Follow these tips to avoid the lines

How To Successfully Navigate Through Financial Aid

Brandon Reis
Staff Writer

Those students who make use of financial aid here at Bergen Community College know that this advantage does not come without certain sacrifices. The price paid for a cheaper education through financial aid, though not out of pocket, may be physically and mentally taxing. And yet, students often see the general uncertainties all can be the perfect ingredients for a frustrating day. With these three simple suggestions, however, you can be one step closer to attaining an affordable education.

1. Be Prepared

First things first — no matter what, you’re going to have to wait. At the DMV, you have to wait; on Black Friday, you have to wait. It’s no different here. The upside is that while you’re waiting, you can order your coffee or read a newspaper. If you are going to wait, however, make sure to bring all your documents, sign paperwork, and read all paperwork. You may have work, families, and other obligations to attend to, so make sure you are prepared.

Before making the trip, be sure to check your student email for updates, requests, and any other important information regarding your status. Equally important is to check WebAdvisor, where you can access your financial aid records directly, apply for a loan, and even request documents. Some students find they come all the way to the mall during the holidays. The campus is clean, comfortable, and, if you allow it, pleasant!

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2. Be Smart

Before making your financial aid application, be sure to set a budget. You will need to know how much money you can save and how flexible you need to be. Before making the trip, be sure to check your student email for updates, requests, and any other important information regarding your status. Equally important is to check WebAdvisor, where you can access your financial aid records directly, apply for a loan, and even request documents. Some students find they come all the way to the mall during the holidays. The campus is clean, comfortable, and, if you allow it, pleasant!

3. Be Positive

This may sound odd to some, but students often send “substitutes” in their stead. Although understandable as they may have work, families, and other responsibilities, it is not only important but essential that you physically come in and complete these objectives yourself. You are the one in college after all, and only you can be responsible for you.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a United States federal law that gives each individual the right to control access to personally identifiable information (PII). In colleges, this right of privacy includes the FAFSA. Generally speaking, students have the right to access their own records. In summary, all students are entitled to know what information is in their files and how it is used. The law affords students the right to inspect and review their educational records and to request that the records be amended if the student believes that the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise inappropriate.

By signing FAFSA, for example, you are giving the government permission to handle and inspect your private information. To sign FAFSA, you need to provide your Social Security number. In many cases, you also need to provide your parents’ Social Security numbers.

Dr. B. Kaye Walter was selected as Bergen Community College’s seventh President during the August 7 Board of Trustee’s Meeting.

My Freshman Flop

David Zillante
Sports Editor

Last Fall, I started “13th grade” at Bergen Community College, as it was known to everyone in Ridgewood High School. I was a high school senior, and I was ready to move on to Bergen State College, just enough to pass and figured hell, I’m simply going to college — it won’t be hard and I’ll pass with flying colors.

Being the student that I am, I chose some of the hardest classes Bergen has to offer! My freshman year, I was majoring in chemistry. I had little experience in or drive for. On top of the courses, I decided to be extra-enthusiastic and schedule myself to have twelve hour days. This was the beginning of something that I would regret.

I have a 1989 Chevy Blazer, and while it is first and foremost my way of getting to and from school, it also happens to be my second car. I have 85,000 miles on it and takes a long time to warm up. I have had to wait for my car to warm up in the cold, and then I have to wait for the second car to roll around. One day, while I was waiting in my car for what seemed like an eternity, I was smacked into the face. I thought, “Why not just drive my truck to school? I’ll make it into my portable house!” I had an old mattress that I decided to put in the back of my truck. I went on to continue furnishing my truck with some pillows, sheets, a sleeping bag and a portable TV to completely my house on wheels.

One day, I realized my comfort was too overdone. Knowing that I missed my second class I began getting ready for my third. Only minutes into the third class, I thought I was hallucinating because it was like English all over again and the amnesia began to set in. I repeated my acts from the morning and fell asleep in my car right after the third class. Soon after that I missed my fourth class and began my journey back home. I repeated my reckless acts of slepping and sleeping for the rest of the semester.

Sooner than I thought another thing slapped me in the face and this time it was reality giving me an adrenaline shot. Upon receiving my grades, I was nearly knocked over by my disgraceful performance evident at the end of the semester. So much for Bergen being easy, huh?
Hello and Goodbye...For Now

Antony Sganga
Editor-In-Chief

I have seen students fail to meet their full potential here, not because of the institution, professors or courses, but because they did not have the drive, determination or work ethic to take the chances provided to them.

Anthony Sganga
Editor-In-Chief

It can be very funny how things in life work out. Just a year ago, fresh out of high school, I entered Bergen Community College with low expectations. A prejudice already set in my mind due to the notion that BCC is lesser than what a college should be. A prejudice unfairly rooted, as with many local high schools, by the school I attended in Ridgewood. With this notion I set modest goals. While visiting BCC late in my senior year, I instantly became interested in The Torch and hoped that I would have an article published. Aside from this, I did not expect much. I wanted high grades and I wanted to be able to transfer to a good four-year school.

Upon arriving here last Fall, I attended my first Torch meeting. Nervous and apprehensive, I was intimidated by the length of the paper (24 pages long) seemed like this group would be an eccentric group of editors and writers. When at first it seemed like this group would never be able to work together, after ironing out some issues, I felt the paper became a much more interesting and exciting publication. Towards the end of the spring semester, I ran for Editor-in-Chief. To think that I would be running the very paper that intimidated me just 12 months before ironing out some issues, was something that I could never imagine. I never thought that I would be a part of The Torch, but I will be away from the college until November.

With this in mind, I ask those reading this not to succumb to the belief that this college is less than any four-year institution. It is completely true when they say it is what you make of it. Whatever your past grades were, do not let that act as a barrier to success here. I was no model student in high school. Upon entering BCC you have a blank slate, and anything is possible. I have seen students fail to meet their full potential here, not because of the institution, professors or courses, but because they did not have the drive, determination or work ethic to take the chances provided to them.

ANTHONY SGANGA

With this I conclude, in a position where I never imagined myself just one year ago. Full of learning and excitement for what lies ahead. See you in November.

The Torch strives for the highest journalistic standards and accuracy. Readers are encouraged to contact us if they find any mistakes in any edition of the Torch.

Margarita Valdez
SGA President

On behalf of the Student Government Association, I want to formally welcome the people who I would soon be meeting. To my surprise, the article was not only published, but was on the front page. My first goal was complete.

The Torch went on, I grew more dedicated to the Torch, and became friends with the people who I would soon be working with. In December, I ran for and was elected as copy editor, the first of many unexpected events.

Work at The Torch during the spring semester was one of the more memorable experiences I have had. To say the very least, it was quite an eccentric group of editors and writers. When at first it seemed like this group would never be able to work together, after ironing out some issues, it was something that I could never imagine. I never thought that I would be a part of The Torch, but I will be away from the college until November.

The people who I would soon be meeting taught me that there are ways of turning challenges into positive experiences. Therefore, I started to get more involved with the community and I encourage you to become active as well.

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Correction

THE TORCH, a member of the Associated Collegiate Press and the College Media Association, is the official student newspaper of Bergen Community College. The purpose of THE TORCH is to report on the events at BCC and the local community and to offer the BCC community a forum for expression. The opinions expressed in THE TORCH are not necessarily those of THE TORCH. All the information submitted to THE TORCH become property of THE TORCH.
Continued from page 1

meeting I went to I thought to myself, “Oh my god, these people are a bunch of squares.” Thinking back to that meeting, I believe that was a good stepping stone to begin my trek into journalism. I asked my friend about it and he said to come again and volunteer to write an article. So I did, I wrote a couple things here and there and started to meet the people of the Torch and hell, I loved it. I would rather work hard at an article than sleep in my car any day. The Torch kept me occupied with not only writing, but with school in general.

The first semester and the second semester ended with me being much more pleased with what I saw in my grades. Knowing that I did much better the second semester, I thought to myself there was no possible way the school could stop my financial aid now. To my horror though, I received a letter in the mail saying that I was on academic probation again. My mind felt as though it had been shattered into a million little pieces. I thought to myself, “How?” I did everything that the counselors told me to do to repeal this, I changed my major, I did much better with my grades. I did not know who to point my finger at and yell at, when again I was not just slapped, but crippled at the devastating blow that hit my mind. I had to point that finger at myself. If I had not slackened off and thought that college was easy, I wouldn’t be here.

To those who are in my shoes and that are new to the college I say this: Do your best your first semester because it means a lot in the long run. Do not take your financial aid money for granted. Take that money and go to the classes that you really would want and would make you happy. Do not slack off and think to yourself that you will do better next time. Because where I am now there is no next time, all I can hope for is that the college considers my appeal and allows me a second chance. There is no worse feeling than knowing that you may be taken out of college because you royally screwed yourself from the beginning. Please take my advice and do good and if you’re not happy with the classes you took, go to your counselor and get out of them quickly before you’re in my shoes.

Aurora Proves To Warn

David Gomez
Co-editor

We have given our condolences to tragedies of this kind before, and the public’s reaction never skips a beat. But reincarnated in this context and whether that reality would have been a more positive outcome.

One should not waste time on the suicide aspect but the article neglects that should have been abandoned long before the Aurora shooting in Tucson, Arizona. Contrary to the statements of Gov. Mitt Romney and President Obama, there is nothing “shocking” about the shooting; some say this was, in a way, expected.

This is because loose gun laws permit, not prevent, tragedies of this kind. As many gun law supporters push for even looser restrictions, it is necessary to analyze the Aurora incident in this context and whether that reality would have been a more positive outcome.

“Criminals don’t care about laws,” people say if criminals don’t care about laws, why not expand the Second Amendment? The best way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun. And just knowing there’s a good guy with a gun around—a cop, a guard, a soldier, and yes, a law abiding citizen with a gun—makes us feel safer because we are safer.

The second amendment is often presented by gun law supporters as an infallible and absolute doctrine; but of course that’s why we need more freedom and a lot less government. That’s why our Second Amendment rights should be expanded, not diminished. And that’s why, right here in this hall today, I call on Congress and every state legislature to empower the American people to ensure their own safety by enacting legislation to grant all law-abiding Americans the right to carry a firearm for personal protection.

The second amendment is often presented by gun law supporters as an infallible and absolute doctrine; but of course the authors of the Constitution weren’t ignorant of the inevitable need to refine or add amendments over time.

I’m not sure how safe LaPierre thinks this world would be if everyone owned a gun, but the reality is, this gun law assigns to every protected victim of gunfire. They have a better chance of benefiting those intending to inflict harm on people — one only has to choose from a list of new-tainted names to prove it.

When planning to commit mass murder, James Holmes did need to search for any loopholes to acquire weapons, and the Internet acted solely as a middleman. Trigger-ready explosives planted back in his apartment, he walked into the theater complex not with a gun he found in his father’s closet, but with an assault rifle, a 12-gauge shotgun, two semiautomatic pistols and in full SWAT gear — protective helmet, vest, leggings and gloves. It seems as though gun restrictions couldn’t get much milder.

If you sleep in class you won’t pass.

OPINIONS AND EDITORIALS

SEPTEMBER 2012
VOLUME 20 ISSUE 1
THE TORCH

ASSAULT RIFLES COVER THE DISPLAY WALL AT CHEAPER THAN DIRT IN NORTH FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Photo by Anthony Sganga

Photo courtesy of sxc.hu
The end of the 2012 spring semester brought along renovating changes for the Judith K. Winn School of Honors and its supporting student club, the Honors Association.

As the semester came to an end, the newly elected president of the Executive Board, Steven Chung, was eager to start working with his fellow board members. Working throughout the summer would allow for all the semester’s events to be planned before the new semester started.

Besides the planning and scheduling of events during meetings, (deleted words)which take place during summer vacation, the members of the fall 2012 Executive Board and Advisory Board worked on creating a new logo to represent the School of Honors and the Honors Association. Based on a design approved by the previous Executive Board, a final draft was made and taken to a graphic designer to give the logo a final and professional touch.

Previous to this, the official inauguration of the School of Honors and its newly renovated office took place on Mar. 3, with the presence of students, faculty, and Dr. Judith K. Winn. Active between the years 1995 and 2007, Dr. Winn was a former president of Bergen Community College. Previously called the Honors Program, the School of Honors was named after Dr. Winn in the spring of 2011.

Soon after the inauguration ceremony, the Honors Association Executive Board elections took place presenting a new selection of students to lead the events and activities regarding the School of Honors throughout the 2012 fall semester. Following the elections, all honors students present were invited to sign up as members of the Honors Association’s Advisory Board. Later, students were also offered Executive Board Assistant positions in order to give as many students as possible an opportunity to actively participate in the Honors Association.

For more information on how to become a member of the School of Honors or how to join the Honors Association, students can feel free to stop by the Honors Office located in room A-336 of the Pitkin Education Center. Secretary Patrice Lenowitz, who was one of the founders and the first president of the Honors Association, is always more than happy to offer her assistance. The office is also available to honors students to study and receive academic counseling and mentoring with the Honors Counselor, Professor Michael Feder.

Events initiated by the Honors Association this upcoming fall semester will include lectures/Q&A sessions with honors professors, lectures by student faculty on a wide range of intriguing topics, information sessions with representatives from New York University and Columbia University, and, best of all, an actual trip to NYU in October. For more details on events, visit www.bergen.edu/honors, or visit the honors office.

The Judith K. Winn School of Honors welcomes all students to the campus, and hopes that you will not be afraid of taking a small step at challenging your capacities and take at least one honors course. Don’t be afraid of becoming an honors student (if you are not already one). There is nothing to lose but only to gain from the experience!

With the flexible scheduled hours, students can stop by at any time during the week to check what books are available. Most times students find what they need. This event has gained much success, as many books have profit from it. Students can socialize amongst themselves and discuss the professors they took and how often textbooks were used. This can aid the expectations and doubts of incoming freshmen regarding the usage of materials in their present or upcoming classes.

In many ways this event is not just one about books and saving money, but of getting vital first-hand information and making new friends. This is definitely an event that students should not miss for anything. Given that the start date is right around the corner, start brushing off the dust from those old books sitting on the shelf and prepare your best selling tactics.

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3. It’s Not THAT Bad

Of all the places you could be stuck at for a morning or afternoon, Bergen Community College isn’t that bad. The financial aid office is now conveniently located in the brand-new Student Center, which is filled with plenty of seating, clean facilities, Wi-Fi access and charging stations, and even two restaurants. Come in, grab a ticket, and get some work done on your laptop while you munch on some pizza or sip an iced coffee. Before you know it, your number will be next and you’ll be on your way to accomplishing your goal, and all on a full stomach.

If sitting around just isn’t an option, then this might be the perfect time to walk around and visit our beautiful campus. Complete with four separate buildings, a state-of-the-art library, and a fully accessible bookstore, Bergen’s Paramus campus is where you can get all you school-related errands done while you wait. This may include last-minute class registrations, book and supply purchases, or just getting acquainted with the environment.

See? That’s not so bad. Looking back now, you may almost forget what you were so nervous or frustrated about.

Becoming aware is the first step to solving the mystery that is financial aid, and hopefully, with the help of this handy guide, you will be prepared to face one of RCC’s toughest feats. Best of luck!

Your Honorable Update

Norman Shafto
Staff Writer

The Torch Head Says:

Please Be a Part of my Team!

We have openings for:

Ad Manager
News Reporters
Sports Journalists
Creative Writers
Poets

Add us on Facebook: facebook.com/bergentorch
Follow us on Twitter: @TorchHeadSays

Photographers
Cartoonists
Graphic Designers
Web Designers

You do receive compensation. But we need your PASSION!

How To Successfully Navigate Throughly Financial Aid

Continued from page 1
Imagine yourself in class or at work. Picture the daily routine, then suddenly you get the call. For some the call is an opportunity, for others it can be a chilling fear. I can not speak on behalf of other service branch reserves, but for a majority of reserve Marines I know, the call to war is an opportunity to serve our country proudly, gain an experience, meet new brothers and have the chance to do something that most people cannot bear to think of.

Now, my everyday life would go like this; I would wake up at 5 a.m., work out till about 6:30, go to work at 7, and by 4 p.m. I would rush to school and use any spare time to do homework assignments, catch up with friends and go to class. I did this Monday through Friday and depending on the week it was; on the weekend I would go to my reserve center to fulfill my duty as a reservist. It is a tough schedule to maintain and at times you manage to impress yourself.

Let us return to point about the call. I got the call from my Staff Sergeant asking me if I wanted to activate. Truth be told I missed the first call and heard her voice mail, I called her back and said yes before she could say anything. At that point I had about two weeks to get ready for my groups activation. School was coming to an end and I was preparing to put my job on hold. I felt lucky that I really didn’t have to drop school, but on other occasions one might not have that luxury.

Well needless to say my activation date came up, and I officially made the jump from civilian to active duty Marine. It is drastic change, especially when it involves a deployment.

There is plenty of work and training to do, as well as paperwork to prepare, documents to fill out, and doctors to go see. My MOS (Marine Occupational Specialty), or my job is a mechanic. I have the privilege to work with our beloved vehicles. I specialize in the HMMWV (Humvee) and the Mk 23 dubbed the “7 Ton.”

There is always something to do around the motor pool and it keeps things exciting for me since I am only able to do it one weekend a month. Now I do work the motor pool every day while it is a more demanding schedule, I still enjoy the active duty lifestyle.

For all my other service branch members in school keep up the good work and to my Marines in school stay strong, Semper Fidelis. I look forward to writing again about my experience as an active duty Marine, take care and have a great semester everyone.
Discover your

Over 50 clubs to choose from!

Do you like school sports?

No

Are you an indoor or outdoor person?

Indoor

Video-games

Comic-Con

Outdoor

Would you rather play video games or join a charitable cause?

Join cause

Outgoing

Shy

Take a picture

Great at the TV

S.P.A.R.K.

Anime

Torch

S.P.A.R.K. stands for Students Practicing Acts of Random Kindness and is an anti-bullying organization. Its mission is to help others deal with the effects of bullying as well as to help raise awareness for the cause.

This club involves the love of anime, manga, video-games, cosplaying (costume role-playing), and so much more. These people are energetic, friendly, and creative.

The Torch is a student run newspaper. You enjoy writing or taking pictures and are organized and ambitious, and enjoy putting your creativity and investigative skills to good use.
Illustration by Jamie Kurtz

Contact Student Life (A115) for Club info

Do you have spirit?
Yes

Are you into politics?
No

Washington D.C.

Yes

Who is your favorite Superhero?
Superman

In class, you prefer to...
Write essays

Debate

Awesome lighting & background

Work in groups

S.A.B.

The Student Activities Board runs all the events on campus. These people are energetic, organized, and love to plan events to help keep the campus alive and entertained.

Theatre

The theatre club is devoted to the drama arts. These people are energetic, animated, and love to perform and be the center of attention.

S.G.A.

The Student Government Association is a political club that helps the student body. They act as the mediator between the administration and the students.
Sex Columnist
Nita Lim

Considering a recent study has found the highest rates of teen pregnancy and births in the western industrialized world," with a staggering 34% of young women getting pregnant at least once before reaching 20 years of age (eight in ten of said pregnancies were cited as unintentional), now may be the time to control teenage pregnancy.

According to a study by the Guttmacher Institute, the rate of teen pregnancies is 20 years of age (eight in ten of said pregnancies were cited as unintentional), now may be the time to control teenage pregnancy.

Sex is everywhere these days... Texting helps make your relationship with someone first; especially if there's a time... texting helps make your relationship with someone first; especially if there's a time...

A Ihrem Arrowhead diabetes educator... features make the effort to physically own up to what is being said.

One of the major problems with this approach is its avoidance of the advantages of contraception. If the temperature is right and the pool is open (wink-wink),

when the desire to swim is strong, teens are gonna want a dip, right? “This new study make it crystal clear...”

The Obama administration has shifted away from abstinence-only programs... The US sees teen sexuality as a part...

It shows the dualities in message content... and not too thick.

One of the great ways to spice up the relationship and keep the flame of being ready.”

Flirtexting with your boo however does not always have to be dirty either. There are many ways to show your special someone how much you care and want them without revealing any sexual photos or explicit text messages. Suggestions from MSNBC are as followed: randomly texting him/her “I love you” or “I’m crazy about you” is a quick simple way to make them smile. Or sending a picture of your bed with a caption like “wish you were laying next to me” or “room for two?”

This must be stated nevertheless that sexting is in fact a decision to be made by mature adults in serious relationships. It is refreshing to hear that in December 2011 a study published in the journal Pediatrics (found in an article of the Huffington Post) found that teen sexting was not as prevalent as had been previously reported. The study found that 1 percent of children aged 8 to 12 were engaging in “adult” communication and that new data indicates adults between 18-29 and 30-49 are the larger audience doing it.

Color courtesy of mctcampus.com

Keeping the Flame Alive While Being Miles Apart

Shake It Up!

The Shake Shack, located at 691 8th Ave, New York City, really shakes up the crowd with its appetizing and affordable food. Although the Shake Shack has many locations throughout New York City (Battery Park, Madison Square Park, etc.), this one located right in Times Square has become increasingly popular. It is less than a 5 minute walk from Port Authority and has a very easy commute from BCC. The 163 leaves you off within walking distance from the Shack.

Besides convenience, the food is very well prepared! I ordered the Shack Burger, fries, and chocolate shake and my bill only came out to $11.20 (but you can easily substitute the shake for a fresh squeezed lemonade or fresh brewed iced tea and remain under $10). The Shack Burger contained a soft bbble roll with lettuce, tomato, cheese, and the infamous shack sauce. Although I could not get the secret inside the sauce, it complimented the perfectly tempered beef amazingly. Not a big meat fan? They also have a vegetarian “Shroom Burger that was delicious as well. I didn’t miss the meat at all! The fries were also prepared well, not too crunchy or too soft. The only complaint I can make is that my shake was a little too chocolatey, though the consistency was great, very creamy and not too thick.

This charming restaurant is the ideal place for any college student on a budget! Keep in mind, with the high demand, it may take a while to get to your seat. Ordering and waiting to pick up my food was a 20 minute process. It was worth it since the price and quality made up for it.

Color courtesy of aget.com

Too Much Teen Pregnancy?

MSNBC, “Sexting is especially beneficial in long-distance relationships. The need for sexting when heights are near is not around one another.” It’s an easy solution that can be rather effective... says the 209 x 397 pixel image in the story.

In a study by sociologist Dr. Amy Schalet, interviews were conducted with random participants from both the United States, the country with the lowest: “The US sees...

Sexting has its place in a relationship... Texting helps make your relationship... especially if there’s a time...

According to an article from MSNBC, “Sexting is especially beneficial in long-distance relationships. The need for sexting when heights are near is not around one another.” It’s an easy solution that can be rather effective. According to researches these differing attitudes, and

Sex Columnist
Nita Lim

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When the desire to swim is strong, teens are gonna want a dip, right? “This new study make it crystal clear...”

The Obama administration has shifted away from abstinence-only programs... The US sees teen sexuality as a part...
10 Things: I Wish I Had Known My First Semester
Antonella Sielicki
Features Editor

1. Know that community college does not mean it is any less of an institution for higher education. For us BCC students, we are incredibly lucky to have such a fine school to attend for the fraction of the price of starting at a 4-year university. Do not beat yourself up because you are, “stuck going to community college,” whether it is for financial, academic, or various other reasons.

2. Do not underestimate all that Bergen has to offer. There is a tutoring center, a math center, and a writing center. Those are there to help you succeed. Not to mention, all the events that are hosted as well as trips offered are designed for the students to take advantage of.

3. Think about doing a part-time job from the start. Almost everyone will change it at least once, and if you are not sure about it, pick something general and be open to trying everything. You will not know what you want to spend your life doing until you experience different things.

4. Grades and homework are important, but do not do nothing. Displaying leadership and passion are going to be what gets you to your dream job someday, so do not hate yourself after a bad grade. But be sure to learn from your mistakes as to many may dictate where your college career will take you in a negative light.

5. Make the effort to get involved in something, anything at Bergen. My first semester at Bergen were incredibly lonely, being that all my high school friends were away at college. After joining the newspaper, I met others that shared my interests, and trust me, school is a lot more fun when you have friends around. With over 60 clubs and Division III sports, there is literally something for everyone.

6. Take advantage of office hours, and make the effort to get to know your professors. Not only will it help you understand the material, that professor will remember you down the line when you need a recommendation. Do not be just another student to them.

7. Make your schedule around when you will perform best. If that means you are not a morning person, do not punish yourself with an 8:00 am class. In college, you get a much larger amount of freedom; use it wisely.

8. Challenge, but do not renege on yourself. Do not take on more than you can commit to or handle, but do leave room for new opportunities.

9. Do not be scared to make mistakes or fail at something. That is the only way you learn, and right now, the world is at your feet. Every mistake is a lesson.

10. The person you will be when you leave BCC for the last time will be a very different one than when you started. Let yourself change and grow. Keep your mind open, to the people, the classes, perspectives, anything. Do not close it, even if you do not agree. Right now is your time to shine. The world is at your feet, you just have to go after it.

The List: Things to Do Before You Graduate
Try to do as many of these before you walk out BCC’s doors with your degree in hand.

College is a passing time in your life; may as well make the best of it as you can.

- Try something you would never have before.
- Take a class that is completely different than your major.
- Join a club or sport.
- Try out for a play.
- Ask for help.
- Make use of the tutoring center.
- Befriend a professor.
- Go on a weekend trip, completely spur of the moment.
- Look at the stars through the telescope in the Technology building.
- Go to eat at the Bergen Room, (the fine dining restaurant put on by the culinary students).
- Go to school in pajamas, and be okay with it.
- Declare a personal mental health day.
- Once or twice in your college career, be irresponsible the night before a test and go out.
- Ask someone on a date.
- Write a personal bucket list, one for before thirty, and one before you die.
- Date someone you wouldn’t normally.
- Fail a test, and survive.
- Take lots of pictures.
- Read a book a month.
- Enjoy how good you look right now- you won’t be as hot in 10 years.
- Take a class at the Meadowlands campus.
- Keep playlists of the music you like right now. Years from now, they’ll bring you back to these moments.
- Speak in front of a crowd.
- Befriend a random person in one of your classes.
- Study abroad.
- Hear one of the notable speakers who come to campus.
- Fall in love. Fall out of love. Fall in love again.
- Get an internship.
- Ride a bike through campus. (That’s what those racks outside public safety are for!)
- Have a picnic outside the student center.
- Get a work study job on campus.
- Write an article for the Torch, and get it published.
- Take a picture with the Bulldog.
- Full an all-nighter.
- Graduate from Bergen Community College.

How to Have a Life in College, and Still Be Successful
Antonella Sielicki
Features Editor
As an editor of The Torch, and a full-time student holding two jobs, I know what it’s like to be swamped. People have a lot of extra courses or two, or being involved in a sport or club, students have a lot expected of them, and sometimes there just isn’t the time. Or so it seems.

There are ways to manage it, so that you have time for yourself, and accomplish everything you want to do.

First, you must want it, and identify why you want it. Is it an extra class you are taking, so that you’ll be ahead? Do you have to work in order to support yourself comfortably? You must have a reason behind it; you will just be comfortable? You must have a reason behind it; you will just be comfortable? You must have a reason behind it; you will just be comfortable? You must have a reason behind it; you will just be comfortable?

Get a calendar, and actually use it. Even if a paperback planner isn’t appealing to you, use your phone. All smartphones come with a calendar, and if you have access to an app store, there are many free ones you can use.

Plan ahead. As much as us college students like to say we’re surprised when a big paper is due, we’re usually not and teachers will lay it out for you from the beginning. At the beginning of the semester, put everything into a calendar and reminders as it gets closer. Big research paper due at the end of the semester? Make a plan from the start, and divide it up to do a little bit each week. When finals come, you’ll have a lot more time to devote to studying, and less to stressing about the paper.

Another way I’ve found to manage everything is making to-do lists. Every night, make a list of what you need to accomplish the following day, and when you will have time to do it. Those three hours in between classes you usually go home to sleep? Reserve it for your homework in the library. This will keep you from getting overwhelmed.

Seeing it laid out on paper, and assigning time for each of them will keep you accomplished and less stressed. And when you get it all done, reword yourself, without the stress of worrying what else there is to do.

All that said, definitely give yourself time to have fun. If something isn’t working for you, do something about it. In college, yes, a student has responsibilities, but this is the time for you to thrive. These years are the best of your life; you shouldn’t waste them being stressed constantly.

Features Editor

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The person you will be when you leave BCC for the last time will be a very different one than when you started. Let yourself change and grow. Keep your mind open, to the people, the classes, perspectives, anything. Do not close it, even if you do not agree. Right now is your time to shine. The world is at your feet, you just have to go after it.
Innumerable Shades of Banality

David Gomez
Co-Editor

I thought about not even admitting that I picked it up in the first place.

Fifty Shades of Grey by E.L. James, had only been recognizable to me the same way almost anything popular that is making money is streamlined into your head somehow. I decided to go into it with the name and popularity being the only things I knew of the recently released bestseller; had I known what I knew now prior to reading it, I can't say I would have bothered with it.

Optimism of my ignorance most likely prevailed due to a regrettable faith in the majority and authority; "#1 New York Times Bestseller," "A GoodReads Choice Awards Finalist For Best Romance," over ten million copies sold within the first few weeks of its release. But a repellent could be the fact that the Fifty Shades trilogy is a fanfiction of the Twilight series, or simply that it is an erotic fiction book, or just read a few pages.

It seems so obvious to me that the book is unworthy of mass publication; I would have to look at anyone who argues in favor of it with squinted eyes and a slanted head. If it is the case that one simply enjoys the name and popularity being the only things on their side, then it would seem that it is an erotic fiction book, or just read a few pages.

So if it is not literature then what is it? Frankly, I would not consider the book unworthy of mass publication; I would have to look at anyone who argues in favor of it with squinted eyes and a slanted head.

When reading novels, we’re forced to notice the depth and weight of voice, a unique style and a grasp of knowledge so tight that it can be fluently transcribed. Due to the fact that cliches are phrases that are overused, and therefore require no individual thought, the artistic requirement of literature is not filled when they are used.

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I've been waiting for this party all week!
Chuck, promise me you won't get inebriated and embarrass me.

I won't embarrass you, Sarah.

You'll notice I didn't say I won't get inebriated!

But seriously, what would you say seems longer? The wait for football season...

Or the wait for the third season of my little pony: friendship is magic?

I say the wait for this conversation to be over.

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MBL 2012 Playoff Preview
Karim G. Daif
Copy Editor

The summer heat has officially died down and there are less than fifty games left in the Major League Baseball season. It’s safe to say the MLB just skyrocketed in interest and is definitely in it’s prime for exciting late inning drama as every last pitch, catch, and run could break a legendary playoff run.

Baseball is a highly coveted sport, especially in North America. However, with 162 games in the regular season, it can be hard for even the biggest fans to keep up with every game. But that is in big part the explanation of why the end of the regular season and post season is must see TV.

As the 2011 defending champion St. Louis Cardinals proved last year, seeding doesn’t matter as much as the heart of a winner. St. Louis barely made the playoffs, limping in on a few crucial late wins in the end of their season to solidify their playoff birth. But once in, they quickly dominated the playoffs, limping in on a few cases as a career ender for pitchers around the league for years.

In the National League, the buzz can’t stay away from the Washington Nationals ace pitcher, Steven Strasburg, and his manager’s decision to shut him down after he reaches his pitch count limit for the season. The Nationals have never made the playoffs and until this year, have been DC’s loseable losers.

But with the team seemingly coasting into the playoffs the possibility of a legitimate postseason run maybe worth the risk. With the emergence of their roof top phenom Bryce Harper, the Nationals could be the team to beat. Yet the team wants to limit his pitches because Strausburg Washington’s number one overall pick in the 2009 MLB draft, came off Tommy John surgery which has been known to be in all too many cases as a career ender for pitchers around the league for years.

Watch for National League games to come with plenty of drama as seeding is as tight as it gets. Don’t count out the wily old veterans in Atlanta as the Braves will be the underdog to watch out for coming out of this league.

But wait, did someone say Tebow? As the offensive headaches were quelled with Tebow’s publicity, the New York Jets look to take back the crown of New York and began their run to the Super Bowl with Mark Sanchez calling the shots at quarterback. Much was made of the trade to bring last year’s Denver Broncos starting quarterback Tim Tebow to back up Mark Sanchez. Yet with a new offensive coordinator in Tony Sparano, who practically made wildcard a standard offense, gang green looks to surprise defenses all over the league and use the run game to get them back to an AFC Championship Game.

With a depleted receiving core, the Jets will need to milk the ground game and try to utilize Tebow’s athleticism to create for positive offense. Head Coach Rex Ryan will be calling the plays on defense this season so watch out for heavy blitzes, especially from newly acquired safeties Yeremiah Bell and Laron Landry.

While the Buffalo Bills looking much improved, the AFC East will be extremely competitive and may very well be the hardest division in football. But don’t tell that to anybody in Philadelphia as they look to get over the “dream team” slump and get back to business. The NFL is geared to have a competitive and surprising season on all fronts; let’s just hope the party stays in New York.

Leaves begin to change color and summer shorts turn into school sweats. Students of all ages begin going back to school and the calendar says September. This can only mean one thing: Football is back!

Back with a vengeance I might add. As the doors open September 5 at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, the New York Giants will begin their quest to defend their fourth Super Bowl Championship against the visiting Dallas Cowboys. With another fairy tale run under their already accomplished wings, what else is left for the Giants? Repeat! defend their championship and dominate the regular season; something they have never done in the same season.

Under the guidance of head coach Tom Coughlin, gang blue has never had a dominant or regular season team. In fact, reports circulating around the Giants camp indicated that if not for the miraculous run in 2007 that led to an incredible Super Bowl win, Coughlin was certainly on the hot seat and likely would have been fired. Although signing a two year extension is nice, nothing in New York is guaranteed, especially when losing becomes a common practice. Let’s hope the fans can come out strong and make another run at a championship.

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