

## Lyric Theatre Presents *An Evening of Three Pieces*

HALEY TREVINO  
Regular Contributor

This Thursday, Friday, and Saturday Houghton's Lyric Theatre will be presenting *An Evening of Three Pieces*, a collection of two operas and a musical: *The Worst One Ever* by Gary Belshaw; *Gallantry* by Douglas Moore; and *Ordinary Days* by Adam Gwan.

*The Worst One Ever* is a short comedy piece that revolves around three college girls in their dorm complaining about the men in their lives. "It's really funny, relatable, and dramatic," remarked lead actress, Danielle Ferris ('22), who plays a girl complaining about her professor.

*Gallantry* is another short piece with an ironic twist. It is an opera in which a televised production unfolds before the audience's eyes, from actors assuming their roles on the stage to comedic commercial breaks. "I think the audience is going to laugh from start to finish," said Director Amanda Cox ('01).

Finally, *Ordinary Days* by Adam Gwan will round off the night with a slice of life from New York City, following the relationships of four very different people. "Our audience can expect laughter and tears from this one," Cox said. "It's a really beautiful piece about life



COURTESY OF HOUGHTON LYRIC THEATRE FACEBOOK

Director Amanda Cox observes a rehearsal.

and humanity and how our lives intertwine and how our past and present experiences inform how we behave towards one another and how we can learn from one another."

This will be Cox's sixth production for Houghton College. Past performances include the comedy *The Marriage of Figaro* by Mozart and *Songs for a New World* by Jason Robert Brown. Cox's vision for Lyric Theatre reveals her passion for her work. "We want to make sure what we're doing as ac-

tors is to the glory of God and that we're finding our identity as children of God. What we're trying to do is something that's greater than ourselves, trying to show people pieces of God's character through the art that we create. How we do on the stage, how well we perform, that doesn't define us. So we can sit in that space of knowing we're beloved and not have to feel like we have to prove ourselves."

Danielle Ferris recalled *Songs for a New World* as the

impetus to join Lyric Theatre. "I saw [*Songs for a New World*] and I was inspired. I knew I wanted to be a part of this." Caleb Durant ('22), one of the lead actors in *Gallantry*, was drawn to Lyric Theatre by his love of theater and has since enjoyed the community Lyric Theatre has provided. "Everyone's really wonderful and really supportive," he said. "In theater it's normal to have competition and the people you're competing with will try to bring you down and make you feel bad

### ★ Correction ★

The November 8 article "Residence Life Undergoes Major Restructuring" incorrectly referred to Michael Earle as the ARD of Roth. He is Roth's Graduate Assistant Area Coordinator; Ryan Burrichter is the ARD.

about yourself, but it doesn't happen here." Ferris also commented on the unity of the cast, "Lyric Theatre is super fun but challenging. The whole cast is extremely nice, amazing, hard-working people, great to work with. It helps me grow as a person." Cox also praised the work of her performers: "Houghton students are wonderful. They are so willing to be brave and vulnerable on stage and they are so encouraging to one another."

Lyric Theatre will perform Thursday, November 14 at 7pm, Friday, November 15 at 7pm, and Saturday, November 16 at 2pm and 7pm. Tickets are \$5 for students and may be purchased online or at the Campus Center. Each performance will be held in the Center for the Arts Recital Hall. ★

## National College Admissions Ethical Guidelines Revised

JOHANNA FLOREZ

The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), of which Houghton College is a member, recently changed its ethics guidelines to allow more competition among member schools.

The change comes in response to an investigation launched in 2017 against NACAC by the Justice Department, and the threat of potential litigation. NACAC's ethics guidelines discouraged colleges from pursuing students after May 1—according to the Wall Street Journal, the guidelines stated, "Once students have committed themselves to a college, other colleges must respect that choice and cease recruiting them." The guidelines also barred colleges from offering extra incentives (such as special housing options or financial aid packages) to students who apply through binding early decision programs. Finally, they discouraged member

## MercySeat Hosts 24 Hour Worship Event



COURTESY OF MERCY SEAT FACEBOOK

Students worship at The Cry.

VICTORIA HOCK  
Regular Contributor

For 24 uninterrupted hours, MercySeat will be hosting Houghton College's biannual worship event, The Cry, from 7pm Saturday to 7pm Sunday in the Van Dyk Lounge.

This unique event, held once every semester, is 24 hours of non-stop worship through prayer, song, art, and fellowship. The hope for this event is

that it will create "an intentional place of worship during a busy time in the semester." Vivian Rivers, MercySeat Public Relations Director, also added that "The Cry is a time for relaxation, reflection, and reconnecting with God. It's also a time to join with the Houghton community in fellowship."

Both MercySeat President, Karissa Esala, and Rivers have been involved with MercySeat

and the planning of The Cry since their first years at Houghton. They both expressed enthusiasm about the event, especially based on the success of previous years. Rivers said "The feedback has been pretty positive, and people think it's a lot of fun," both of them also mentioned that they love how unique and different the event is every time.

## LEGO League Engages Youth in STEM

ELISE KOELBL

The LEGO League is fast-approaching on our campus. This weekend, on Saturday November 16, Houghton is once again welcoming children and their families to take part in fun LEGO related activities during this event.

But what is the LEGO League? Elayne Stewart, one of the coordinators of this event, shed light on the activities: "The LEGO League has been running for about fifteen years, and it encourages its participants from ages nine to sixteen to work together in teams to solve real-world problems. The teams use STEM concepts—students overcome the same challenges that face scientists today. They develop critical-thinking and presentation skills, build self-confidence in STEM, and have a ton of fun while working as part of a team."

Stewart has been with the program since the events first



# WiFi Updated; Challenges Being Surmounted

BURTON BREWSTER  
Regular Contributor

The IEEE 802.11x on campus, also known as WiFi, was updated this fall semester—much to the surprise of the students.

For many, the decision seemed strange considering how the internet services on campus from years past seemed quite adequate. In the words of Renee Miller (‘20), “It was fine! Why did they change it?”

Seth Taylor (‘99) and Erin Bard (‘11) are the Senior Network Administrator and Network Administrator respectively, jobs which encompass many things, including the wired networks on campus, the college’s internet connection, the email systems, and of course the WiFi. In an interview with both Taylor and Bard, it was explained, “Every year we re-evaluate... which systems need to be replaced or upgraded. In late 2018 our analysis identified the Wi-Fi network as

a system that was due for a major overhaul.” There were a number of reasons for this conclusion though, as they continued, “Most of our hardware was starting to age; 82% of our Wi-Fi access points were manufactured in 2010 or 2011, and were no longer going to be receiving software or security updates after August 2019. However to get support [for the newer technology], we needed to replace all the physical devices across campus that transmit the Wi-Fi signal; the access points.”

The network that Houghton had previously purchased was from the company Cisco, and while Cisco did have updated models, according to the Administrators, “the cost was going to increase severalfold.” As a result, it was decided that a new WiFi vendor needed to be found. The final candidate was a company known as Aerohive.

According to Taylor and Bard, “They had a reputation for good equipment, great

support, and were innovators in the Wi-Fi field; we also found that many other small colleges and universities were using Aerohive, including other Council for Christian College & University (CCCU) schools. By far our favorite feature offered exclusively by Aerohive was their Private Pre-Shared Key (PPSK) which allows each student, employee, or guest to connect to the Wi-Fi network using just a password.”

This feature of Aerohive WiFi has been met with some criticism. “Occasionally, my devices will drop off the internet and they won’t want to connect for a while. Then I’ll have to reinsert the PPSK password they gave us,” says Louis Schriver (‘22). “When my family comes to visit they do not like the new WiFi. For example, my dad’s phone refuses to connect even when he plugs in the guest passcode they gave him. He’s had to make two different guest accounts because they just don’t work.”

Over the summer, 240 access points were replaced and 34 new ones were added. And although testing over the summer yielded no issues, about two weeks into the fall semester complaints were starting to be filed. “We sent out a campus wide survey to find out how widespread the problems were.” Explained Taylor and Bard, “We had over 300 responses within 24 hours, far exceeding the response rate of previous surveys.” Most responses were negative so the Administrators immediately contacted Aerohive asking for support. Each suggestion from Aerohive on how to fix the internet turned up flat however. It was only when reaching out to other CCCU schools that a solution was discovered. By rolling back to an older version of the software it made the system more stable. “We feel confident that the main problem...was a bug in the latest version of the access point software.”

Even with the major fixes

in the system though, there have been mixed responses. According to Garrett Martin (‘20), “In terms of game speed and trying to load areas it gets laggy at times.” On the other hand, some reception has been optimistic. Jessica Sähler (‘21) says, “I think it’s gotten better. I haven’t run into any problems since then.”

When asked about plans for the future, Taylor and Bard responded, “At this point, based on lack of reported problems, we believe that the network is back to a stable state and that the campus-wide problems have been resolved... We are planning to add additional access points in several buildings next summer.”

In the words of Garrett Martin, “Compared to what [you] get out here in the middle of nowhere, I think it’s the best internet you can get.” ★

## NACAC from page 1

colleges from pursuing transfer enrollments from the previous year’s freshman applicant pool. NACAC removed these policies from the ethics guidelines to relieve the financial burden of the investigation and litigation. (However, individual member schools remain free to hold themselves to similar boundaries.)

The Justice Department’s concerns were that NACAC’s guidelines violated federal antitrust laws and prevented students from getting the best price for their college educations. Without these restrictions in place, colleges could spend all summer competing over candidates—even those who have already paid enrollment deposits elsewhere—and offering them larger and larger scholarships. This could benefit students financially, but could make it more challenging for schools to predict enrollment numbers with the increased likelihood that students might walk away from deposits.

Marianne Loper, the director of Student Financial Services, does not anticipate many students delaying their final college decision beyond the former May 1 deadline. “It is truly to a student’s advantage to get connected to their new community early, begin course selection, correspond with a possible roommate, and mentally prepare for the leap into a specific college so that the transition is as smooth as possible,” she says. “While there are always

some students who do not finalize their decision in the spring, it typically is a disadvantage to wait and can add undue stress.” Without NACAC’s limitations in place, other member colleges might be reaching out to students after they commit to Houghton at the end of high school, but Loper does not expect that this will make a significant impact on the number of students who hold to their initial commitment.

Ryan Spear, Houghton’s Dean of Admission, also does not plan on significantly changing admissions practices to take advantage of the opportunity to offer prospective students special financial perks. He expresses concerns about the culture promoted by prioritizing the lowest tuition bill over commitment to an educational institution. While transferring partway through one’s college career can be valuable to pursue the best educational experience (Spear transferred into Houghton himself), he warns against “chasing a better price tag.” Spear says, “If students are only being compelled to transfer because of financial gimmicks, I don’t think that’s really going to help them in the long term to be best prepared for their career.”

Spear plans on training admissions counselors to build relationships with students as early as ninth or tenth grade, and to be able to “make a strong claim for Houghton if we really do feel like Houghton would be a good fit for that student.” He hopes to equip prospective students with “the best set of ques-

tions to make that decision.” He also hopes to “show that Houghton is a great place to choose because we’re not going to be like other schools that are going to engage in some of the more unsavory practices” which were formerly banned by NACAC.

As for current students, Spear says that they should be aware they might see advertisements to transfer to other NACAC member schools. “I’d be really curious, if they do, to have that information passed along to our office to get a sense for what that looks like,” he says. He also plans to offer students who have definitively chosen to attend Houghton “a step-by-step guide for how to ‘break up’ with your other colleges,” so that other recruitment emails do not crowd out what they need to do to get ready to attend here.

President Mullen says that the NACAC’s concession to the Justice Department’s expectation of a freer college market “increases the pressure [on Houghton] to make the conversation about more than money.” While some NACAC member schools might choose to incentivize students with perks like a cheaper meal plan or a better parking permit, the Houghton administration and staff are instead emphasizing what makes a Houghton education worth more than a less expensive school. Loper says, “Houghton focuses on performing in a Christ-like, ethical manner, and will continue to do so regardless of changes to association policies. Similarly, we have always strived to offer strong, competitive scholar-

ships and grants to our students, and that will remain our goal, in order that new students will also reap the benefits of joining the Houghton family.” ★

## CRY from page 1

“One hour, someone could be rocking out on the drums, and the next, you’re listening to a reading from 1st Samuel,” Rivers stated. She added that this is because every single member of the Houghton community, not just MercySeat members, is encouraged to sign up for an hour-long time slot to sing, lead prayer, read from the Bible or create pieces of art to reflect their love for God. “Sometimes, members of the Houghton community or Houghton faculty members will even sign up to lead an hour of worship,” Esala noted. “You’ll likely hear some things you expected, but also things you may not have expected.”

The event is generally held at a busy time during the semester. Esala explained that “Usually, the event is held closer to finals week, so that students can have this time to have a break from the craziness.” This semester, it’s a bit earlier, since MercySeat wanted as many students to be able to attend as possible.

In the days leading up to The Cry, MercySeat has been holding their nightly worship at each residence hall on campus, as well as at the townhouses. Tonight, to finish off these Nights of Worship, they’ll be in the main lounge of Lambein from 8-9pm.

Both Rivers and Esala would encourage everyone to attend this event at some point during the 24 hours. Or, if you’re feeling adventurous (and running on a lot of sleep), you can take on the challenge Esala mentioned some students have attempted in the past: “Some students have made it their mission to stay the full 24 hours!” ★

## LEGO from page 1

started in Rochester. According to her, the program originally started with just one tournament, but it has since grown to nearly ten tournaments in the region. The LEGO League first came to Houghton nearly a decade ago in 2009.

During the event, there are many fun-filled activities for teams to participate in. Stewart helped to explain the event: “Teams have participated in challenges having to do with building cities, animals, education, water, weather disasters, health and more. Student have to create a research-type science project about the theme and then also program a LEGO robot to maneuver through a set of theme related LEGO object autonomously to score points in a 2.5 minute match. Teams work together to solve real world problems through their research, and learn about programming and having fun!”

The LEGO League will be held on Saturday, November 16, 8am to 5pm in the Reinhold Campus Center. ★

There are 2 issues of the STAR left in the semester!

*If you have been wanting to*

- publish an opinion
- learn to do good journalism
- advertise an event

*Now’s the time!*

*Email us at editor@houghtonstar.com*

# Sustainability Tips

## Are Straws Really the Issue?

JESSE RUCQUOI  
Center for Sustainability Intern

In 2015, marine biologist Christine Figgenger filmed her team removing a plastic straw from a sea turtle’s nose. The video, which currently has over 38 million views on Youtube, went viral, fueling the anti-plastics movement. Individuals mainly focused on straws, advocating for the use of metal or glass substitutes. Companies such as Starbucks and American Airlines joined the movement, working towards eliminating their corporate use of straws. Environmentalists are concerned that businesses and individuals will consider their role in decreasing the use of plastic straws as the only necessary action for a cleaner, more sustainable future.

Of course, plastic straws are a small part of the bigger issue. According to 2017 records from International Coastal Cleanup, plastic straws were the seventh most common item collected. However, plastic wrappers, grocery bags, and water bottles were even more prevalent, being among the top five. According to an article written in Stanford Earth, plastic waste now floats amid ocean current patterns, together covering as much as 40 percent of the ocean’s surface.

But Jesse, you may ask, why should we, as college students living hundreds of miles from the nearest coastline, care about the oceans? As a rising generation of leaders, workers, and consumers, we will continue to experience the effects of climate change at a growing rate. Unstable farming seasons are altering produce availability, natural disasters are becoming more prevalent, and Houghton winters continue to fluctuate as they always have, though becoming progressively warmer. Oceans naturally absorb carbon dioxide, which helps to reduce climate change impacts.

When pollutants, such as single-use plastics, enter these waters, its productivity is stunted.

The oceans also feed us, though not only through seafood. Ingredients from the sea can also be found in foods such as peanut butter and soymilk. This knowledge and the fact that society as a whole has come to rely heavily on plastics explains why the oceans are directly related to our food security and global economy. A study cited by Stanford Earth discovered that microplastics are in about 25 percent of the seafood in our markets. Additionally, microplastics were found in 94 percent of tap water samples in the U.S. and in nearly every brand of bottled water. The irony that we may be consuming the remnants of our trash is unsettling. For this reason, I am ecstatic to know that so many people are committing to use less straws. It is evident that general awareness has grown in recent years about the effects of using non-renewable materials.

My hope is that this popular transition away from plastic straws will be the first step of a more fundamental shift away from single-use plastics overall. As individuals, we can contribute to this global effort by recycling correctly, reusing materials where possible, and buying less overly-packaged goods (such as single-serve snacks). One of the perks of living in a remote location like Houghton is that we are surrounded by local farmers and Amish markets. It is made easy for us to buy our food in bulk, which requires less packaging and saves money! Additionally, if we, as consumers, demand more sustainable practices from larger businesses and corporations such as Target and Walmart, they will eventually have no other option but to invest in these efforts. May we continue to choose healing over hurting when it comes to our relationship with God’s creation.★

# International Voices

## A Slice of Paradise

LUKE HUIZENGA

Living in Cameroon, I was surrounded with missionaries on a daily basis. I lived near them, I went to school with them, I travelled with them, the list goes on. The point is, much of my life overseas was spent among countless staunch Christians. When you find yourself spending most of your time with people who have sacrificed quite a bit, moved to a foreign country, and started a new life all for the sake of bringing the Gospel to strangers, it’s almost impossible to remain uninspired. The longer I was around all these committed followers of God, the more I realized just how beautiful the Holy Spirit’s work can be.

There is something hard to define that occurs when a large group of believers gathers together for a purpose greater than themselves. Suffice to say that I grew in my own faith, pushed by those who would teach me simply by living their lives. I was blessed to be given so many role models at once. If you asked me right now to pick out one or two, it would legitimately take me a minute or two to sort through the names of those who I was always looking up to. I would certainly not be as spiritually mature now (although I still have a ways to go!) without my time in Cameroon. The determination people had for not only preaching faith, but living it out

as well, was infectious.

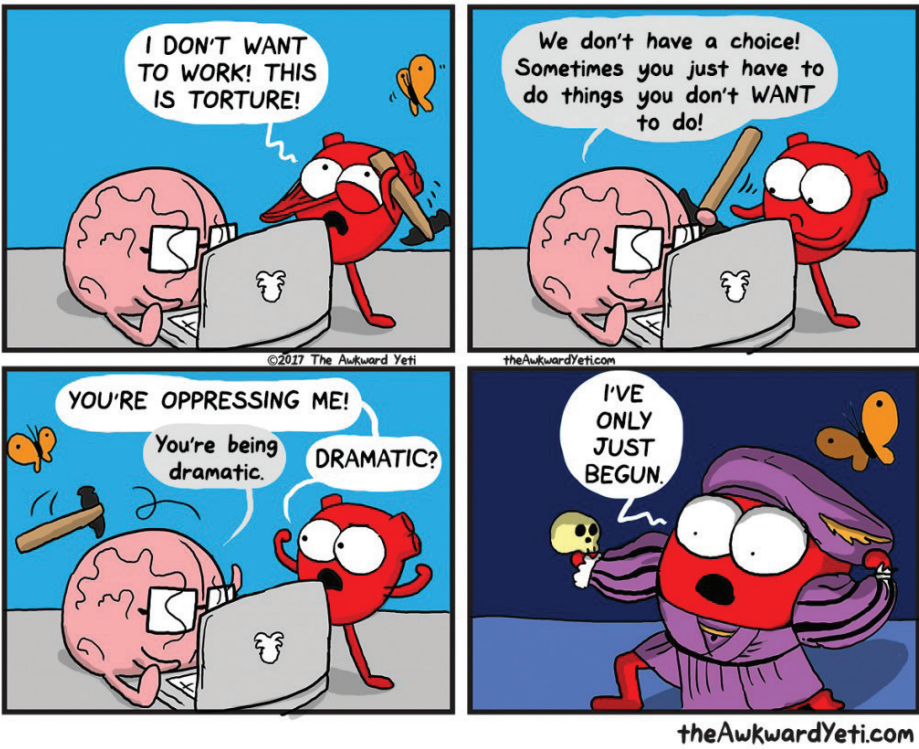
My dad once said to me that he believed our experience was a hint of what the new Earth is going to look like, surrounded by passionate Christians whose ultimate motivation in life is to serve and worship God. He described the mission field as “a slice of paradise.” I like to think he was exactly right: With everyone striving to treat each other as Christ would have treated them, it’s easy to imagine this being even just a glimpse of the perfect future to come.

Now, after spending so much time in Houghton, I have a strong desire to live out that kind of passion here as well. Obviously, Houghton is a radically different environment from where I stayed in Cameroon, but one similarity is that it is a hub for dedicated Christians. After seeing and experiencing some of the same devotion on this campus as well, my hope is that everyone working at and attending Houghton will grow in their love for Christ and be convicted to share that love with those around them. As I meet more people at the college, I see hints of God’s promised future. Now, I encourage those who read this to help me in building Houghton College into a place that gives each person here a chance to encounter that glorious slice of paradise.★

# Comics

## Heart and Brain

NICK SELUK



November 21 | 7:30-8:30 | ChC 211

Eco-Reps Guest  
Speaker:  
Pete Lopez:  
Region 2  
Administrator  
for the EPA

Questions? Email [Marv.Chichester22@hougton.edu](mailto:Marv.Chichester22@hougton.edu)



# What is the Houghton College LECOM Program?

ERIN MAGGIO  
Regular Contributor

The average medical school applicant applies to fifteen schools. With the LECOM program at Houghton College, students only need to apply to one. Houghton College’s affiliation with LECOM, The Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, serves as a bridge for their students interested in dental, pharmacy, or medical school, to gain acceptance to a health professional school. However, rather than applying for school near or at the end of one’s undergraduate studies, as would be normal, one can apply for acceptance into the LECOM program while either still a Houghton College prospective or once already at Houghton before sophomore year.

Once applying to Houghton and the LECOM program, the institutions review the applications. They then notify the applicant of their acceptance to Houghton, and if they have been granted provisional acceptance to the LECOM program. If granted this, the student completes their bachelor’s degree at Houghton College while meeting all the requirements for entering the LECOM program. This then allows them to then



COURTESY OF KATIE DANG

From left to right: Stephen Freire (‘20), Gwen Stokes (‘20), Katie Dang (‘21), and Ronnie Lott (‘21)

enroll right after graduating.

According to Professor Jamie Potter, an assistant professor of biology at Houghton, this program is beneficial to its enrollees because “[Students are] accepted into their program of choice at LECOM without going through the highly competitive, costly, intensive, standard medical/dental/pharmacy application process. [Students are]

also exempt from the requirement for the MCAT exam (for medical school).” This helps to alleviate stress for students later on amidst the busyness and rigors of their junior and senior years of undergraduate studies.

“I no longer had to worry about applications, MCAT testing, or interviews. I have had the opportunity to solely focus on my undergraduate experi-

ence and education instead of the constant pressure that comes with applying to medical school at the end of your undergraduate years,” Ronnie Lott (‘21), a LECOM participant, said. Not only did this mean less worrying for him, but it is allowing him to graduate a year early from Houghton College to attend medical school.

Stephen Freire (‘20) is an-

other student in the LECOM program right now. He emphasized how the program really gave him an upper hand. “The medical school search is really difficult. I have had friends who wanted to go to medical school, who were smarter than me, and still couldn’t get in and didn’t apply with LECOM,” he said.

In order to apply, a student must have an SAT score higher than 1170 or an ACT score higher than 26, as well as a high school grade point average higher than 3.5. Once accepted, as a student at Houghton, one must maintain a 3.4 overall GPA and a 3.2 Science GPA in order to keep their spot in the LECOM medical school class upon graduating. While at Houghton, students must also take certain classes and receive a grade of C or higher in all of them.

Houghton’s affiliation with LECOM is distinctive in its benefits to students. The program allows students to be secure in their future place in LECOM’s medical school programs and allows them to worry less, without the looming fears of the MCAT and medical school applications. ★

# The Mosaic Center’s New Book Club Reads *I’m Still Here*

MARIA MOORE

Each Thursday at 6:15 pm, a group of students and faculty members meet for the Mosaic Center’s new book club. This semester they are reading *I’m Still Here: Black Dignity In A World Made For Whiteness*, written by Austin Channing Brown. The book reveals Brown’s perspective on America’s racial divide and attempts at reconciliation, through an account of her experience as a Christian African American woman in middle-class, white America. Nuk Kongkaw, the Director of the Mosaic Center, explained in an interview that she chose the book because it has a “perspective we don’t often hear from, and is not prevalent on Houghton College’s campus.”

Lecrae, the Grammy award-winning artist and bestselling author of *Unashamed*, reveals the emotional and poignant nature of Austin’s book through his experience with it: “I have laughed, I have held back tears, I have reflected with joy, hope, and hurt while reading. Austin captures perfectly the sentiment of many black people in America. She’s not only telling her story, but she’s also telling our story. Austin is a gift to the body and the culture.”

A typical book club session includes a discussion of selected chapters in the book and questions for analysis, prompting members to think about situations they have encountered like

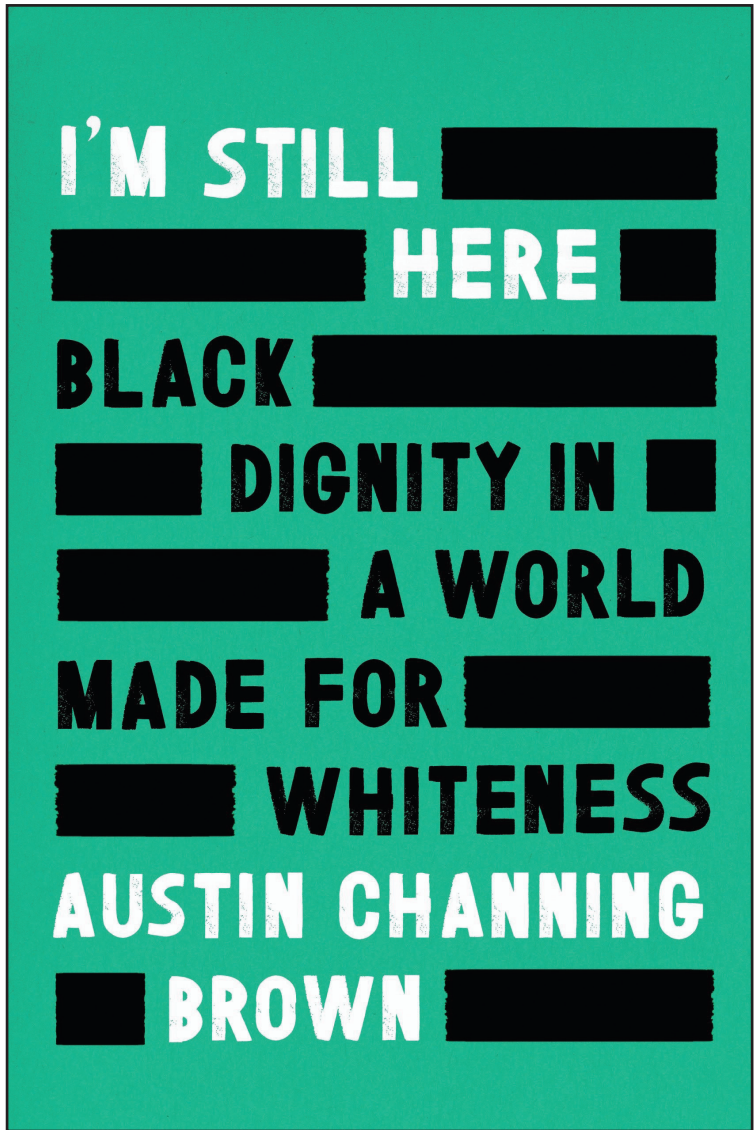
Brown’s. Eunjin Kwak (‘20), an active member of the book club, expressed that the book club provides a “platform for students to have a voice on race issues,” who typically do not feel as comfortable to speak on these issues in different contexts. In complement to this, Kongkaw explained that one aspect of the book club she appreciates is “when people share their own stories and connect with what the writer is saying. Often times when we read other peoples’ perspectives, we find we are not as alone as we think we are, and, in one person being brave to share their story...creates space for more people share.”

The book club is open to anyone in the Houghton College community. Kwak explained how “it is positive to see leaders [and] staff members in the school who are willing to engage in the book club and learn from a different perspective, and apply this to supporting students from all backgrounds in the Houghton Community.”

Lambein Resident Director Beth Phifer is one of those members. She explained in her interview that she “see[s] value in participating in the book club as a staff member;” that, “the book club is an opportunity to remove a sharp distinction of knowledge between staff and students.” As a staff member, she is able to model that she is also a lifelong learner in pursuit of biblical justice, in this case as it applies to race, and still has “so much to

learn.” She also values being in the book club because it allows her to hear from individual students about their personal experiences. Kongkaw also emphasized in her interview how she loves that a book club is an “equalizer,” and removes the power differential that often exists in classrooms that can make it difficult for students to share their perspective or story.

The book club provides a space where students and staff from different cultural backgrounds can come together and address some of the harsh realities of race relations in America, a place to hear from perspectives not often heard from; and also, a platform for students and staff to learn how to support each other both in and beyond the Houghton community. Kongkaw hopes to “continue the book club with books that center around equity, diversity, and inclusion...and work in tandem with Dean Jordan who has offered a book club in previous semesters.” ★



COURTESY OF AMAZON.COM

The cover of the book being studied in the Mosaic Center’s book club.



# New Education Master’s Program Nears End of First Semester

PHOEBE MULLEN  
Regular Contributor

This fall, Houghton launched its Masters of Science in Education degree. The program focuses on children’s literacy and is entirely online. There are four students enrolled—all Houghton grads, and all new teachers. Professor Sunshine Sullivan of the education department conceived of the program a few years ago. She sketched out what she thought it could look like, and then brought the ideas to her colleagues in the education department. Together they talked to recent grads and local schools, and together they explored the idea in order to develop a program proposal. Part of that process surveying other institutions in the area. “There were no Christian liberal arts colleges offering a fully online literacy program,” says Prof. Sullivan. There are a few Christian liberal arts colleges that offer an online program, “But [they have] a residential period. And that can be challenging for some teachers. So what I really wanted to do was develop this [in order for teachers to] finish it in one year right after graduation, or they could take one course at a time. You [can] graduate, start teaching, and take one course at a time, and pay for it in cash.” Houghton’s program is en-



COURTESY OF HOUGHTON.EDU

Professor Sunshine Sullivan, who headed the development of Houghton’s MS Ed program.

tirely online in order to accommodate students who are teaching and attempting to get their masters at the same time. New York state law requires all teachers to have their master’s degree within five years of beginning to teach. Getting their degree on top of a full-time job can be difficult. “I chose Houghton’s program because it was completely online (and therefore flexible), would allow me to be certified in areas of education I was interested in, and would be chal-

lenging,” says Ella Hotchkiss (19’), one of the four students in the new program’s first course. The first course, “Culturally Responsive and Dialogic Pedagogy,” is taught by Prof. Sunshine Sullivan of the education department. In the upcoming spring semester, Prof. Laura Hopkins, associate professor of education, will teach another course. The plan is for the program to be rolled out fully next fall. “I’m going out and meeting

with local school districts, I’m talking with teachers who might want to take a course for their continuing education,” says Prof. Sullivan. She also says she is working to “develop some sort of partnership between the district and our program, to support their on-going professional development needs in the area of literacy.” This is part of an effort to make sure the program is sustainable, because Houghton does not want to teach courses to one student at a time, but also

hopes to serve the community. One of the functions of the program is to create a space for students to support each other in their early years of teaching. The students use Flip Grid, an online service, to post videos for the other students and professors to see. The students are supplied with prompts, which they meant to help them connect their readings with their classroom experiences. After they have posted their initial videos, the students then get a chance to respond to each other. Prof. Sullivan sees this as an integral part of the program. The students have “been able to connect with each other in different ways because now they are teachers. They have full responsibility of their students, and now they have three other people that they know for sure... we can continue to support and challenge each other to stretch beyond what we were able to do at the undergrad level.” Hotchkiss has had a good experience, and appreciates the support from her professor. “I think it’s a learning experience for all of us. I’ve still been struggling to balance classwork and my teaching job and everything else but we’re all figuring it out.” ★

Oh look.  
Another empty space.  
Even if you only have time to write a couple hundred words, you can still contribute to filling this newspaper with high quality content and keeping the campus informed.  
To get involved, email us at [editor@houghtonstar.com](mailto:editor@houghtonstar.com)  
Don't be boring. Join the STAR team!

## PHOTO OF THE WEEK

From the biology department’s Facebook page.  
(Follow them)  
It’s a dragonfly on a pretty leaf.



*You have lovely pictures, and we’d love to see them!  
Send them to us at [editor@houghtonstar.com](mailto:editor@houghtonstar.com) and we’ll try to publish them!*



# The Middle of Nowhere: Highlander Territory



COURTESY OF CALEB FESMIRE

BRIANNA ENGLER

While visiting Houghton, many will exclaim how beautiful campus and the surrounding area are. Most current students, however, constantly complain, and I am not exempt from this, about the fact that Houghton “is in the middle of nowhere.” Where does this disconnect come from? I believe that we take for granted where our campus is located. The Houghton experience is *enhanced* by our rural location, not diminished. Odds are that most of us will not end up

living in a community like we do. Many will live in cities or suburbs. I am not saying that there is anything wrong with these, but our rural location provides something that they do not: an opportunity for close relationships. This is why all Houghton students can brag about our community life. I implore you to begin, or continue, to cherish what our location provides: an ability to focus on our academics, spiritual life, and relationships without distraction and a closeness with God and His creation.

One of my favorite things about Houghton is the fact that it is 90 percent residential. Due

once classes are over. I would be too distracted by all the stores and restaurants to focus on the relationships I have with people on campus. This does not mean that going off campus is detrimental to your social life, as it is not healthy to be in the same place for weeks on end. What I am saying is that by staying on campus most days of the week, we are able to build deeper connections with our peers. When we are “all in” in our relationships with others we form the tight-knit community that Houghton is known for. Not only do we get the chance to have fun together, by going for hikes, attending sporting events and

as academically, by studying with friends in Java and taking advantage of the student offices in Paine Center for Science. By eliminating the distractions around us, we are able to be fully involved in campus life. We are able to take advantage of activities and clubs that we may have never considered before. Houghton’s location allows us to follow the greatest commandments. By focusing on our relationships, we are able to love God with *all* our heart, soul and mind and love our neighbors as ourselves.

It is such a blessing to be surrounded by God’s creation, to see His handiwork and be able to explore it. Over the past few weeks, campus has been alive with the beautiful Fall colors. I often found myself staring in awe of the bright yellow, orange and red trees that adorn our campus. I love Houghton in the fall and have since I was a child. Now, snow has started to come and, whether or not you are ready for it, you can not help but exclaim how beautiful the snow is in the trees and how it resembles the perfect snow from every Christmas Hallmark movie. Another of my favorite aspects

of Houghton are the stars. In “the middle of nowhere” we are free, though not completely, of light pollution. There have been many times that I have walked to Field of Dreams or the multiple trails on campus just staring at the night sky. If you have not taken the time to do this, I recommend you do so. You may be freezing the entire time, but you will not regret it. In these times and these places, with feelings of awe and wonder, it is easy to feel God’s presence. To marvel at His creation and be at one with His creation.

There is so much that our location offers that others do not. I encourage you to look around and see what you love and appreciate about our campus. We may be an hour away from Target and Chipotle, but in exchange, we have a much more meaningful experience during our time here. ★

*Brianna is a sophomore majoring in psychology.*

“By focusing on our relationships, we are able to love God with all our heart, soul and mind and love our neighbors as ourselves.”

to this fact, there are always people on campus to be with as well as things to do. In a college in the city, most people would spend time off campus

watching movies together in the Fireside lounge in Gillette, but we also are able to grow spiritually together, through chapel and Koinonia, as well

# Radically Reoriented Speech



COURTESY OF CALEB FESMIRE

CORY MESSERSCHMIDT

God cares about consistency in our lives. If the truth of the gospel that we profess does not change our actions, the Bible tells us we are deceiving ourselves (James 1:22). This encompasses all areas of our lives; we cannot serve self in one area and serve God in another. I’d like to challenge us to think about the way the gospel transforms our speech.

In Ephesians 4 and 5, Paul admonishes the Christians in Ephesus (and by extension, us) to consider their words. Those

who have been born again have received Christ’s forgiveness of sins (Eph. 4:32) and have “put on the new man” – that is, their life and desires have been radically reoriented by God. Paul applies this truth in a very practical way. Because of the undeserved forgiveness we have received, Christians should “therefore, be imitators of God as dear children” (5:1). Those who are regenerated, made new in Christ, are commanded to strive to be like God. Pursuing godliness is the highest calling in the life of the Christian.

Taking this reality, Paul lays out some things Christians should not do, describing behaviors that are antithetical to

holiness. He begins with sexual sins and wrong attitudes, then moves in verse 4 to verbal sins. Specifically, they are filthiness, foolish talking, and crude joking. Particularly in the context of sexual immorality (v. 3, 5), Paul seems to be talking about low, profane humor – basically, joking about sin. This type of joking

treats lightly sins that should be kept at arm’s length. People who practice the very sins we laugh about will perish eternally (v. 5-6, Rev. 21:8). These are not light matters to be joked about. God treats them so seriously He died to take the penalty due these sins. Don’t be deceived (v. 6)! Steer clear of this type of talking, it isn’t fitting for believers (v. 3). As theologian Matthew Henry says, “shall blessing and cursing, lewdness and thanksgivings, proceed out of the same mouth?” (James 3:10). I get it, it’s not easy. But God calls us to do things that are difficult and hard.

Fortunately, Paul doesn’t just leave us with the negative. We are not just given a list of behaviors to avoid, we are also told behaviors to “put on.” Instead of speaking in ways that aren’t right for a

believer to speak, we are called to use our words for God’s glory. Verse 4 tells us that as we avoid destructive types of speech, we are to be characterized by giving of thanks. We are also to use our words to build people up (4:29), recognizing that God can use us to show His grace to the people around us.

What we speak about in our everyday conversations shows the state of our hearts (Matt. 15:18). Our tongue can be full of deadly poison (James 3:8). We have a choice to be consistent with what we claim to believe and pursue godliness with our speech, or we can continue in destructive patterns that are deleterious to our Christian witness. Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Prov. 18:21). Let’s strive to choose life by engaging in radically reoriented, edifying conversations this year. ★

*Cory is a sophomore majoring in business administration and accounting.*

“Those who are regenerated, made new in Christ, are commanded to strive to be like God. Pursuing godliness is the highest calling in the life of the Christian.”



# How Houghton Can Help Mental Health



COURTESY OF CALEB FESMIRE

ANSLEY GREEN

We are all aware of the idea of the Houghton plague, the illness that cycles through nearly every student every year. However, there is another plague that hits Houghton every year—one that doesn’t get the attention that it deserves. Affecting over 30% of college students, Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D) can cause anyone to experience intense depression. Most students know that Houghton offers free counseling from licensed professionals. But I have two recommendations that would help the counseling center better serve students. First, the counseling center should advertise the other available resources for coping with S.A.D. Second, the counselors ought to be able to provide excused absences for traumatic situations or mental health crises.

The first recommendation is that the counseling center advertise their niche resources more widely, as some of them are not advertised as much as they need to be. For example, one of the most popular treatments for seasonal affective

disorder is lightbox or ultraviolet therapy, which is available by appointment in the counseling center, a fact unknown to many. Lightbox therapy uses a bright, ultraviolet-protected lamp to provide your body with the missing vitamin D due to the lack of sunshine. This vitamin D deficiency also happens to have a major role in one’s mood, hence why lightbox therapy is effective in reducing the symptoms of seasonal depression. Regularly relaxing or doing homework next to the lamp for a while can help improve mood.

However, having knowledge of these services doesn’t erase the stigma around accessing

“...counselors ought to be able to provide excused absences for traumatic situations or mental health crises.”

this immense change in daylight hours. With this comes the idea of a ‘mental health day,’ a day taken off of classes and work so that the student can get a mental and physical break. It works as a type of reset by breaking the routine of daily life and allowing for intentional recuperation.

“Encouraging a struggling friend to get support or being open about positive experiences with the counseling center can be all it takes to make more people feel comfortable about [counseling]”

them. That part is up to us as students. Encouraging a struggling friend to get support or being open about positive experiences with the counseling center can be all it takes to make more people feel comfortable about the idea of using the extensive resources available.

The second recommendation is that counselors be able to provide excused absences for students who need a mental health day. As a college in the northeast, Houghton faces a much higher chance of increased mental illness due to the drastic weather change and lack of sunshine—exacerbated for international students or students from further south who do not know how to deal with

If counselors had the ability to excuse absences, this would eliminate any shame in emailing a professor in an attempt to explain why a class was missed, facing the possibility of being denied an excuse for said absence. A counselor would have the power to send an email or write a pass to be given to a professor. This pass would have minimal information on the issue to preserve confidentiality. It would also be expected that questions would not be asked of the student.

Though changing the criteria for an excused absence could raise concerns causing a decrease in class attendance, the fact is that attending a class while struggling with mental

illness can be just as detrimental to your class performance as missing the class altogether. Furthermore, mental illness has the ability to be just as disadvantageous to a student’s health as physical illnesses such as a cold or flu. With symptoms like insomnia, irritability, and fatigue, seasonal depression can affect a student’s ability to pay attention or get the most out of their college experience.

A policy like this would not go without restrictions, however. The main stipulation would be that the counselor would use careful discretion, especially with students that they already know have a tendency for skipping classes. There would also need to be a limitation on the number of times one is given such an excuse from class, though that would most likely need to be left up to the discretion of their counselor as well.

Despite the amount of regulation that would be required, the benefits of allowing mental health absences are vast. With this system, the college and professors would automatically be validating the difficulties that are faced by those with mental illnesses. One of the main problems faced by neuro-atypical people is lack of validation, therefore listening to their problems and not expecting them to consistently exhaust themselves to find motivation for school work would be an important step in erasing some of the stig-

ma around mental illness.

Not only do students deal with difficult classes, but we struggle with balancing social, physical and spiritual health as well. When any of these four aspects of life fall apart, it can be damaging if a rest period is not allowed. Of course there are breaks and weekends, but nothing feels as restful as taking an intentional day off to care for yourself and spend time with God. Finally, improving mental health on campus would reduce the drop-out rate in both classes and the school overall. Allowing counselors to provide excused absences is a critical part of keeping students healthy and ensuring success.

With all the changes coming to Houghton’s campus, specifically with the new Vision of our Common Life, it is not far-fetched to ask for more focus on the mental health of our fellow students. This is only the beginning of a long, intense conversation that is extremely necessary to a healthy student body. With a predicted 300+ students who struggle with mental illness and seasonal depression on the daily, this is not a situation that can be ignored. ★

*Ansley is a sophomore majoring in political science.*

## SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less

SUBMIT TO  
editor@houghtonstar.com



The mission of the Houghton Star is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have characterized Houghton College since its inception. This will be done by serving as a medium for the expression of student thought and as a quality publication of significant campus news, Houghton area news, and events.

The Houghton  
STAR

2019-2020 Staff

JOHANNA FLOREZ // Co-Editor-in-Chief

DAVID BOWERS // Co-Editor-in-Chief

RILEY GASTIN // News Editor

JOSIAH WEIDENHEFT // Columns Editor

GERI EDWARDS // Features Editor

OWEN HARDIMAN // Opinions Editor

CALEB FESMIRE // Web and Photos Editor

SUSAN BRUXVOORT LIPSCOMB // Faculty Adviser





# Artist of the Week

## Holly Fleth

// Senior Data Science and Art Major



In my work as an artist and graphic designer, I am inspired by the beautiful colors and forms that I see in the world around me. I enjoy finding unique ways to represent these things in my work, creating art that captures not only the visual beauty of the world, but also the feelings of peace and joy that such beauty creates. The ability to capture a piece of what I see in the world and share it with others is one of my favorite parts of being an artist.

