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CLEVELAND
STATE
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Fall 2025

JACK, JOSEPH
AND MORTON
MANDEL
HONORS
COLLEGE
NEWSLETTER



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4.0 Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Honors College Newsletter

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Cover Photo by Storm Orr

Mandel Welcomes Double the Scholars in 2024



Dr. Rachel Carnell, Dean of the Mandel Honors College as of 2023.

By Kara Nottingham

With the start of the 2024 academic year, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Honors College welcomed in the largest cohort of scholars it has seen yet. The program's first year admission reached more than double the amount of 2023's, with 124 first-year students joining the program. Alongside those students was the highest number of transfer students, with 40 coming in from other institutions to finish their degrees. This increase is in no small part thanks to the efforts of Dr. Rachel

Carnell, current dean of the Mandel Honors College, to expand the reach and awareness of the program and the benefits it can offer for students at CSU.

Regarding these changes, Dean Carnell says that, "The Honors College is a special place, and we want to spread those advantages to a broader group."

Regarding the reasons behind such a shift in admissions, she reports that for many, there was simply a lack of awareness of the program: "When I first arrived, many students told me, 'I didn't know there was an Honors College, otherwise I'd have applied.'" Dean Carnell and the Admissions staff worked to get CSU's application process "into the digital age."

Notably, they included an option to apply for the Mandel Honors College directly on the application that all incoming students must fill out, making it much more visible. Other changes included the extension of the deadline from winter to late spring and the removal of the GPA requirement to apply, ensuring that no high-potential students with the ability to thrive and perform at Honors levels were being missed. "Case and Harvard read all of their applications — why shouldn't we?" remarked Carnell regarding the new policy.

Looking at the numbers, it's easy to see that these efforts were not in vain. So what does this increase mean for Mandel?

“More people know about it, more people are excited about being a part of it, and as we go forward, I’m looking to work with our Vice President, Randy Deike, to determine the perfect size for this program now that we know we can expand our reach in a really meaningful way. We want to maintain a manageable size that brings in high potential students at Cleveland State that allows all of them to get the

full benefit of the Honors College.” The excitement of the growing program is palpable; students and staff alike are thrilled to be a part of Mandel at such a pivotal time. The Mandel Honors College is coming into its tenth year stronger than ever, with a large, dynamic group of students ready to make the most of these opportunities on the CSU campus and Greater Cleveland as a whole. Regarding the

new additions, Dean Carnell gives the following, encouraging message, “In teaching and engaging with the incoming students, I have to say that this cohort of students seems to have fully recovered from the COVID experience and is keyed to be engaged with the campus and CSU experience.” Here’s to more scholars, more opportunities, and more years of the Mandel Honors Program here at CSU!



Community leaders Hermione Malone, Micheal Obertaez, and Matt Weinkam

Leading Through Stories: Celebrating 10 Years of the Honors College

By Julia Srnec

On October 10th, Cleveland State University’s Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Honors College hosted a forum to celebrate their 10th Anniversary at The City Club of Cleveland. The forum was titled “Leading Through Stories,” and featured three Cleveland leaders as speakers on a panel. They represented the humanities through literature, theater, and film, sharing their thoughts on the power of storytelling and the powers stories have in the world today.

Located a short walk away from campus, the forum provided lunch and an engaging discussion for CSU honors students and members of the Honors College community. Dan Moulthrop, CEO of The City Club of Cleveland, moderated the discussion, providing thoughtful questions for the three panel members to respond to. The panel included Hermione Malone, Executive Director of the Cleveland International Film Festival, Micheal Obertaez, Executive Director of Near West Theater, and Matt Weinkam, Executive Director of Literary Cleveland. The panel

began by discussing the importance of highlighting the humanities in academics in a time when many programs are getting smaller, and why telling stories is still important today. Weinkam commented on the subject by discussing how telling stories on one’s own behalf can be empowering, and can help to highlight marginalized communities.

“Stories shape who we are,” he said. Obertaez continued the conversation by discussing his experience as the

(continued on next page)



Leading Through Stories

(continued from pg. 2)

director of a local theater that hosts storytime events with drag queens and the importance of creating spaces where everyone can feel that they can be themselves. Malone also added her experience with the film festival, noting the importance of sharing every side of a story, especially those that have rarely been shared before.

The panel then went on to discuss the role that AI (Artificial Intelligence) technology has begun to have in the artistic sphere. Weinkam discussed the impact that AI has had on students, emphasizing that the point of producing unique work

partially comes from the difficulty of creating it yourself. Malone also shared her perspective on the matter, that through the advance of technology, the value of art created from scratch by people increases.

The event concluded with the opportunity for attendees to ask questions and participate in the discussion themselves. As a celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Honors College, the forum's discussions of stories and the humanities highlighted the importance of providing opportunities for students of all backgrounds to pursue their passions.

Lift Up Vikes!



By Andrew Martens

Food, water, and shelter: all basic human needs that some CSU students aren't getting, but greatly determine their educational success. This is exactly the problem that Lift Up Vikes! (LUV!) is addressing. LUV! is an organization seeking to supply CSU students with basic resources so they can focus on their education. Among the offered services is a food pantry in partnership with the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, a resource center that provides financial wellness education as well as professional clothing, and an emergency fund to provide for students' non-tuition emergency expenses.

Snap/food pantry

The on-campus food pantry at Berkman Hall Room 122 is seeking to solve the problem of food insecurity and nutritional deficiencies faced by some CSU students on a weekly basis. The by-appointment entry to the food pantry allows a quick flow and service to all the students, as well as a sense of privacy. Their website (<https://www.csuohio.edu/liftupvikes/food-pantry>) allows students to sign up for a 15 minute time slot to provide them a "safe, comfortable, dignified and convenient shopping experience."



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Resource center

LUV!'s (primarily online) resource center provides students with access to a selection of financial wellness worksheets for student budgeting, saving, and general money management. The website also outlines "referrals to on- and off-campus service providers" as well as news concerning programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Despite a largely online center, they host in person events titled "Dress for Success" that provide professional clothing.

Fowler emergency fund

Not all students' financial struggles are in tuition alone. LUV! recognizes this and hosts the Fowler Emergency Fund as a means to provide for students' non-academic financial emergencies such as utility bills, child care, rent, and more. The grant is application-based with eligibility requirements such as a completed FAFSA and a current term enrollment.

Call to Action

The reach and scope of LUV! would not be possible without the many volunteers and donations that happen year round. If you are looking to make a donation, please check out <https://www.csuohio.edu/liftupvikes/how-help> or scan the QR code for a list of non-perishable items that are accepted.





Leadership Lecture Series: Caryl Pagel

By Daniel Miller

On September 19th, 2024, Mandel Honors College students gathered in Mather Mansion for a talk from CSU Poetry Center Director Caryl Pagel on the humanities and her work in small press publishing. The CSU Poetry Center is a nationally renowned independent publisher of verse and prose and promoter of poetry education in Northeast Ohio. Pagel's past experience with small press publishing was paramount to her work leading the Poetry Center.

A small press publisher differs in both scale and ethos to a major industry publisher. It is ephemeral by design, sprouting up alongside

a burgeoning epicenter of creative activity that would be overlooked by larger publishers. The primary focus is on supporting artistic expression rather than profit. Notable Ohio-born authors who were first published by small presses include Hart Crane and Sherwood Anderson.

The ad hoc nature of small press publishing is at the heart of what the humanities are. Humanities are not just a study from afar but a group activity, a discourse amplified by critical thought, empathy, and figurative expression. This participation in an ever-transforming web of communication mirrors the act of living itself. The humanities are essential for

understanding what it means to be human.

Caryl Pagel emphasized the aforementioned ethos of the humanities by drawing on experiences that shaped her literary career, from both the artistic and administrative sides: doing the typical, excel spreadsheet office work for the student union of her college, founding her small press publishing house Rescue Press in 2009 despite the responsibility and risk, and seeing how art students of a school she was working at collaborated with each other. Her expertise came from willing participation in a variety of experiences and exposure to a diversity of voices.

Caryl Pagel expressed her skepticism about the traditional view of leadership as a strict top-down hierarchy composed of discrete units, favoring a looser collaborative approach instead. Neither art nor management are solo activities. Leadership is an extraordinary privilege to discover more about being human. Leading oneself, let alone a group of people, can be an enlightening exercise in humility or a harrowing tribulation. Desperate for outlets to express agency in the modern world, the lessons of the humanities are more important than ever. Leadership, literature, and life as a whole are equally enriched by openness to experience and collaboration. In an increasingly atomized world, the humanities remind honors students what it takes to become a leader of the future.

A Master's degree can significantly enhance one's academic expertise and professional career. In certain fields, it may either improve career growth or could be required. The Accelerated Master's Program (Accelerated MS) allows undergraduate students to start their graduate career as early as their junior year while taking more intensive 400-level courses while working towards their graduate degree.



Exploring the Accelerated Master's Program

A Path to Academic and Professional Growth

By Matthew Kleps

Are you an undergraduate who wants to specialize in your major?

The Accelerated MS allows undergraduate students to dual enroll nine graduate credit hours and receive nine more credits counted towards their graduate degree. The first nine would be applied to both the undergraduate and graduate degrees while the additional nine would only be applied towards the graduate degree. Required classes for undergraduate degrees may offer a 500-level equivalent class, which would have more intensive coursework compared to the 400-level class and would apply to both degrees.

What if you do not know if a graduate degree is right for you?

Graduate degrees are not for everyone and change based on individual circumstances. Advice should be taken concerning the driving force of working towards a graduate degree, which is typically for academic or work-force purposes. Ask professors, coworkers, managers, or advisors with

experience in the field if they believe it would accelerate your performance.

Master's degrees' being optimal changes based on major, specialization, companies, location of work, and so on. For those on the fence, it would likely be best to join the Accelerated MS program to dual enroll, because the coursework from 400-level to 500-level courses changes depending on the professor but usually adds an additional hour per week. This could help make the decision to fully commit to a graduate program before having to completely enroll. If the student decides against the graduate degree, then only a handful of hours were lost, but if a student pursues the degree, then the class time for nine credit hours was saved.

There is a strong synergy between the Accelerated MS program and Honors College. Later in their undergraduate studies in the Honors College, students can take 500-level courses instead of honors-level courses. In this circumstance, the graduate credits are practically a secondary effect of being a part of the Honors College. Different departments

have different regulations, but within certain programs Honors Project and Honors Thesis credits can be substituted with Master's Project Credits.

How do I apply?

Applications change based on each individual department but typically follow the same process. Around two-years of credits would be required, a specific cumulative grade point average, and an application for admission to the Accelerated program. Reaching out to the department would be the best first step.

Overall, the Accelerated MS program is a program that honors students should take regardless of their major. Informed decisions can be made from having conversations with industry, academics, and advisors based on future career plans. By dual enrolling in both undergraduate and graduate courses, students can save time and maximize their credits taken. Ultimately, the Accelerates MS program is a practical and efficient way for students to advance in their academic and professional careers.



Advice from Experience for New Students

By Henry Hoeu

Adjusting to new experiences is hard. No matter if you're dorming, commuting, or going out-of-state, new experiences can be a real challenge. The idea of not knowing a certain future is anxiety-inducing, affecting the way we see the world around us. Although we cannot prevent these feelings, we can try to help each other understand the appropriate steps to adjust to college and approach the "right" path to ease our anxious minds. To help with reducing stress for fellow students, here is advice from experienced students for CSU learners across the board:

Advice for new students:

- Allow for there to be a grace period with the changes in college. I say give yourself time, about two weeks, to form an opinion about these changes. This way you don't have to feel rushed to decide whether you like a class, are following the right schedule, or are balancing school and social life the best way possible.
- Honor Student Amy Washinger's piece of advice is to keep up with hobbies. School can be taxing and can consume your life. So, in order to destress and keep yourself afloat, practicing your hobbies helps you keep in touch with yourself during hard times. For Amy, drawing helps her distress and gives her time to reflect.

Advice for student athletes:

- To maintain a good balance between being an athlete at the collegiate level and experiencing life, CSU's track and cross country runner Brooke Bechtel suggests that athletes be aware of their personal capacities. She explains

that it is perfectly fine that everyone has different athletic, academic, and social capacity. Brooke emphasizes what's important is self-care and finding time to relax and decompress through mental and physical stress.

Advice for Honors Students:

- During the school year, honor student and treasurer for the Student of Fine Arts Organization Emilie Bonsignore has been finding ways to balance her honors courses and working two part-time jobs. She explains that self-discipline is one of the best habits to exercise as a college student. After completing her work, she relaxes by spending time with family and friends, which helps her unwind the rest of her day.

- Honor student and President of Mandel Vikes, Asya Abed notes that putting yourself out there and finding a study buddy in each class can be extremely helpful. It allows you to have a support system by making new friends



and also allows you to exchange ideas. One thing Asya does to meet new people is to get involved, join the intramural league, and be a member of TRIO.

First Step to Meeting New People:

- Joining a club can be beneficial in many ways. Tatum Martines, an honor student and also the vice president of CSU's Club Tennis, explained that joining a club helped her adjust to the college setting and created new and unique experiences. Not only did it help Tatum create new memories and gain close friends during practice, but it also helped her learn to be social and feel like a part of something special. Club Tennis welcomes people who have little to no experience and have players who would love to practice with you.
- There are over 200 clubs and student organizations that allow you to explore your interests and share your ideas. Not only that, joining a club can help with networking skills, as some clubs are created for you to meet professionals and get an insight into the day-to-day life in your field.

Student Discounts⁸

By Ruby Jaafar

Places to Go

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame:

Students who bring in their valid college ID can get \$5 off general admission tickets.

Cleveland Public Theatre:

They have many "choose what you pay options" that start at \$1 a ticket! These tickets are paid as a donation and are a great option for students who want to visit a fun event for a low price.

Great Lakes Science Center:

College students get a \$1 discount on general admission tickets with a valid student ID.

Cleveland Museum of Art:

General admission is always free, so grab a friend and have fun exploring. (Some exhibits may require an extra fee.)

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo:

Free admission on Mondays for Cuyahoga County and Hinckley township residents. (Bring valid ID.)

University Circle Pass:

You can purchase a circle pass and visit three attractions for a discounted price: the Cleveland Botanical Gardens, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, and Cleveland History Center.

Discounts on Clothes

- Many clothing stores offer discounts to college students. You can easily access these deals through apps like **Student Beans** and **UNiDAYS**, which verify your status and show these available discounts. Once you have made an account and confirmed that you're an active student, you can apply discount codes directly at checkout.

Some brands offering discount right now include ASOS - 10% off, Aerie - 10% off, Crocs - 25%, Nike - up to 40% off, Foot Locker - 25% off, American Eagle 10% off, Hollister - 10% off, UGG - 10% off, e.l.f cosmetics - 20% off, and many more! Check out the apps for more deals that are constantly updated.

Discounts on Food

Many discounts can be found in the Student Beans and UNiDAYS apps. Different locations of fast food chains such as Subway and Dunkin' offer 10% off when you show your student ID. These are available at participating locations only, so make sure to ask next time you're ordering!



Cleveland State
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Is Switching Majors Right for You?

By Mark Hribar

For students starting their college journey or students unhappy with their current academic path, choosing and sticking with a major can be a tricky thing. Some students come into college having no idea what they want to do with the rest of their lives and just pick the most interesting major until they actually figure out what they want to do.

I was in a similar situation myself. I came into CSU as a Mathematics Major with a slight interest in Engineering, so I enrolled into the Intro to Engineering Design course to see if I would like it. I ended up loving the idea of switching to an Engineering Major and switched from Mathematics to Electrical Engineering. Many students might be stuck in a similar situation and are wondering if they should switch majors or not. This article aims to highlight different resources that students can use to help aid their decision.

My Majors Advising Report

The My Majors Advising Report is an assessment that guides students in picking or changing their major. From the CSU website, “The MyMajors Assessment reveals information such as student enjoyment, motivation, previous academic performance, extra-curricular activities, and other areas” to figure out the best major fit for a student. It compares your current declared major with the top 10 majors recommended by the report. It can tell you whether your selected major is within your areas of interest, or if your major is outside of your interests and that another major might fit you better. This is a great start for students interested in possibly changing majors.

Student Advisors

To request changing your major, you need to talk to your student advisor

You can access your advisor’s schedule through Starfish and set up a meeting with your specific advisor and the department advisor as well. They can answer questions you may have about different majors and help guide you through the process. It is always good to talk to someone before you make a decision as big as switching majors, so set up a meeting with your advisor before fully committing to your decision.

Choosing and sticking with a major is a hard thing to do. This article only serves as a starting point to help get students on their way and goes to appreciate the hard work CSU puts in to help students with this process. Even if you want to change to a completely unrelated major, that is ok! If you take a lot of specialized courses for a specific major freshman year, you may have to spend more time taking different courses to catch up to your original graduation date. If you are unsure of what you want your major to be going into college, try and take more general education courses freshman year while you figure out which major you want to go with. If you are already a few years into your major, that is okay too! Talk to your advisor to try and figure out the best course of action. So, if you are ever contemplating changing your major, now hopefully you are more informed as to how to get started.



Living on Campus vs. Commuting to Campus ¹⁰

By Arianna Motley

This article will show the positives and negatives of living on campus and commuting to campus. Choosing between these two options can be tricky. Each choice has its own pros and cons, which can vary greatly.

Additionally, some advantages and disadvantages can overlap. The great news is that you can always give one a shot for a semester and see how it feels.

Good luck!

Pros of dorming:

- Living on campus allows for short walks for an early class.
- You can return to your dorm between classes to study or relax.
- You can easily join evening study groups.
- You get to enjoy the full college experience.
- You Gain independence and take on more responsibilities. Also, don't forget about the RTA pass that's included in tuition.
- Living on campus is perfect for traveling around the city.

Cons of dorming:

- Room and board costs can be expensive.
- Dorms may feel less private than you're used to.
- You may encounter roommate conflicts.
- Even if your home is nearby, you may miss your family and friends.
- It can be challenging to focus on studying with all the noise in dorms.
- All residential students at CSU are required to purchase a meal plan, which may not be ideal due to limited food options on campus.

Pros of commuting:

- You can enjoy the comfort of your own home.
- You can mentally disassociate school from home for a healthier mindset.
- You can save money by skipping room and board costs.
- You can use your RTA pass to explore the city.
- You can enjoy delicious home-cooked meals.
- You can enjoy a little more privacy.

Cons of commuting:

- You may have a fear of missing out (FOMO) if you can't make it to fun campus events and activities.
- You can be late for class due to traffic, and bad weather such as snow can make the commute challenging.
- Money spent on gas, car insurance, and parking passes can add up.
- Finding parking can be a hunt.
- It's hard to have time to study right before a test, unless you arrive on campus early.





Staying Healthy on Campus

By Ruby Jafaar

While there are plenty of food options on campus, making meals at home can help save money and stay healthy. Here's a quick tip for putting together a well balanced meal: add a grain + protein + veggies! Some ideas include:

A pasta bowl: Whole wheat pasta (grain), grilled chicken (protein), spinach and mushrooms (veggies). Toss everything together with your favorite pasta sauce for a simple nutritious meal.

Stir-fry: Repurpose leftover rice (grain) and stir-fry with different veggies like broccoli, and carrots. Add some egg (protein), soy sauce, and your favorite seasoning for a quick meal.

These are quick and balanced meals to help you stay energized throughout the day!

CSU Viking Cake Pops!

By Ruby Jaafar

Ingredients

- Your favorite cake mix
- Ingredients listed on the cake mix box
- Container of frosting (we used chocolate!)
- Green melting chocolate
- White melting chocolate
- Coconut oil
- Cake pop straws
- Rice Krispie Treats (to make viking helmet)

Preparation (Dorm Friendly)

- 1 Prepare the cake mix according to the box instructions and bake the cake.
- 2 Allow the cake to cool completely.
- 3 In a large bowl, crumble the cooled cake into small pieces. Add the container of frosting to the bowl and mix until the consistency is soft enough to hold a shape.
- 4 Roll the cake mixture into a golf-sized ball. (Tip: Avoid making them too large as they may fall off the cake straws.)
- 5 Place the cake balls on a parchment-lined baking tray and refrigerate for 2-4 hours.
- 6 Melt the green and white chocolates in the microwave with some coconut oil for 30 second-increments, stirring until smooth.
- 7 Remove the cake balls from the fridge. Dip the end of each cake straw into the melted chocolate before inserting it into a cake ball. Then, dip the entire cake ball into the melted chocolate, ensuring it's evenly coated.
- 8 Stand the cake pops on a styrofoam block or a box with holes to let them dry upright.
- 9 While the cake pops are hardening, form Viking helmets out of the Rice Krispie treats and dip them in melted chocolate.
- 10 Decorate the cake pops with white chocolate drizzle and once the Viking helmets are set, place them on top of the cake pops.

Tips: We had extra cake pop dough left so we rolled them into balls, and drizzled chocolate on top to make another extra snack! This is a great dessert to bring to a party or a fun sweet treat to make with your friends on a Saturday night!

Baking Recipes, S. (2024, May 16). Homemade cake pops. Sally's Baking Addiction. <https://sallysbakingaddiction.com/homemade-cake-pops/>

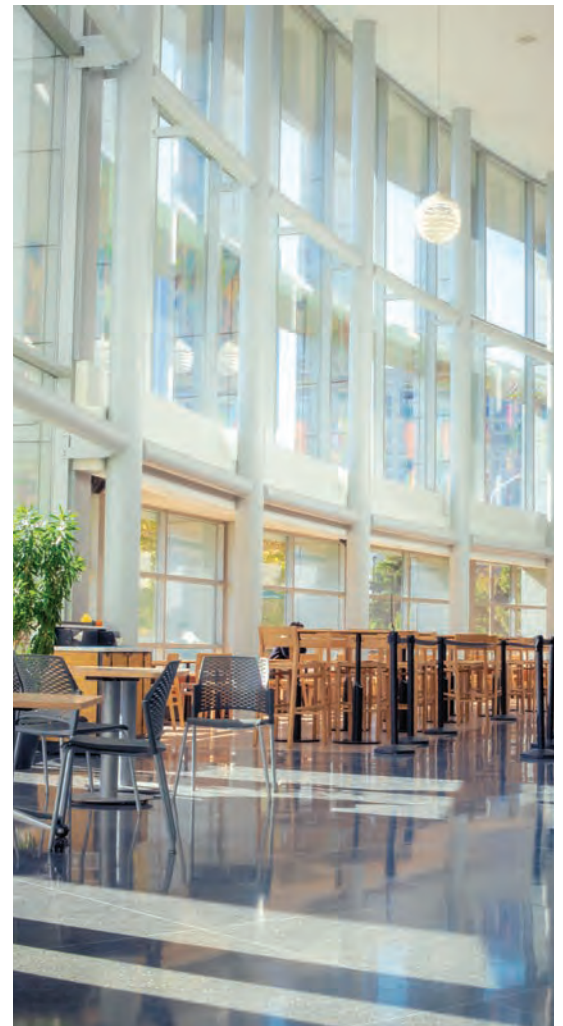
Campus Sights

Photos by
Storm Orr

View of Rhodes Tower (back) and the
Student Center (foreground)



Student Center interior (top) and
exterior (bottom)



Right:
Wolstein
Center

Bottom
left:
Bert L.
Wolstein
Hall

Bottom
right:
College of
Health



JACK, JOSEPH &
MORTON MANDEL
HONORS COLLEGE

