Alleged Student Senate violations tossed aside

Accusing senator resigns before complaint is addressed

Sam Hill
Editor-in-Chief

Two weeks ago the Student Senate treasurer denounced decisions made by the senate chair and parliamentarian to withhold his paycheck after multiple absences.

Treasurer Jason Blanco recommended that Joshua Dodge, the senate chair, and Joshua Tharpe, the parliamentarian be removed from their positions for violating the constitution, which does not give them the authority to alter stipends.

According to members of the senate’s executive board, Blanco never filed the proper paperwork to the Violations Inquiry Committee to warrant investigating his claims and call for Dodge and Tharpe to be removed and that he quit immediately after that meeting.

“There was nothing properly submitted, so, officially, there’s nothing to talk about,” said Tharpe.

Dodge, Tharpe and Judson Case, the senate vice-chair, declined to discuss the specifics of Blanco’s accusations because they were discussed within an executive session. When a senator is appointed, they are asked to sign a confidentiality waiver restricting them from speaking about what is discussed in these sessions. The senate generally goes into executive session to discuss personal problems including promotions, demotions or dismissals.

Dodge did say that the issue with Blanco’s accusations were strictly procedural and the decision to not act on his concerns was indeed not biased.

The Student Government Association constitution requires anyone accusing an individual of violating the senate’s rules and regulations to file multiple copies of a formal complaint including a full description of the violation, names of witnesses, contact information and their signature. After a formal complaint is submitted, the VIC has ten days to notify the accused party, another ten days to convene and investigate and 30 days to conclude their findings and choose an appropriate penalty.

Because Blanco did not file a formal complaint, the VIC is unable to investigate, let alone act and remove anyone from their position.

“If he had filed a complaint properly, it would’ve been investigated but he walked away,” said Tharpe.

Dodge declined to comment on Blanco’s request to have him removed from his position, saying that there are two sides to every story and that he didn’t feel comfortable speaking on the situation to the press. He suggested that any student who wanted to know his thoughts on the issue to come speak with him during his office hours in the SGA office.

Sam Hill / Editor-in-Chief

Student Senate continues to fill empty seats

New senators John Jackson and Scott Reiner both cited the university’s budget deficit and the dismissal of professor last spring as reasons for wanting to join the student senate.

Alex Huber
Contributor

The primary goal of the Student Senate for so far this semester has been filling vacant seats and increasing their presence on campus, and they’re beginning to make progress.

At last week’s meeting the senate added two new senators and quickly replaced the treasurer position that was left vacant due to internal conflicts. During the previous meeting former treasurer Jason Blanco accused two executive board members on unconstitutional actions and resigned immediately afterward.

In the wake of Blanco’s resignation the senate is pressing on by voting in Senator Ashley Rose, a member of the senate’s finance committee as the new senate treasurer. Rose and Senator Tom Bahun were both nominated for the position, each having significant experience in dealing with finances. Rose was already a part of the finance committee and Bahun serves as the treasurer of the Board of Student Organizations. Both Bahun and Rose have experience with accounting for numerous groups outside of the university.

Bahun’s position with the BSO was brought up during the deliberation by Kyle Frazier, the student body president, who did not think it was wise to have Bahun take the position at the BSO for the senate.

“I don’t thinkrocking the BSO again is the best option right now,” said Frazier, noting that the BSO has been running smoothly and it would not be wise of the senate to make them look for a new executive board member.

Constitutionally, students are not allowed to hold multiple stipend positions, so Bahun would’ve had to resign from BSO to receive a stipend for the senate treasurer position.

Senator Matt Wilkinson, who also chairs the BSO, said he was comfortable letting Bahun take the position, even if it meant he had to find someone to take his place.

“I’m fully confident that we could find someone capable,” Wilkinson said during discussion while the two candidates were out of the room.

No one had any doubt in either of the candidates’ abilities; however, senators wanted to make sure that they were looking out for the entire Student Government Association, not just the senate.

A secret ballot was cast where Rose was elected by a majority vote. As the senate treasurer, she is now responsible for overseeing the SGA’s budget and advising other groups on financial matters.

In addition to filling the treasurer spot, two new senators were appointed to the senate. Scott Reiner and John Jackson joined the senate, filling the empty seats left behind by former senators who were removed due to attendance issues this semester. The two new senators were elected by a nearly unanimous vote.

Senator Jackson was appointed to the student affairs committee while Reiner was appointed to the public affairs committee. Both cited the recent budget deficit and dismissal of faculty last spring as reasons for joining the senate.

After the appointments, the senate spoke at length about increasing their presence on campus, speaking about ideas such as creating public profiles of themselves, creating a forum for students to voice their concerns without having to attend senate meeting and better attending to student and student groups.

Sam Hill / Editor-in-Chief

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“Love is an orientation” discussion space created

LGBTQ members and Christians talk it out

Francis Flisiuk
Managing Editor

In an effort to provide a comfortable and welcoming space for members of the LGBTQ community to discuss their faith, a group of other Christians, a six-week series of discussions has been planned centered around the idea that “love is an orientation.”

Sarah Holmes, the assistant director of student life and diversity and coordinator of the center for sexualities and gender diversity, has teamed up with Reverend Rus Willette, the leader of the Christian Naviators group on campus. Willette has been working with gay and lesbian students over the years that come from straight, conservative backgrounds and did not gain the support of their family, “They often use religion as the reason for their lack of support,” said Holmes.

According to Holmes, there are many students in Maine and across the country that are either gay and don’t feel welcome in their churches or are practicing Christians that are hesitant to come out due to social pressure. Sometimes people are targeted and roped into hurtful stereotypes, by those closest to them, like their friends and family.

Many students worked with gay and lesbian students over the years that come from straight, conservative backgrounds and did not gain the support of their family, “They often use religion as the reason for their lack of support,” said Holmes.

Still there are Christians on campus that are less accepting of people from the LGBTQ community, but Holmes noted that most of the groups that harass gay students come from outside the community.

Holmes mentioned the Westboro Baptist Church who has picketed at USM in the past, as well as Guy Hammond, the founder of Strength in Weakness Ministry, who preached last year that with proper faith you can “pray away homosexuality.”

“I get that a person’s religion is very important to them,” said Holmes. “But the search for a truly open and welcoming faith community is even more important.”

The Bible says that believers are supposed to love the sinner and hate the sin but according to the holy text, homosexuality is viewed as a “detestable” sin. The infamous passage in Leviticus 20:13 clearly con demns homosexuality by saying: “If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.” It’s this 2,100-year-old quote that has fueled discrimination against LGBTQ members in those that interpret the Bible literally and as an infallible, word-for-word truth.

The lead organizer of the Alpha Omega Christian Fellowship, said that no further interpretation of this passage is needed, because the Bible and its language makes it “plain and clear.”

“I do not believe that one can be a practitioner of the Christian faith while living that [LGBTQ] type of lifestyle,” said Jones. “Just like there are other ways that people live that Jesus would not approve of in those that follow him.”

Jones said that LGBTQ members can express their faith, but their sexual orientation does hinder their ability to fully commit to that faith.

Alpha Omega has not responded to inquiries and invitations about future “Love Is an Orientation” discussions.

Ryden explained that it is possible to complete the program in two years, but many students are nontraditional or part time and only take a class or two per semester. A student in this demographic will be eligible to graduate in the 2017. As of right now, it looks like they are going to graduate, “That is one of the reasons why we’re not accepting new students,” said Jester. “I would definitely be seeking legal action if I was not allowed the amount of time promised.”

“Having these types of conversations is an important step for the community,” said Holmes. “People just need to be open and live with love and grace.”

The door to the center for sexualities and gender diversity in the Woodbury Campus Center. This is where the weekly discussions are held.

‘Our students are still left with a lot of questions and a lot of unknowns. It doesn’t seem like their needs and interests were fully taken into account.”

Katelyn Wiggins / Free Press Staff

Admin yet to ease uncertainty in teach-out plan

Emma James
News Editor

Programs eliminated by the board of trustees are still waiting for administrative action to proceed with the enactment of a teach-out plan for students. Progress has been made slowly, but uncertainty still remains.

According to Kent Ryden, professor and director of American and New England studies, the dean’s office sent out a letter to all current students asking if they plan to finish their degrees, and informing them that they would have two years to do so.

“The dean’s office has been trying to plan out the sequence of required courses for students, but not the elective courses,” said Ryden. “We’ve just learned that there will be elective courses available each semester, but at this point we don’t know what those elective courses will be, nobody knows who will be advising students on these and independent studies and internships.”

Ryden indicated that the teach-out plan as it has been developed thus far has had no consultation with the ANES faculty.

“Our students are still left with a lot of questions and a lot of unknowns,” said Ryden. “I need to be able to answer them. It doesn’t seem like their needs and interests were fully taken into account,” said Ryden. “A lot of our students are pretty upset.”

David Jester, a current ANES student, expressed concern at the uncertainty of it all.

“Since I’m doing a thesis track, it could take me a year and a half or even two years to three years to finish,” said Jester. “When I entered the program we were supposed to be given six years to complete, so that wouldn’t have allowed me until 2013. As of right now, it looks like they’re only giving us two years which goes against the student guidelines.”

Stephen Pollock, professor of geosciences, was unable to comment on the teach-out plan for his program, indicating that everything is “too preliminary” to be released at this point.

“What happens ultimately rests in the upper ranks of the administration. The provost or president will eventually sign off,” said Pollock. “We may know something more after the provost releases his academic restructuring plans on Monday.”

Ryden attributes the uncertainty to a “poorly thought out elimination process.”

Ryden explained that it is possible to complete the program in two years, but many students are wanted to do this without thinking and just want people to lay down and play dead.”

If Ryden was involved in the teach-out plan process, he explained, he would take into account the needs of the students.

“I would try to involve the students in the process or at least get a good sense of what would work best for them and would try to bring more specificity to the teach-out plan,” said Ryden. “That is, eliminate a lot of the uncertainty. Establish what the faculty resources would be and what the curricular resources will be.”

“I’ve already invested enough of my life’s money into this,” said Jester. “I would definitely be seeking legal action if I was not allowed the amount of time promised.”

Kent Ryden, professor and director of American and New England studies, expresses concern in the lack of consultation with ANES faculty by the dean’s office in regard to the teach-out program.

Katelyn Wiggins / Free Press Staff

Some of the hurt that’s been done?” said Holmes. “People just need to focus on living with kindness, love and gratitude.”
President David Flanagan gave more details about his strategy to "vanquish USM's daunting budget challenge" during a brief speech to an audience of over 300 local business and education leaders at an "Eggs and Issues" event at the Holiday Inn in Portland.

The monthly business forum, organized by the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, invites community members from many sectors to gather and discuss important issues. Last week, the forum served as both a brief overview of USM's financial deficit and, apart from many strategies, an extended invitation to form a more symbiotic relationship with many of the local businesses in the greater Portland area.

"To succeed we will need your help as corporate partners, as interim generators and advocates for restoring our funding in Augusta," said Flanagan. "We must find and adopt a new business model."

Flanagan, who was recently appointed as a member of the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, stressed that USM needs to become more entrepreneurial and work towards an increase in community engagement, which he believes will benefit both students and local business leaders. Flanagan wants to increase appropriation funds from the state legislature to around $36 million, the amount that's been gradually lost since 2008.

"We need to get more funding for the whole UMS system," said Flanagan. "So the bulk of the cost of education goes to the state instead of to the students."

Jim Page, the chancellor of the seven colleges of the UMaine system, spoke alongside Flanagan and cited that in-state tuition in Maine has increased 365% over the past 25 years. This is part of the reason that the system is suffering from a $69 million structural gap.

"The university system is broken and must be changed and transformed," said Page. "We have outstanding expertise across all our institutions and we need to unlock their full potential."

Page said that in order to compete with the fierce competition on the higher education market, USM needs to increase and spread its inspiring educational capabilities.

"We must be second to none when it comes to research in economic development and public service," said Page. "We want to be a critical partner in our region."

Both Page and Flanagan noted the efforts of the students and faculty working in the new cyber-security lab as a prime example of departments that are leveraging their resources to serve the community. The lab was recently featured in a national spot on the CBS evening news.

"Our pioneering efforts in cyber-security illustrates how well USM can contribute to the needs of our students and the economic development of our town," said Flanagan.

According to Flanagan, gaining community partners will open the doors for more internships and work-study opportunities for students and actually provide them with some real world experience. A more complex relationship with USM would also give local employers a database of skilled laborers. This ties in directly with the administration's new "metropolitan" vision.

Flanagan said that the metropolitan university, above all, means concentrating on "purer areas" like music, health, business, science, technology and engineering. These are the academic areas that are experiencing the most growth and are always seeking out new practitioners, scholars and workers.

Kate Zema, a junior women and gender studies major and student representative at the event, said that USM's plan for increased involvement with the city of Portland is fantastic, but she's also concerned that community engagement will be limited to just the business and political sectors.

"I would love to see the university and city I have come to love, work together toward a better future," said Zema. "However, we need social scientists and critical thinkers just like we need doctors and lawyers from this university. I fear that metropolitan university is simply just a fancy phrase for getting rid of the humanities and some close professional relationships that are so meaningful to making USM a great university."

Flanagan ensured that the humanities and social science concentrations will still be a part of USM's curriculum, just in a more economical and efficient way.

Flanagan wants to add to the existing corporate partnerships USM has with companies like UNUM, Texas Instruments and IDEXX, and said that he's anxious to talk to as many business leaders as he can. So far ideas have been flowing with a company called Connect Ed as well as with District 3's City Councilor Edward Suslovic.

After the two speeches and a brief Q-and-A, Suslovic pitched the idea of a partnership between USM's private bus system and the city of Portland's. Suslovic posed the question that instead of having a private bus that USM pays 100% of the cost of, why not have the Metro operate it and give students access to the whole region?

"Wouldn't it be great if a commuter could just get anywhere around Portland just by flashing their student ID?" asked Suslovic.

"I'm totally open for it," said Flanagan. "Send me an email about it. Transportation between Portland and Gorham is a major issue."

Flanagan closed his 14 minute speech with optimism and a request for the audience to become involved in USM's future.

"I ask you to invest in USM," said Flanagan. "It will be among the most rewarding and enduring actions you can take anywhere this year."

Francis Flisiuk
Managing Editor

If you are interested in learning more about the event, you can visit the USM Freepress website at francis@usmfreepress.org.

News
October 6, 2014

Flanagan speaks to business leaders at local event

Sam Hill / Editor-In-Chief
USM to host teach-in focusing on ISIS activity

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, commonly referred to as ISIS, has made headlines around the world recently for making violent threats against the United States and its allies, and the beheading of two American journalists.

On Wednesday, the office of Multicultural Students Affairs is hosting a teach-in for the public, focusing on the political and militant atmosphere in Middle Eastern countries, the history of unrest and violence in those areas and how ISIS activities are affecting the global community.

“Part of the mission of any higher learning institution is to train tomorrow’s leaders and global citizens, and in order to produce that, you have to make them aware of this larger world that exists beyond their own country,” said Reza Jalali, coordinator of the office.

The teach-in will include a panel consisting of Jalali, Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, a professor of political science at the University of New England, Senem Aslan, an assistant professor of politics at Bates College and Ali Al Mshakheel, a journalist formerly based in Iraq, where he wrote for the Times of London and ABC News.

Each panelist is scheduled to speak briefly about their views on ISIS, Middle Eastern history and the possibility of direct U.S. intervention before opening up to take questions from the audience. Jalali says the goal is to provide students and the community with a forum to ask questions, raise concerns and learn more about the conflict.

“We try to create a safe-zone so that people can ask any questions they want, because they’re not going to be judged,” said Jalali. “Not all learning takes place in the classroom — some of it happens in hallways, in student groups, some in lecture halls — and this is one place where people can just walk in and get some information for free.”

Jalali said that he wants students to understand that while this violence and conflict is happening far from the U.S., it can easily still impact them.

“We’re not asking you to take sides, but regardless of how you feel, if there’s a conflict out there you may be called there to fight for your country or the price of gas may go up at home,” said Jalali. “As part of this global community, what happens there impacts us here.”

Aslan suggested that students explore a wide range of news sources to fully understand what’s happening regarding ISIS activities.

“They can read newspapers that have reporters on the ground in the region. They can read foreign newspapers to get a sense of how U.S. actions are affecting other countries or how they are perceived by citizens of the Middle East and beyond,” she wrote in an email to the Free Press.

Jalali said he hopes that discussion will lead toward the history of the situation as well, noting that widespread terrorist groups do not simply sprout up overnight.

“Students should start to develop that historical consciousness about U.S foreign policy because today’s decisions will continue affecting their lives in the years to come,” wrote Aslan. “The problems that we face today in Iraq and Syria have a lot to do with the U.S. occupation in Iraq in 2003, for example.”

Recent polls from NBC News and the Wall Street Journal show that 72% of Americans believe that the U.S. will send combat troops overseas against ISIS militants, even though President Barack Obama has spoken against it on many occasions. Jalali said that he feels while Americans are willing to send armed forces into Syria, most don’t know where Syria is.

“To me that is horrible, because we ask our brave young men and women in uniform to go fight this war, but we don’t bother ourselves to know where we’re sending them,” said Jalali. “We’ve kind of divided these countries into friends, foes and people we really don’t care about. With that kind of generalization and stereotyping, events like this [the teach-in] become really important.”

The teach-in will be held in the Woodbury Campus Center amphitheater from 11:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday and there will be light snacks available.
Students demand earlier bus

Brian Gordon
Contributor

The 8:45 bus that runs from Woodbury Campus Center in Portland to Gorham is often late getting students back to the dorms.

A quick search on MaineStreet yielded nine classes that end at 7 p.m. or just after, forcing those students who are heading home in Gorham to wait nearly two hours, as they miss the 7 p.m. bus.

Waiting in the warmth of Woodbury Campus Center was Lydia Kaply, a freshman nursing major. She had been waiting for the bus since 7 p.m. Her anatomy and physiology class was supposed to go until 7:55 p.m. but her professor often cuts them early.

She noted that there’s a lot of classes that conclude at seven and those students miss the bus ride home scheduled for 7 p.m.

Kaply was joined by Niko Milanoski, a freshman accounting major, who waited an hour for the 8:45 p.m. bus to bring him back to Gorham. His astronomy class ends at 7:50 p.m. and he settles in for a good hour wait twice a week.

Joy Pathal, dean of students, was receptive to student complaints. She said that the seven p.m. bus would become the 7:10 bus, beginning Oct. 6.

Kylie Ovady, president of the Queer Straight Alliance, and a junior media studies major, said the group has to plan their meetings around the bus schedule.

Alena Kiel, a senior liberal studies major who joined the group said that USM ought to call the bus the 8:55 because that’s when it usually shows up.

“It’s a long time on a dark bus with bad music,” said Gabby Bouquet, a freshman nursing major. She also added that there was a lot of confusion as to why the bus stopped at the mall on its commute to Gorham.

No one waiting for the bus could remember anyone ever getting on or off the bus at that stop. The driver just stops and doesn’t even open the door.

“If there is no longer student interest [at the mall stop] I do not see a reason to provide the service,” said Pathal. She also added that the stop would be made on a request basis. “It is easy to identify students who wish to be dropped off at the Maine Mall, but more challenging, although not impossible, to set up a system to know if anyone is waiting at the Maine Mall to be picked up and brought back to campus.”

Regarding the overall lateness of the bus, Pathal said she would pass along the complaint to those in charge and hopefully fewer students are seen waiting in the dark.

news@usmfreepress.org @USMFreePress

Police Beat

Selections from the USM Department of Public Safety police log September 24 to September 30

Wednesday, September 24

Amber alert
3:54 p.m. - Well Being Check. Checking on a student. Unable to locate. - Luther Bonney Hall, 85 Bedford St.

Thursday, September 25

That wacky tobacky
9:30 p.m. - Report taken for odor of marijuana. - Upton Hastings Hall, 52 University Way

Look out for ghost cars
9:51 p.m. - Motor vehicle stop. Warning for operating without headlights. - 149 State St.

Sunday, September 28

FIRE! FIRE! Ah wait, nope
6:03 a.m. - Fire alarm activation. System reset by Portland Fire Department. Facilities employee also responded to fix the issue. - Glickman Library - 314 Forest Ave

You only busted up my car, no problem
6:21 p.m. - Property damage only. Two vehicle accident. No report required. - G8 parking lot, 24 University Way

Snow in September?
9:36 a.m. - Summons issued to Rosanne M. Swiger, 65 of Portland for studded snow tires and failure to produce insurance. Warnings for failure to provide registration and inadequate brake light. - Parking garage, 88 Bedford St.

Monday, September 29

Go fight somewhere else
8:30 a.m. - Harassing communication, handled by officer. Verbal disagreement. Subjects moved along. - Glickman Library, 314 Forest Ave

Verbal disagreement. Subjects moved along. - Glickman Library, 314 Forest Ave

You’re supposed to stop at the giant, red sign
10:34 p.m. - Warning given for stop sign violation. - Costello Complex, 43 Campus Ave

Lucky lurker
2:17 p.m. - Suspicious Incident. Handled by Officer. - Upton Hastings Hall, 52 University Way

Extreme Hot Pockets
6:40 p.m. - Fire alarm activation for burnt food. - Upperclass Hall, 25 Husky Dr

I don’t like people playing on my phone!
8:15 p.m. - Harassing communication through phone. Report taken. - Upton Hastings Hall, 52 University Way.

Tuesday, September 30

Bums like reading too
3:55 p.m. - Suspicious activity. Staff requested assistance with a patron. All set. - Glickman Library, 314 Forest Ave.

Police logs are edited for grammar and style. They can be found at usm.maine.edu/police/campus-crime-log.
The technical side of stagecraft students

While the audience is dazzled by sparkling costumes, complex lighting and actor antics on stage, some of the most important work happens behind the scenes.

USM Theatre Department produces a minimum of two shows per semester, and the students who work backstage contribute greatly to each theatrical success. A lot of the individuals who are working backstage love what they do, and plan on pursuing stagecraft as a future career. "On some levels the most important thing about a play is the individuals who are working backstage. They're really probing at what it means to be human," said Magnaure.

"Before college, I had never worked with any stage lighting equipment. Even though I want to pursue acting, I will probably end up working in a lighting shop somewhere. I'd rather work in the theater in some way than not," said Bodenheimer. "If that doesn't work out, I can work backstage," said Kennedy. This trend appeared common among the students who participate in the theatre productions. Martin Bodenheimer, a junior theatre major, also explains that before attending USM, he thought he would just pursue acting. Yet what he learned was far beyond his expectations.

"I came into this department thinking I wanted to act. Even then I wasn't trained enough to do that yet. In the future, I will be able to pursue acting, but if that doesn't work out, I can pursue design, and if that doesn't work out, I can work backstage," said Magnaure. This trend appeared common among the students who participate in the theatre productions. Martin Bodenheimer, a junior theatre major, also explains that before attending USM, he thought he would just pursue acting. Yet what he learned was far beyond his expectations.

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Lady Antebellum strays from the country norm

The Manhattan Short Film Festival happens annually and includes 10 short films that have been selected out of thousands from around the world. The idea is to present these short films to an audience who cast votes and pick their favorite particular as well as their favorite actor or actress.

The headquarters of this event is the York College theater on continents such as Europe and Australia, are involved in hosting this event in many of their respective states and countries.

Focusing on only five of the short films shown at Nickelodeon Theater in Portland, this film festival is definitely worth attending from anywhere in the world. One of the first films titled “I Did With You,” features 11 different vocalists. The film tells the story of a loner on a train who has an app on his smartphone called “Soul Mate” who he hopes will help him discover new love. He discovers that technology can be a blessing as well as a curse, even when an app can give him true privacy as to who one should be dating. He fails to see what is right before his very eyes, leading to a misrecognition of a real love for one is supposed to be going after.

“Mend and Make Do” tells a love story in backwards, but has all the charm of nostalgic romance. Directed by English filmmaker Bexie Bash, this is a moving and emotional movie that uses every day objects in a stop-motion orchestra of symphony. There are no actors but only animated objects which can be found anywhere. The objects show a love story throughout the time. In an original and refreshing way, this is a story concerning the relationship between Vincent and Lyn, two young lovers who are no longer together, and it is only after everything between them has fallen apart that they can finally understand the true meaning of love. “Love comes in circles / And love takes its own time / Bending and breaking, not taking a straight line / I never knew, I never loved timeless and true / Oh, I did, yeah I did with you.”

Another one of their hit songs, “DownTown,” features gui-tarist Charles with vocals by American singer Erik Schmitt, tells the love story of a woman who is waiting for her man to show her off to the world after he continually lets her down on date nights. “I’m only counting on your cancellation, / When I should be counting on you at my door. / Did you forget about how we went around, / I don’t know why you don’t take me downtown anymore.”

Overall, Lady Antebellum has figured out a way to keep their music sound new and fresh without overdoing their typical country style sound. Their previous albums have delighted mainly country lovers, yet 747 leaves their comfort zone and allows for different audiences to see the world. “It’s a blessing as well as a curse, even when an app can give him true privacy as to who one should be dating.”

For more info, go online to apply: www.usmfreepress.org/get-involved
Words and Images has put out a literary journal annually since 1998, which includes the work of USM students. The journal has been a vital platform for the expression of creative works by students, and it has played a crucial role in promoting the arts and fostering a culture of critical thinking and free expression.

During the academic year, Words and Images hosts a variety of events, including readings, workshops, and film screenings. These events bring together students, faculty, and community members to celebrate the power of words and images and to foster a sense of community and shared purpose.

One of the most significant events organized by Words and Images is the Banned Books Film Series, which features adaptations of famous books that have been banned or censored due to their content. This series is not just about showcasing the art of filmmaking but also about challenging censorship and promoting the freedom of expression.

The Banned Books Film Series is a perfect example of how Words and Images uses its platform to address issues of censorship and promote diversity in literature. By featuring films that have been banned or censored, the series encourages viewers to think critically about the reasons behind censorship and to appreciate the importance of free speech and artistic freedom.

In addition to the Banned Books Film Series, Words and Images also organizes other events, such as readings and workshops, to provide students with opportunities to share their work and to learn from one another.

Words and Images is a testament to the power of the arts to inspire and to challenge. It is a space where students can express themselves freely and where the community can come together to celebrate the beauty of words and images.
Avenue Q Show Review

Krysteana Scribner
Arts & Culture Editor

From Sept. 19 to Oct. 4, the raunchy puppet show Avenue Q made its debut at Lyric Music Theater on Sawyer Street in South Portland. This unique puppet-filled comedy aimed at adult audiences left people sorting through a variety of emotions, from sadness to hysterical laughter that couldn’t be tamed.

This musical told the story of a recent college graduate named Princeton, who moved into a shabby New York apartment on Avenue Q. There, he met the lovely Kate, as well as the rest of his neighbors who helped him discover his purpose in life.

Located in the front of the stage, two sign language interpreters used puppets to sign to the deaf audience, which made the experience open and intriguing to all audience members.

The cast of 11 actors performed at an expert level and their quality of sound effects and precision on stage made for an amazing theater experience. The topics in the show touched upon what life is like after college and how to discover who you truly are.

As the play progressed, controversial subjects such as racism, homosexuality and Schadenfreude (taking pleasure in others’ pain) are discussed through song and a disturbing display of puppet intercourse had the audience both laughing and cringing.

Molly Harmon, who played the role of Kate Monster in Avenue Q, believes that the success of the show goes not only to the actors, but to the manager, puppet builder, lighting staff and sound board operator.

“This play was a blast, and I am super glad I got to be a part of the show. Everyone in the cast did an amazing job, and although this wasn’t the first show I’ve been in that involved puppets, it was definitely the most rewarding one,” said Harmon.

Each scene change was quick and well done, and actors made facial expressions according to how their puppets were feeling, which made for a surreal experience and a more realistic show.

This performance was amazing because no matter what the subject, the dialogue kept audiences in good humor until the end. The mature content over love, sex and finding ourselves in the midst of it all kept the audience on their toes in wonder where Princeton and his neighbors were headed in life and what kind of things the future had in store for the characters.

Through all of these difficult topics of discussion, the actors and actresses held it together and performed a play that felt both genuine and comical.

At the end of the performance, audience members stood for an applause that lasted well beyond the end of the show. Anyone who had the chance to see this play left the Lyric Music Theater with a new outlook on the world of puppetry and acting.

Throughout the months of November, February, April and June, Lyric Music Theater will be hosting other shows, such as Oliver! and How to Succeed in Business Without Even Trying. If you missed out on Avenue Q, then plan on attending one of these other amazing plays.
Our opinion: USM needs to keep impacting programs, not just money-makers

Last week President Flanagan was appointed as a member of the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, which he hopes will help him in his efforts to promote community engagement and closer professional relationships with businesses and companies in the region at large.

Flanagan argued the need to invest in USM and realize that there is a lot of potential to unlock with the University of Maine system to make the transition between graduation and work. Flanagan's vision sees a future where an employer looking for a skilled laborer can access a wide portfolio that provides a list of services from certain departments, no matter where they are in the state.

It was also incredibly beneficial for a students learning experience if they could log onto a website, and have access to the best of USM's offerings, even if they are on a completely different campus. Our rapidly growing technology could certainly make this digital academic portal a reality, we just don’t want it to replace actual interactions between professors and students, because that’s where the real learning happens. Technology can make learning a lot more accessible, but we don’t turn USM into a “Netflix University” where you can earn a degree by lying in your bed eating Doritos.

We think it’s important for USM and the rest of the schools in the UMaine system to become a more critical option for employers when they are looking for work. To fill up their job openings. During a four-year experience at college, a lot of students have a hard time truly realize what kind of career they should choose. If outside employers spend more time tabling on campus, sponsoring career-related events and offering more internships and work-study jobs, it could make the transition between graduation and the real world a lot less terrifying.

USM does need to be engaged with the greater Portland community, we just hope that the nature of the engagement doesn’t solely benefit potential employers and that it takes students goals and ambitions into considerations.

Flanagan said that his new business model involves concentrating on “purer” areas like science, technology, engineering, and the health professions because those academic departments foresee the most job growth. We hope that USM isn’t choosing to term focus only based on entrepreneurial goals.

Let’s not forget about the academic departments that so many students go to. This campaign is also about preserving arts, classics, history, theatre and women and gender studies, to name a few. These focuses help make Portland prosperous, vibrant and interesting. Just because you can’t attach a dollar amount to this kind of community engagement doesn’t mean it’s not worthwhile. Portland’s got a vibrant creative community, so let’s not minimize that curriculum just because some other areas are more profitable.

We hope that the administration finds a way to include the value of liberal arts and related programs into their income and expense reports and that it influences their decisions come time to eliminate programs and lay staff and faculty.

Our Opinion is written by the Free Press editorial board.

Nick Marchetta
Contributor

As of last Friday, September 27, I had resigned, in truth because I could not bring myself to attend Senate meetings any longer. It wasn’t the tug after the forty-third Senate vote to eliminate Student Senate. Although I had resigned, in truth because I could not bring myself to attend Senate meetings any longer. It wasn’t the tug after the forty-third Senate vote to eliminate Student Senate. Although I had resigned, in truth because I could not bring myself to attend Senate meetings any longer. It wasn’t the tug after the forty-third Senate vote to eliminate Student Senate. Although I had resigned, in truth because I could not bring myself to attend Senate meetings any longer. It wasn’t the tug after the forty-third Senate vote to eliminate Student Senate. Although I had resigned, in truth because I could not bring myself to attend Senate meetings any longer. It wasn’t the tug after the forty-third Senate vote to eliminate Student Senate. Although I had resigned, in truth because I could not bring myself to attend Senate meetings any longer. It wasn’t the tug after the forty-third Senate vote to eliminate Student Senate. Although I had resigned, in truth because I could not bring myself to attend Senate meetings any longer.
Adventures in the Winchester Cathedral

Martin Conte
Free Press Staff

It’s been three weeks since I arrived in Winchester, and yet it took until today for me to sufficiently explore Winchester Cathedral, the skycraping Anglican church that has sat in the city’s center since 1066 A.D and was made famous by the 1967’s chart-topping song of the same name. Joining a group of students from Uni, and graciously led by two fearless senior guides, I embarked on “the tower climb,” an adventure as dramatic and intriguing as a Game of Thrones episode.

We started with a walk across the length of the cathedral itself, stepping over gravestones set in the floor from the past millennium, including the final resting place of novelist Jane Austen. Somewhere, hidden in the cloisters, the organist diligently practiced, filling the hall with the strains of sacred music. A reminder that, as I have stated before, the U.K is privileged to have a history constantly alive, and carefully preserved, for future generations. I go to sleep with those miracle voices. Until next time.

Martin Conte is a senior English major currently studying abroad at the University Winchester and loving it.
Crossword

Weekly Horoscope

Sudoku

Cryptogram

Every letter in a cryptogram stands for another letter. Use the hint to crack the code.

The solution to last issue's crossword

Aries

March 21–April 19

Mutual pleasure is the focus today. Sharing your fun doubles it. Compromise with someone close to find activities you both enjoy.

Taurus

April 20–May 20

Lottery fever! The urge to gamble is high. Don’t risk what you can’t afford to lose. Seek safe excitement (like love or roller coasters).

Gemini

May 21–June 20

Facts are in focus. You may catch up on tasks, fix up equipment; make needed repairs, do organizing, or make anything useful.

Cancer

June 21–July 22

Power plays or manipulations by loved ones are likely, so be extra empathic and cooperative tonight. Look for chances to be a team.

Leo

July 23–August 22

Your zeal leads you into new territory. You break new ground at home or at work and it’s exciting.

Virgo

August 23–September 22

Surround yourself with beauty today—whether you create it, visit an art gallery, a flower show, window shop, watch the sunset, etc.

Libra

September 23–October 22

Test your stamina and control by teasing and delaying gratification tonight. Build endurance and heighten satisfaction.

Scorpio

October 23–November 21

Examine allowances and expenditures today. A discussion of financial needs and responsibilities (within the family) aids realism.

Sagittarius

November 22–December 21

Curiosity about how things work is stronger today. Don’t ask embarrassing questions, but do increase your understanding.

Capricorn

December 22–January 19

You and your beloved need to balance a lighthearted approach with a more intense commitment. Find a middle ground.

Aquarius

January 20–February 18

Strength is an issue today; your willpower is better than usual. Focus, concentration, and business instincts are good.

Pisces

February 19–March 20

You zeal leads you into new territory. You break new ground at home or at work and it’s exciting.

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Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9 × 9–square grid subdivided into nine 3 × 3 boxes. Some of the squares contain numbers. The object is to fill in the remaining squares so that every row, every column, and every 3 × 3 box contains each of the numbers from 1 to 9 exactly once.

Every letter in a cryptogram stands for another letter. Use the hint to crack the code.

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And here is your hint: O = T

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GEB’s ‘Minute to Win it’ a hit with residential students

PORTLAND, Maine—The parade of accolades for Portland continued Wednesday, when Congress Street, the street where most of the city’s bars kick off, earned national honors.

The American Planning Association, in recognition of a national street named Congress Street, which runs through Portland’s downtown area, among its 10 Great Places in America: Streets for 2014.

The APA annually picks 10 streets that reflect a true sense of place, cultural and historical interest, community involvement and a vision for the community’s future. This year’s list included prominent streets, such as Broadway in New York City and Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C.

During a news conference last Wednesday to announce the APA designation, Mayor Michael Brennan said about the evolution of main streets in America and how Congress Street continued to grow while managing to stay grounded and local.

“We have, through a conscious effort in the city of Portland, survived transition over the years, and we now have a Congress Street that’s thriving and growing,” Brennan said. “For those of us who have lived in Portland for a long time, we’ve seen Congress Street continue its 10 Great Places in America: Portland’s downtown area, among other things,” William Anderson, president of APA, said in a prepared statement issued Wednesday morning. “Planners, working with others, help build better communities in a variety of settings, from urban to rural; the result — better neighborhoods, cities and regions. We applaud these efforts and congratulate this year’s designees.”

According to Carl Eppich, city planner and president of APA’s Northern New England chapter, a great city or street is reflective of the people who work there.

“I wasn’t really surprised by this designation, but I was really pleased and excited for my colleagues here in the city,” Eppich said. “With planning destinations like great streets, they don’t happen by accident.”

“This is exciting for the city of Portland to be recognized nationally for one of our most prominent streets and especially for city staff in our planning department, who work so hard everyday to improve our streets,” said Sheila Hill-Christian, acting city manager.

Brennan went on to outline some of the work the city’s planning and urban development department has done over the years and extended his praise to city workers, residents and businesses.

“These things do not come simply by happenstance,” Brennan said. “It’s because of a lot of decisions made by citizens of Portland, local businesses and people who work for the city of Portland to ensure that a transition has occurred and that we now have a street that we can be proud of.”

For this year’s Minute to Win It competition, the winner would receive a Chromecast as a prize.

For Tibbetts, event nights have been a weekly hobby the last four years. “Every year, I host to host an event like this for the community,” said Tibbets. “Some nights I’ll host arts and crafts; other nights it will be performances. I just feel that as a student of USM, I have an obligation to try getting as many people as possible to come to these social events. But as an obligation, it’s something I enjoy putting together.”

For her next event, Tibbets will be hosting the event “Crayon Art” on Wednesday Oct. 8 in Brooks Student Center.
Involvement Spotlight: Hip Hop dance club is growing

Deborah Roberts
Contributor

Twice a week in the Sullivan multipurpose room, USM students dance to complex hip hop routines, to get their cardio workout in, but also just to have some plain, sweat-inducing fun.

The group was borne out of a demand for a dance club focusing on the hip hop style. According to the founder of the club Mouttwei Chap, styles like ballroom dancing, are “not really our thing.”

When asked how the group was formed Chap said, “We did it for our love of dancing. We created this to basically have fun and learn to teach others and show our love of dancing.”

The response proved to be truthful because the student participants were focused on some intense dance moves and clearly had fun both in the teaching of the dance and in the execution.

According to Maiki Sato, the second in charge of the club, some of the moves are pretty serious and are compiled from previous shows and experiences.

“We use our experiences to help us learn how to teach and choreograph as a group,” said Sato.

Chap has experiences in performing dances from his time living in Massachusetts. Sato learned a lot of his skills while taking classes over the years. This combined dance knowledge leads often to new choreographed dance numbers for the students to learn.

Dance groups usually range from four to six people of varying experience levels. Either way people mainly show up to have fun.

Nicole Steinhagen said “I have no dance experience whatsoever and I just showed up tonight to have some fun.”

“It’s a new experience, going out of your comfort zone and learning something you love,” said Sato. Hip hop dance club’s founders like to find a way to dance everyday and have fun while doing it.

When asked if the group would ever put on a performance, the group members responded excitedly: “We would love to put on a performance whenever we can get enough people to show up and get into this performance. It’s great fun and we would love to share it with everyone someday.”

According to Sengmolicka Vuthy, another group member, moving your body to the rhythm of a hip hop beat, proves to be quickly tiring.

“It’s a great workout and it’s fun when we get together and work on our routines,” said Vuthy.

Most of the participants said that they are hopeful more people show up to the club and realize what a great time it is.

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