

# Word on the Hill

## What do you count down?

By Erica Dunigan & Katie Vorderstrasse



"365 days a year, I'm counting down to my birthday."

**Aushia Stump**  
health and physical education  
freshman



"I pretty much count down my whole life."

**Emily Honsicker**  
athletic training  
freshman



"Thing I count down the most for is turning 21."

**Jevyn Voss**  
communications  
sophomore



"I look forward, most, to summer because I get to see my friends and I get to work and make money."

**Hannah Mason**  
biology  
freshman



"Graduating."

**Zack Castor**  
biology  
senior



"I count down to my birthday."

**Cristelle Tejes**  
communications  
sophomore

## Put it in perspective:

### What is your strategy for selecting courses?



**ERIN BUSTER**

Each semester when it is time to choose courses, I dig out my five year plan I made my freshman year and begin crossing out the classes I have taken and

mark the classes I need to take next. Then, I create a schedule of my classes to make sure I don't have any classes that are happening at the same time or cry because I have an 8 a.m. class every day. Once I am organized I stay up until midnight the night of course selection and register for all of my classes. It is a simple and organized strategy.

*Erin Buster is a junior majoring in music education.*



**DAVID BATES**

Being a junior, I usually pick my classes based on my academic plan. If two or three of those classes are being offered then I will take those. I enjoy taking

an easier class each semester as well so I don't feel completely overwhelmed. Then I go to my minor courses and take one or two of those. I also have the honor of having a wonderful advisor, Dr. Claudia Geer, who will assist me with her thoughts on what I should take in order to graduate on time. I take full advantage of her suggestions. The advisors know best.

*David Bates is a junior majoring in psychology.*

## Anticipation means counting down days



**LUIZ REYES**

There are many occasions or reasons why I would have a personal count down. Of course there is a countdown for my birthday, as well as for spring break, final tests, weekends, summer vacations, Thanksgiving, and last but not least Christmas.

I consider myself to be among those folks who always seem to be counting down for the weekend even though it is still Sunday night. The reason for this is mainly because the weekend to me is like a short pause or break from all the stress that comes with school. As well as for me, this is the best thing to happen to those who work hard the entire week. It is like finding a pot of gold, nothing but sheer happiness. Thanksgiving has always

been on my count down list because I see it as a time to spend quality time with family and friends. It is also a time to enjoy a splendid feast that is prepared with love by my mom and dad. I know that once this time comes it means only one thing, that Christmas is right around the corner. I use countdowns to help me get through tough times during the school year. It allows me to look forward to an extraordinary event that is filled with joy and happiness, which ultimately outweighs the terrible times during the year.

After this wonderful countdown has passed another one immediately follows, which is the countdown to Christmas. This countdown is definitely my favorite of them all because it means that I get two weeks off from school and I get to fly back home to my family. It is a joyous event that we can all agree, it is worth the wait. This countdown also means that another semester is in the books and school is that much closer to ending.

The reason why I count down for my birthday is, well because it is the day I was brought in to

this world and I hold it to be the most important event in my life. As for spring break the reason I have a countdown for this occasion is because it marks the time in my school year where I can take some time off away from school work and just relax. I take this opportunity to regain all those sleep hours that had been previously lost during the semester.

The event all college kids dread is of course final exams. No one in the history of college has ever loved taking those exams, but they have to be done regardless. This is precisely why I count down for this event, merely to prepare myself for the storm. It is never a fun time in my life but I do make sure I stay on top of my game when final exam comes around.

A school year usually last around nine long and grueling months. The first few months are good you know, everything is going my way and I am just on my A game as far as class work is concern but then once it hits the four to five month

marker things begin to slow down. By this time, school may seem to last an eternity. Then I begin to count down days until summer vacation. Then just like that time starts to fly away. Sure it may be a day to day thing but it still helps motivate me and is that drive that I need to finish off the year on a high note. I know that the vacation will consist of two or more months of nothing but stress free fun. This is why I count down for summer vacation.

All these countdowns have positive effects in my life. They allow me to have a better view on the days that remain until that special day, which consequently provokes me to perform at my best in all my classes. Why? Well because I see it like this, if I concentrate solely on school and my assignments rather than on the days remaining, time will simply pass me by in a blink of an eye. This is the reason why I countdown my days.

*Luiz Reyes is a freshman majoring in business administration. You may e-mail him at luiz.reyes@sckans.edu.*

## Advisor provides insight to ease stress during enrollment



**MICHELLE BOUCHER**

When I was in college, new course schedules represented fresh starts and new opportunities. I would flip through the pages, highlighter in hand, selecting all the courses that caught my eye.

My enrollment habits were similarly idiosyncratic—I

would enroll in as many of these highlighted courses as the weekly class schedule and the limits of a full-time load would permit, with little regard for major requirements or a sensible graduation timeline.

Fortunately (for my parents, anyway) I was footing the bill for my own education, on a pay as you go plan, so only I suffered the consequences of my lack of focus and career planning.

Little surprise that it took me 10 years to graduate from college, or that when I finally did so, I had many more hours than the minimum I needed.

Experience is a good teacher,

but I wish I'd listened a little more carefully when my advisors cautioned me about four-year plans and major requirements.

I've learned a few things about schedules, enrollment and time management since then. This week, Southwestern students will be selecting their classes. With so many choices, here are a few things to keep in mind.

**Check your Four-year plan.** Some courses you did need to take only be offered every other semester or every other year. Since there are only so many class times in a week,

you will inevitably encounter conflicts. When a course you need to graduate is offered, it should be your first priority.

**Learn to read the 'Academic Plan' on Self-Service.** If you don't understand your plan, or if you think something's incorrect, check with your advisor or the registrar.

**Take charge of your education.** No one will pay as much attention to your plan as you will. Don't wait until your senior year to find out what you did need to take at College Writing II.

**Your advisor is your friend.** He or she knows the ins and outs of the course offerings in

your major, when and how often the courses in your major will be offered, and when it's best to take what. Make an appointment and go see your advisor. Ask for his or her advice, and listen to it.

**Check your general education requirements.** General education courses fill up quickly, and you'll have the best luck avoiding conflicts if you enroll early.

**Make your decisions and enroll.** Schedules can be changed, but if you don't enroll, you may miss the class you want to take, or you may find that the available times don't fit your schedule.

**Finally, take some risks.** Once you have your "must-haves" in your enrollment basket, take some time to look at the schedule. What class looks intriguing? What subject have you always wondered about?

Don't let the fear of a tough professor or a heavy reading

load scare you away. Reading, writing and thinking are all good for your brain.

They'll help you learn to think more quickly and clearly, and these abilities are good for your lifetime. If you've always wanted to act, take an acting class. Always wondered about the stars? Take a class in elementary astronomy.

The natural science division has a cornucopia of general education offerings on the schedule this fall. Indulge your inner geek.

Putting together a good schedule is a little like finishing a puzzle, and sometimes it can be frustrating. But with time, planning and thought, next semester can be the best adventure yet. Remember, you can start enrolling this Thursday. Don't miss it.

*Michelle Boucher is a professor at English Department. You may contact her at michelle.boucher@sckans.edu*

## Fresh sound secures new heights for band



**DALTON CARVER**

Attack Attack! is back, and in response to the mostly negative feedback from their self-titled album, better and more hard core than ever.

Now reduced to four members with the departure of clean vocalist Johnny Franck, it seems that they've cut the majority of the musical fat.

Not to be confused with the British alternative band, Attack! Attack! (That's with two explanation points), the Ohio-based hard core act has increased the breakdown count and decreased the synthesized and techno sounds typically associated with the band.

The album was written off an overall theme of revolution and how the main character, seemingly the front man, fights a dic-

tator loosely based upon Adolf Hitler and World War II. Despite trying to create a different kind of appeal, the songs lack connection to each other, breaking up the story Attack Attack! tries to tell.

Honestly, the songs could stand alone, as they could be related to any hardship or problem that listener may be going through. The story, if the listener thinks about it, adds a bit of structure, but is largely unnecessary to enjoy the album.

"This Means War" also tells the story of the rise of current vocalist Caleb Shomo, originally hired as the band's keyboardist and synth creator.

Shortly after the release of Attack Attack!'s first album, "Someday Came Suddenly", the band's screamer, Austin Carlile, was released. Carlile, now lead vocalist for Of Mice & Men, bounced back quickly, while Attack Attack! hired no new members.

For the second, self-titled release, Shomo pulled double duty, as he was promoted to screamer in addition to his original tasks. As if following a trend, the band lost clean vocalist Johnny

Franck after the second album's release, leaving many to wonder who would follow.

Once again, instead of hiring a new voice, Shomo stepped up and assumed the role of both screamer and clean vocalist, performing admirably.

Not only has he improved his screams to a sharper, more refined sound, he actually has a good, easy to listen to voice. Don't get me wrong, he's no Jonny Craig, but in all honesty, he doesn't need to be.

His voice performs well in the role it should, and beyond expectations. As a huge plus, his screams are easily understandable, making This Means War an easier listen to those outside the genre who are looking for something to ease them into harder bands, such as The Devil Wears Prada or August Burns Red.

However, despite the leaps and bounds the album completes, it's not without flaw. Shomo's lyrics are good at times, but generic for the genre, expressing typical feelings of angst and frustration.

Even though the release is more hard core and linear as a whole, many parts of the

songs sound similar, although increased listening should differentiate tracks to fans. It just needs a bit more variety in sound overall. With Shomo at the helm, synthesized and techno sounds have surprisingly decreased.

The few that remain actually add body to the songs that contain them, unlike the previous two albums, where they seemed a bit tacked on.

Despite these minor problems, This Means War is an extremely solid effort, sure to bolster Attack Attack!'s credibility and respect in the hard core scene, as well as other music genres.

In fact, within hours of its release, the album shot to the #2 spot on iTunes overall top albums, right below Adele.

Haters and naysayers may argue against Attack Attack!'s success, but reaching that level of popularity is difficult for any artist, let alone an artist in this kind of genre. Don't feel the need to hold your applause for this extremely solid and progressive release.

*Dalton Carver is a freshman majoring in Communication. You can e-mail him at dalton.carver@sckans.edu.*

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