Calendar:

October 21: Last day to drop a course or change a course to pass/fail

October 23-24: Family Weekend

October 26: Spring registration begins

November 5-7, 19-21 FITD’s The Importance of Being Earnest

November 26-29: Thanksgiving break

December 4: Last class day

December 3-5 FITD’s Stocking Stuffers

December 5-6: Fall graduation ceremonies

From the director’s desk:

Last semester, I attended the LAH student production of “Chicago” and had a “wow” moment. While I delight in watching our students hone their research, writing, and speaking skills, to see that shy freshman come alive as an actor, singer, dancer, to see students draw upon and develop the leadership and organizational skills it takes to put on such a production, is a thrilling reminder that in LAH the pursuit of a liberal education goes on in and out of the classroom. In this newsletter, we who are privileged to work in LAH hope that you will gain a sense of the energy and talents and creativity of the some 500 LAH students. Whether participating in LAHSC, the Liberal Arts Honors governing body, in “Foot in the Door,” the LAH Theatrical group, in the LAH Music Ensemble Echo, our literary magazine, or the Ransom Reading groups, LAH students are learning to lead and to work together. I also want to call your attention to the LAH students who are studying abroad and who are participating in internships. Funding study abroad and internships remains a top priority of our program. I welcome your comments, suggestions, and questions (carver@austin.utexas.edu).

Best wishes,
Students Speak:
A Prize Winning First Year Scholarship Essay

Finding myself on the cusp of adulthood, I know as I age I risk taking my own story too seriously, and missing the far more captivating stories of others. My offer to the university and my professors: the value I place on my enthusiasm for what others have to say. I am not very wise but wise enough still to stop talking and listen to someone else. The most freeing thing about being eighteen and unwise: society still grants me permission to listen only, without any pressures to make grand conclusions.

Living in New York City this past summer, and mulling over the questions you posed for this essay, I became self-aware of my listening habits. In the city, snatches of narrative drift all around, if you listen. A man walking around the Jacqueline Onassis Kennedy Reservoir in Central Park demands to know why his wife wouldn’t call the painter herself when he was under so much pressure from work. Two doormen—one short and squat, the other very large—stationed on Central Park West squint upwards at the drizzling sky as they nervously try to jump a car battery. When a passerby gawks at the electrical dangers the situation presents, the larger doorman points to his colleague and explains: “He wants a new hairstyle.” A small child forcefully pulls on his expensive, miniature dog’s ears and happily sings, “I’m stretching out Dolly’s ears.” His parents, engaged in a heated conversation about childrearing theories, ignore their dog’s torturous improvements.

I learned lessons this summer though not only from listening on the streets. I also read E.B White’s essay, “Here is New York.” Writing in the summer of 1948, White nails in the short piece a non-native New Yorker’s response to New York City. “Many people who have no real independence of spirit depend on the city’s tremendous variety and sources of excitement for spiritual sustenance and maintenance of morale,” White writes. Throughout the essay, his descriptions capture the many pulses of New York with an accuracy that endures even now, more than 70 years later. Reading White re-affirmed my belief that a wannabe storyteller like myself needs to listen to others; perspective and age are not just the stuff of fables; “Here is New York” gave worth to feelings I consider my own but, at the same time, I know I couldn’t express them as well as White did. Even White, in his youth, probably wasn’t the writer who could produce such prose. In another essay, “Years of Wonder,” White describes his youthful writing style as “stomach-twisting” and offers samples that prove his point. But, as an undergraduate student at Cornell University, White listened when his professors spoke. The Elements of Style—a grammar book originally written by his English professor and later lovingly revised by White—is the ultimate proof of the attention he paid to his teacher.

This summer in New York I also discovered The Moth—a not-for-profit storytelling organization. Founded in 1997 by poet and novelist George Dawes Green, The Moth sponsors gatherings at coffee houses and clubs where ordinary people stand up and tell mostly funny, sometimes sad stories that relate to a pre-determined theme. With admission price set at reasonable price of six or seven dollars, Moth events usually mean hours of waiting in a line that spans a city block. Undeterred, I would arrive early and listen intently. Only briefly did I wonder whether I should put my name in a hat from which the evening’s master of ceremonies randomly selected the storytellers. Stage fright didn’t stop me - rather, I was aware that all of the good storytellers were well into their adult lives. I preferred to hear their tales rather than attempt to spin my own.

Someday I believe I will tell stories of my own. But I have already acquired the firm belief that I have more to learn from others rather than the other way around. I am eager to listen to my professors, who are, in some respects, storytellers themselves. I know that my label as a beginner allows me to listen receptively to others and, for now, that’s enough.

- Susannah Jacob, Undeclared
LAH Music and Theater Events

The Amorous-Paulharmonic Music Ensemble has a busy fall performance schedule in the works. They are performing in the Family Weekend Musical Extravaganza, Friday, Oct 23. They have also been asked to perform to celebrate Jester Dormitory’s 40th Birthday.

Foot in the Door Theatre will present The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde from Nov. 5-7 and 19-21 and Stocking Stuffers, a series of Christmas vignettes from Dec. 3 - 5. Please check the LAH websites for further performance details.

Echo

Dear Liberal Arts Honors colleagues,

Looking for an opportunity to publish your prose, poetry, or photography? Echo is now soliciting original material for its 2009-2010 issue, and we would love to consider your work. Send anything and everything our way at echolitmag@gmail.com. Feel free to encourage fellow students in your English and Rhetoric classes to do the same.

Additionally, we are always looking for more staff members to help review submissions and work on design and layout. If you would like to be a part of Echo, please email us at the aforementioned address and we will happily add you to our staff mailing list.

Yours sincerely,
Echo staff

LAH Student Council

LAHSC has had fundraisers at Pita Pit and Spicy Pickle and is putting together one with Yogurt Spot. We’re also participating in Diabetes walk and Race for the Cure.

The LAHSC’s talent show is in mid-November and they plan to have an end of the semester show “holiday” show the week before Thanksgiving.

For more information, email carter.lee.olson@gmail.com.

LAH Pre-Med Society

The LAH Pre-Med Society is a student-run organization focused on combining the world of Liberal Arts and medicine. Our goal is to provide avenues of resources that will ultimately benefit students who are pursuing a career in the healthcare field but are currently majoring or focusing on a degree in the Liberal Arts arena.

Some of the things we have to offer are links to internships around the Austin area, volunteer opportunities at local hospitals and clinics, access to Kaplan and Princeton Review’s MCAT preparation classes, and guest speakers who have gone through the process of balancing Pre-Med with liberal arts that can give us insight into how they worked it all together. Also, in order for all the members to be fully incorporated in the society, we will have a different member bring in information about a medical school or an MCAT question that they can share with everyone else at each meeting. However, it’s not all academic and work. We have social outings and get-togethers so we can vent and let off some steam. After all, it’s not easy being a Pre-Med student! For more information, contact Nazia Hussain at naz 338@yahoo.com.

LAH Yearly Scholarship Winners

First Year
Andrew Bowman
Markose Butler
Bethany Ellerbrook
Tatum Fritz
Noelle Gilman
Armen Hazarian
Susannah Jacob
Severine Kale
Blake Martin
Aileen O’Leary
Mary Perkins
Issa Ramos
Morgan Tennant
Lauren Thomas
Jacob Townsend

Second Year
Erica Allseitz
Paul Cuno-Booth
Susannah Duerr
Bethany Johnson
Kathleen Kidder
Ashleigh Kuertz
James Lamon
Ariel Maxworth
JT Williams
Alexandra Young

Third Year
Caitlin Eberhardt
Steven Karson
Darcy Kues
Kevin Martin
Justine Pak
Abigail Palmer
Jennifer Pier
Lindsay Taraban
Merrit Martin
Molly Wahlberg

Fourth Year
Zachary Cuyler
Kevin Endres
Andy Jones
Hal Hlavinka
Timmy Huynh
Kela Kundert
Tamara Marshall
Joshua Michaels
Lauren Ratliff
Ania Upstill
Ninamarie Ochoa, Junior
Currently abroad in England

Hometown: El Paso, TX

Major: English Honors

Favorite LAH Class:
E 314L Literary Contest/-Text with Dr. Carol MacKay

Extracurriculars: LAH Writing Tutor, Sigma Tau Delta, Oxford Summer Program

Study Abroad/Internships/Special Programs:
Oxford Summer Program 2008, Oxford University 2009-2010

Advice for Other LAHers: Studying abroad was the best thing I’ve ever done for my education and I highly encourage all LAHers to participate in a study abroad program. The experience of it is priceless and is honestly worth the effort it takes to prepare for a global education!

James Lamon, Sophomore

Hometown: New Braunfels, TX

Majors: English, Philosophy

Favorite LAH Class:
GOV 312L Issues and Policies in American Government with Dr. Benjamin Gregg

Extracurriculars:
Spirit of Shakespeare, LAH Mentor

Special Programs:
Shakespeare at Winedale

Advice for Other LAHers: Have no fear of new experiences.
Anna Russo, Senior

Hometown: Dallas, TX

Major: Government/ Women’s & Gender Studies

Favorite LAH Class:
LAH 350 Life History Documentation Approach to Inquiry with Dr. Ricardo Ainslie

Extracurriculars:
University Health Services, Healthy Sexuality Peer Educator; Student Government Women’s Resource Agency, Co-Director; Liberal Arts Honors Student Council, Council Member; The Daily Texan, Weekly Columnist; 91.7 FM KVRX, Savvy Sexperts Talk Show; LAH “Foot in the Door Theater”; Texas Advocacy Project, Hotline Volunteer

Internships:
American Civil Liberties Union, Reproductive Freedom Project—Public Education Intern; State Representative Carol Kent - Legislative Intern; State Representative Tommy Merritt - Legislative Intern

Advice for other LAHers:
Don’t be afraid to try new things and pursue your interests. College is a time to explore what you are interested not a waiting period until law school, or medical school, or getting a job. College is the time of your life to discover what you are really passionate about and make that into a career. Don’t be afraid if you find out that what you thought you wanted to do since junior high is not what you really want to do. Coming from someone who has changed majors three times I know that stepping away from your original plan and its’ stability may be a bit traumatizing, but I can almost guarantee your existential journey will lead to a happier and more successful you.

Angela Giordani, Senior

Hometown: Austin, TX

Majors: Arabic Language & Literature, English, Islamic Studies, Religious Studies

Favorite LAH Class:
LAH 350 In Search of Meaning with the Professor and Sage Dr. Michael Adams

Extracurriculars:
Arabic Teaching Apprenticeship, UT Arabic Flagship Mentoring Program

Study Abroad/Internships/Special Programs:
UT Arabic Flagship Fellow; 2008 Summer Study Abroad in Alexandria, Egypt; Instructional Assistant and Social-Events Assistant Coordinator for the Summer 2009 UT Arabic Institute; Summer 2009 Research Trip to Cairo for Honors Thesis

Advice for Other LAHers:
UT is a big place. You must therefore discover your niche and delve into it, but don’t make it your prison. Take classes and attend events that introduce you worlds and topics that may seem unrelated to your major. Doing so has, unexpectedly, helped me appreciate my area of focus and keep a fresh, unique perspective on it.
LAH Alumni in Action

Class of 2007: Nazanin Sullivan, History

I graduated in 2007 with a degree in Anthropology and History, and promptly moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina. After working and traveling around the Southern Cone for six months, I moved back to the United States in order to attend graduate school. I am currently a second year history Ph.D. student at Yale University. I study maternal infanticide in early modern Europe, focusing primarily on Spain and its colonial empire. My work includes cultural and legal responses to child death and illness, as well as shifting views of child worth and the definition of childhood throughout the course of the early modern period and across geographic boundaries. I also have a keen interest in folklore studies and fairy tales – and not just those that involve imperiled infants!

I was recently awarded my M.A. in history from Yale, and will (hopefully!) receive my doctorate in 2014. Graduate school is definitely a challenge, but I love being in an environment full of so many talented professors and students and having access to so many exciting opportunities and fresh ideas beyond my own research field.

Outside of school, I tutor weekly at an organization called New Haven Reads, which promotes literacy to children and adults in the greater New Haven area. I also just returned from a month-long trek to the Middle East, where I visited Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel and Palestine. My trip was an incredible experience, and has only heightened my interminable desire to travel! Of course, nothing compares to Texas, and I still miss UT and the wonderful staff of LAH all the time!