

VENERATIO

The Honors College Newsletter

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Poppy, the Honors College Mascot

CATCHING UP ON CAMPUS

By Lorena Munoz

After years of Poppy the Pig being lost in a storage closet, she has been found, relieved, excited, and full of questions about all the wonderful things she missed out on at UTA! And what better place to visit than one of the busiest buildings on campus: the University Center. Commonly referred to as "the UC", this popular gathering spot welcomes all students to congregate, eat, study, nap, and socialize

CATCHING UP ON CAMPUS

Although this building has been around since 1953, it has gone through multiple improvements and additions over the years. However, UTA has bigger plans for our beloved UC.

While Poppy was away, UTA introduced a project entitled “The New UC,” a plan to completely renovate our University Center. The idea was to upgrade and expand the student hub to better accommodate the UTA community and meet student demands for more lounge areas, food service, and student organization spaces.

“But how will UTA build this for us?”

Good question, Poppy! To fund this major renovation, UTA proposed a change to the Student Union fee from \$39 to \$150 per spring and fall semester, and \$75 per summer semester. But this created uncertainty among students, with many feeling uneasy at the thought of having their student bill increased. However, UTA announced that the fee increase wouldn't come into effect until after the construction was over, which is estimated to be in four years.

“Well, what even is the student union fee?”

The student union fee is included in the tuition we pay each semester and goes towards paying for improvements, operations, and debt service on the UC and Commons. This fee has remained fixed at \$39 since 1985, one of the lowest in the UT system. The increase to \$150, however, will make it one of the most expensive, trailing behind UNT's student union fee of \$167.

“When will the project begin?”

That's a bit more complicated, Poppy. Originally, the renovation was scheduled to begin this semester, Fall 2023, and end by 2026.

However, that was assuming the majority of the community would vote 'yes' to the fee upcharge, which would fund the operations. But the vote failed since many students were against paying the increased fee. Now, a new ballot will take place on April 1st, 2024.

“If the vote passes, what will the new UC look like?”

UTA has released conceptual renderings of the upgraded building online and they can also be found in the UC. Some must-haves of the design include more outdoor seating, natural lighting, and a pathway connecting the UC to Woolf Hall. While many students are excited for the modernization, others critiqued the design, saying it looked too much like a mall. However, the designs themselves came from a student committee, where they were asked about what they wanted to see in the new UC and what the designs should focus on. If the project receives funding, students will once again be asked for their input.



Retrieved from
UTA Student Centers

CATCHING UP ON CAMPUS



Retrieved from
UTA Student Centers



Retrieved from
UTA Student Centers

“Sure! Remember to vote and engage in changes at UTA! This is your campus and your community! Make it what you want it to be!”



Retrieved from
UTA Student Centers

More photos can be found at
<https://www.uta.edu/campus-ops/student-centers/the-new-uc/photos>

ACHIEVING STUDENT SUCCESS

By Deborah Esene

The college journey is an experience like no other that comes with both freedom and responsibility. As students begin to enjoy the independence that comes with college, they are also faced with a maze of challenges, such as the academic rigor associated with college, navigating new social relations, physical stressors, and mental strains. However, by navigating through these challenges with intentionality, we can evolve and mature as people, facilitating growth and a better understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

One of the most significant shifts from high school to college is the academic course load and the associated overall rigor.

So, what do you think, Poppy?

“I have mixed feelings. I grew up with the UC and even though I missed out on a lot, I’m so excited to be back home in the Honors College and witness all the new things happening on campus!”

We’re glad you’re back too, Poppy! Is there anything you’d like to say to us Honors kids?

ACHIEVING STUDENT SUCCESS

Because of the increased course intensity, it is essential to study effectively, and a wonderful way to do so is by using active study techniques. Active study, also called active recall, is a form of studying that pushes the brain into deeply understanding the material at hand, which makes the retrieval of the information much more efficient.

Although there is no right or wrong way to study, solely reading textbooks and rewatching lectures can be passive and make the learning process tedious. Instead, opting for active study techniques, such as making flashcards, teaching a friend a concept you learned, doing practice questions, and utilizing mind maps, may make the learning process outside the classroom more effective. It is also important to note that the specific study techniques that will work best for each student will depend on how each student learns best, so taking a learning style quiz may also aid in selecting active study techniques that work best for you.

In addition, other tactics that may help to promote learning include studying in a comfortable space and taking meaningful breaks. Whether nestled in the campus library or a cozy cafe off campus, having a comfortable space to study while taking time to purposefully recharge between study sessions helps to foster focus and productivity during the learning process.

Also, there are many resources on campus that students can use to facilitate learning outside of the classroom. The Division of Student Success is a program led by UTA that offers many resources, such as supplemental instruction (SI) sessions, tutoring, and peer-

led team learning (PLTL), that can be used to continue the learning process.

Putting these strategies into practice will require intentionality and discipline, so finding a way to plan one's time, whether with a traditional pen-and-paper planner or with a more digital setup, is key in making this process more attainable.

It is also crucial for students to prioritize mental and physical health since it also plays a role in academic success. Ways to do so may include staying active, eating well-balanced meals, prioritizing sleep, exploring hobbies and interests, joining student organizations, participating in events that UTA and the Honors College offer, and seeking resources on campus for support and guidance, such as UTA's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

Despite the transition to college coming with new challenges and responsibilities, there are many resources that students can utilize to grow and excel not only as students but, more importantly, as individuals in their future endeavors and professions that lie ahead.



CAMPUS FOOD OPTIONS

CAMPUS FOOD OPTIONS

By Baylie Subjeck

Being a hungry college student is quite dangerous - our bodies are constantly expending more energy than we think. Our brains require sugar and other essential nutrients to function properly, and if not fed well, our body's systems resort to mobilizing the bare minimum of energy and we experience fatigue, headaches, and dizziness (please don't use this article as WebMD and contact a physician if you feel sick. We take no responsibility, thank you). In a nutshell, it's vital that you eat properly when going about your daily activities.

“But what if I don't want to eat at the Connection Café?”

And yes, that's quite an understandable view (it's definitely one way to unite the student population). It's what many people seem to think - but why is that? What is it about Connection that students are so strongly biased against?

Yaseen (They/Them), an Honors College sophomore and member of the Student Government, begins by apologizing:

“To whoever's reading this, I'm sorry about the reality check you're about to get.”

They then proceed to emphasize their first point, a common concern with several other interviewees --

“I believe there's a lack of variety. [They] have absolutely zero Halal or Kosher-designated meat items, which leads the Muslim and Jewish

community on campus... to not be able to eat any meat and therefore lack protein.”

Several other interviewees agree that the vegetarian options are sparse and lack flavor. One of them said that the salad bar usually houses some mold. They would all like to see more variety in cuisine and legumes - especially on the weekends, when the options are already few and far between and dietary restrictions are out of the question.

Then, when prompting Yaseen about food quality, an incident immediately comes to mind:

“When I did the Maverick Experience... I went to Connection Café and one of the workers said, in Hindi, ‘Oh well, it looks like this is raw,’ — not knowing that I [understood] Hindi. [He] handed [the pizza] to me and yes, it was raw.”

During peak hours when the employees are overwhelmed with the number of students, the food often does not turn out cooked through, leading to complications like salmonella or food poisoning.

Then another, more harrowing incident comes to light:

“There was one [time] where the [CFA] sauce [had] gone bad... it smelled rancid. Yes, I did taste it, and I was like ‘Oh, that's not right’. It was buffalo sauce - I didn't even



CAMPUS FOOD OPTIONS

know buffalo sauce could go bad, but they proved me wrong.”

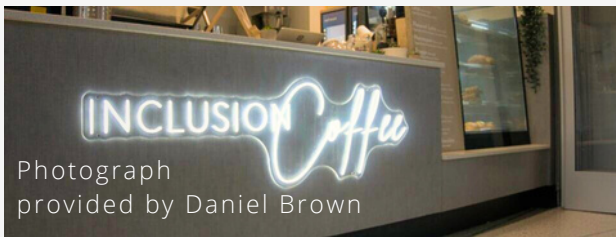
Khaylia Bullen, a freshman in biology, includes,

“I’ve gotten raw chicken... or a raw pancake before, and it [was] just pure batter on the inside .”

When asked about on-campus restaurants , she responds,

“I’ve gotten a few [CFA] sandwiches where you can taste that the chicken is very... it tastes like it’s expired ,”

noting that Olive Garden was now her go-to on the weekends. In addition, Siddarth Tyagi, a Computer Science Engineering Honors student, states that a Connection Café employee once told him they use week-old chicken. He further complains the chicken tenders are often over-fried and that he nearly lost his tooth in a battle against one, overall rating the Café a 1/10.



After all this, I wouldn't be surprised if you don't feel like eating at Connection– so let me tell you about the good-eats on and off-campus! Many of the interviewees agreed they enjoy the Shake Smart in the MAC and the Panera Bread near College Park. Yaseen pointed out a few Halal locations, including Indian

Corner with its small Indian market near College Park, Ricky's Hot Chicken, and Fresh Kebab House. A few other interviewees mentioned they liked the Kintaro Ramen nearby, as well as Salata and New York Eats off-campus. But if you're in the mood for a quick snack between classes, there are usually some organizations selling food by the UAC and the Library Mall, and occasionally even free giveaways!

When it comes to coffee, three places come to mind ; Inclusion Coffee, either in the SEIR Building or on Abram Street, Blue Rhino (found just a ways off-campus), and of course, the iconic Starbucks. The only issue is when it comes to coffee, everyone expects an upcharge for college students – but something many people are unaware of is that the Einstein Bros in the Central Library has unlimited black coffee refills! That means that if you have a previously-bought cup from Einstein Bros, you can indulge in as much black coffee as you'd like – and I can already sense a few caffeine addicts taking notes as they read this.

I hope that these tips and tricks have helped the Maverick Community of foodies and coffee lovers. Thank you Mavs, and keep your Mav Up!

If you find that you are served raw or undercooked food from an on- campus dining establishment, we advise that you do not ingest it. If possible, take a photo and report it to UTA using the link below.

<https://www.uta.edu/student-affairs/sarcenter/contact-us/complaints>

POPPY'S ESCAPE FROM STORAGE

Written by Tatum Sculley

Illustrated by Amanda Nickel



COVID-19 & CAMPUS ORGANIZATIONS

COVID-19 & CAMPUS ORGANIZATIONS

By Douglas Dyer

Coming out of storage after 9 years, Poppy was shocked to hear about the waves caused by COVID-19. Classes were shifted online. People became less involved in UTA's campus community, and students' mental health declined. This caused many programs and organizations to weaken or entirely dissolve! To see how the pandemic has affected our campus, Poppy and I interviewed the leaders of several campus organizations.

Aastha Arora, Honors junior and president of UTA's chapter of the National Latinx Psychological Association, has noticed that following COVID, many members of the group have lost motivation to attend meetings, host social events, and improve NLPA in general. NLPA's mission is to provide support and assistance to Latinx psychology students, so their presence is more than important to lots of Mavericks! However, after months of online meetings and low participation events during COVID, a lack of enthusiasm is to be expected despite efforts to boost community engagement.

"After COVID, it's just harder to get people to come out and enjoy our meetings and events!"

-Aastha Arora

While these challenges impact many organizations, some have taken advantage of the pandemic to take initiative on their goals. For entrepreneur and Honors business

student, Sami Ali, the pandemic helped him begin developing his startup social education site, PlutoLearning, earning \$15,000 in UTA's MavPitch competition to fund its launch.

"I would say COVID definitely affected startup culture for better and worse."

Unused investment funds and a reviving local business scene allowed many to enter the business world, but this poses a few challenges to Mr. Ali later in his startup journey.

"More people are starting their businesses than ever, but now that the market has become so saturated, it's getting difficult to differentiate products from each other. Moreover, less and less (sic) people can get funding for their ideas from accelerator programs, seed funds, and venture capital."

- Sami Ali

Poppy and I were more than surprised to hear how this theme of deteriorating interest in campus and community outreach has impacted UTA's Greek life!

"Alpha Chi Omega and Greek life overall was greatly affected by COVID-19. Our sisters weren't able to spend quality time together in person like we usually do every single day which decreased chapter morale."

COVID-19 & CAMPUS ORGANIZATIONS

COVID stood in the way of philanthropy events, social mixers, and tabling! But AXO President, Kassy Krahulik, has found a way to use COVID's reign of terror for her organization's benefit.

“The pandemic prevented us from planning sisterhood events and holding philanthropy events that mean a lot to us. Since COVID-19 we have put a strong emphasis on rebuilding morale and ensuring there are plenty of opportunities for our ladies to bond and connect now more than ever.”

-Kassy Krahulik

Using the trials of the pandemic to pull her sorority closer together, Ms. Krahulik, like many others, has chosen to build off of COVID's hardships to make the group even stronger than before.

Nathan Branson, the founder and president of UTA's Rotaract Club Chapter, has similarly found that the challenges of COVID could instead become a source of pride and growth, even for a newborn organization.

“As a student at UTA, I witnessed the profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on campus life and club activities. The general decrease in campus involvement posed a significant challenge as I set out to found the Rotaract Club. In the aftermath of the pandemic, engaging students and building a community required innovative approaches and persistent effort.”

The Rotaract Club's purpose is community service, facilitating regular excursions to volunteer in the local area. This makes participation and membership paramount to sustaining the organization in general!



Photograph provided by Katy Atkins

“The initial steps in establishing the Rotaract Club involved understanding and addressing the unique concerns of the post-pandemic campus environment. Students were still adapting to the changes brought by the pandemic, and many were hesitant to commit to new activities or join organizations.”

In its first semester, the club was largely limited to 9 people, and found difficulty gaining enough membership to become an official chapter of the Rotaract Club's national organization, Rotary International.



Photograph provided by Katy Atkins

PUTTING IN THE EFFORT

Recognizing this, I focused on creating a club that would not only offer valuable experiences but also prioritize the well-being and preferences of its members. Now, after three semesters of getting the club off the ground, I can proudly say that our club has experienced incredible growth. It's a source of great pride to see how far we've come, especially considering the unique obstacles we faced in a world emerging from a shutdown."

- Nathan Branson

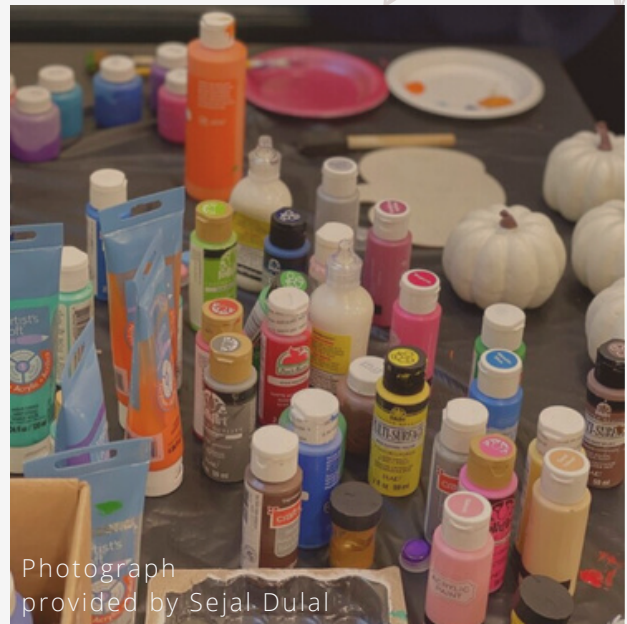
In the face of the pandemic, although it has dissuaded many people from campus engagement, a substantial number have already surmounted this challenge, transforming it into a springboard for their success. Mr. Ali took the opportunity COVID provided to enter a regularly stiff market, Ms. Krahulik chose to bond with her sisters over the challenges of the pandemic, and Mr. Branson built a connected club with experienced leadership! Poppy was so impressed by the Maverick spirit and its ability to persevere even in bizarre circumstances!

PUTTING IN THE EFFORT

By Nhi Nguyen

If Poppy the Pig was to spend a day in the Carolyn A. Barros (CAB) Reading Room, she would be pleasantly greeted by the constant hustle and bustle of students coming in and out of the UTA Honors College. Outside of general body meetings, the Honors College Council (HCC) and the Honors Programming Board meet to plan

events and socials for students. When I spoke with Programming Board member Katie, she mentioned that these events are carefully planned, some with specific activities, while others are just a way for Honors Students to meet up and chat. At the pumpkin painting festival, Poppy would have seen the CAB decked in fall décor, with students filling up all the tables painting miniature foam pumpkins.



Photograph provided by Sejal Dulal



Photograph provided by Sejal Dulal

When the CAB is devoid of events, students often study in the spacious library that is decorated with past Honors students' Capstone Projects. The Honors Capstone Project is the culminating research thesis that all students must create and present. Here, a sampling of 25 years' worth of HC students' hard work is on display to inspire future

PUTTING IN THE EFFORT

students and commemorate those that came before them.

I met and spoke with Preston, a Kinesiology Senior in the CAB. He recounts his journey in the Honors College fondly. With his scholarship, Preston joined the Honors College, becoming one of the top participating students. Preston often studies in the CAB, where the array of large tables and presence of like-minded peers facilitates a quiet, focused environment. In fact, he relayed that the reason he became so involved in Honors was because he happened to study in the CAB. Preston's high participation comes from the fact that every time there was an event, he would already be studying in the CAB, so he would often take breaks by attending meetings or enjoying a seasonal event. Preston even met his two best friends in the CAB. With such a consistent presence at every event, Preston managed to climb all the way to the top of the Honors leaderboard last Spring, which he details as his favorite semester.

In the Honors College, Poppy will be impressed with the amount of extracurricular work these hardworking students must employ to graduate with Honors. Honors students are very ambitious in their academics, ranging from STEM research projects to business proposals. When I spoke to a table of girls sitting and painting pumpkins at the fall event, I realized I was coincidentally sitting with a table of three girls in the same major — Biomedical Engineering.

Bayley, a sophomore, appreciates the challenges and benefits of Honors contracting while Teresa, a senior, is enjoying

the rigorous process of her Capstone Project. Katie, another sophomore, is a member of the Honors Programming Board and finds great pleasure in planning events such as Afternoon Tea, Thanksgiving Dinner, and Video Game Night, where she managed to snag first place in the Mario Kart tournament!

As Poppy is brought into room 101, she will be excited to see the classroom filled with engaged students, talking about resumes and a few others trickling to the CAB to take headshots for their professional profiles. The Honors College has ample resources for all students, ranging from professional development to career planning. According to most students I interviewed, the consensus was that the opportunities presented by the Honors College are there—we just have to put in the effort to make the most of our undergraduate experience.

SUSTAINABILITY ON CAMPUS

By Shreya Tantry

In the ever-growing discourse on sustainability, Dr. Sahadat Hossain, a dynamic Civil Engineering professor at the University of Texas at Arlington, has transformed the conversation into action. Fueled by global concerns over single-use plastics and inspired by innovative road solutions in countries like India and Bangladesh, Dr. Hossain proposed an extraordinary idea—What if our roads were made from recycled plastic?

Dr. Sahadat Hossain has been very passionate about various long-term

SUSTAINABILITY ON CAMPUS

sustainability projects all around the globe. His most recent project at UTA? Parking lots 49 and F10. Dr. Hossain applied his groundbreaking concept to these real world projects and led the transformation of these spaces. These parking lots have been paved with a mixture of 90% bitumen and 10% recycled plastic, a formula that was inspired by Dr. Hossain himself!



Photograph provided by Sejal Dulal

Dr. Hossain's earlier work primarily highlighted waste management while his current training program at UTA focuses on sending the least amount of waste to our landfills as possible. This effort, along with China's 2018 ban on importing waste, and the initiative by Dr. Cowley, president of UTA, inspired the Lot 49 and F10 projects. The university soon hopes to use this formula for long-term repairs and renovations throughout our campus in the future.

Word of Dr. Hossain's projects spread far and wide - well beyond UTA's campus. Multiple projects, influenced by his dedication to sustainability, reached Dallas, Fort Worth and the DFW airport and even transcended borders to countries including Ethiopia and Columbia. Due to his research, these "plastic roads" would require minimal repair after heavy use making his ventures economically feasible for UTA as well.

Dr. Hossain's mantra,

"It's not how much of the job you do that matters, what matters is, it is done right,"

encapsulates his ethos. His relentless passion, coupled with practical applications, propels the potential of recycled plastic in road construction towards an environmentally and economically sustainable horizon and showcases that the application of this technology is truly limitless! With UTA at the forefront, Dr. Hossain remains committed to ensuring this technology benefits not just the university, but the world at large.

UTA'S FOOTBALL TEAM

By Mackenzie Hoekman

The University of Texas at Arlington has not had a football team since the 1980s. Though the team did eventually reach Division I status, it faced many losses. The football program was eventually dismantled as it lacked fans and funding. Overtime, football faded from the culture of UTA and many believe that students don't care that we no longer have a football team. But how do the students of UTA feel now?

UTA's first football team, known as the Grubbworms, was founded in 1919 when UTA was the Grubbs Vocational College. The team had many names thereafter including the Junior Aggies, the Blue Riders, the Rebels, and finally the Mavericks near the end of the team's history.

The team gathered quite an audience, and,

UTA'S FOOTBALL TEAM

with some talented players, they rose to Division 1 status in 1970. The assistant coach, Charlie Key, stated that the team, known as the Rebels at that time, had no business being moved to DI status as they did not have the resources to succeed. The team did not win a single game that year and the following year changed its name to the Mavericks, with a slight record improvement. Although they lacked wins, over 50 players from UTA made it to the NFL.



Retrieved from LinkedIn (1981)

I took some time and interviewed some members of the Honors College to see their views on whether or not UTA should have a football team. Through the interviews, I found that although the respondents say they like football and would likely go to the games if UTA had a team, 80% do not think that UTA should have a team. Several stated that it would likely increase the cost of their tuition and therefore, would not care for UTA to have a team once again. One respondent insightfully said that they enjoy the “culture of football” and that it would make the “guard and band programs better,” but there would be far too many cons to justify a football program. Only one person that I interviewed had played football before, and she was the only person who said that UTA “should

definitely have a football team.” Everyone did agree, though, that Poppy would enjoy going to the football games.

Over the years there have been calls for UTA to bring back its football program. The key issues have been funding for the team and lack of fans. While the team was around, there were times when the number of people attending the games reached peaks, but it waned quickly over time. In the late 1990s a new, small fee was placed on students to support the school’s athletic programs, and some football fans called to have the team reinstated with this new fee in place.

I believe that UTA has such an academic-focused student body that even if the school did get funding for a team there would not be a large fan base. The funding would likely have to come from tuition costs, and I do not want my tuition raised. I know some people really enjoy watching football, but I think we have plenty of other sports for people to watch. UTA has some school spirit, but not enough to support a football team and the things that come with it. The team would frankly just be lackluster all around. For those who love football, there are plenty of other schools nearby that have teams, and they can always watch the NFL.

ATTACK OF THE FLEAS!

By Obianuju Victor-Onyeka

The 2023 Fall season kicked off with some late but beautiful autumn weather, the return of students from all over the country to their college campuses, and yes, bug outbreaks of various kinds (we are looking at you, Fashion Week Parisian bedbugs!). In

ATTACK OF THE FLEAS!

fact, UTA experienced a bug infestation of its own in West Campus, where the College of Architecture Department of Planning and Public Affairs (CAPPA) allegedly had several students switch learning locations due to an outbreak of fleas.



Photograph provided by Daniel Brown

The CAPPA building is one of the most visually pleasing spots on campus, and it's no wonder students love studying there, with the cool waterfall in the quad (which is perfect for picnics or hanging out with friends), the West Campus library, numerous laboratories, and it being a relatively quieter part of campus. Beginning in the Spring 2023 semester, several changes were made to building designations with the introduction of the new Social Work and College of Nursing and Health Innovation (CONHI) Smart Hospital building (SWSH). In particular, the previous Smart Hospital was changed to be designated as a CAPPA building and was thus named "CAPPA South."



Photograph provided by Daniel Brown

This new development came with issues for architecture students and professors who had classes held in the CAPPA South buildings, particularly during the Fall 2023 semester. CAPPA South was fumigated without prior warning, and many students were unable to remain in the building due to the smell of the fumes. Professors, who were alerted of this situation by concerned students, temporarily changed the location of their classes to other locations around the building. Finally, after much confusion and concern from students and professors alike, students and faculty were notified that they would indefinitely have to teach their classes in the other CAPPA buildings, outside of CAPPA South. Once this announcement was made, students attempted to retrieve their property from the fumigated building but had much difficulty due to the strong smell of the fumes, with some students complaining about having trouble breathing.

After the incident, classes were held in the main CAPPA building as well as Cappa North, with some classes even moving to the hallways of the main CAPPA building! Students stayed in their new (but not necessarily) improved learning locations for a little over a week, after which they were informed that it was safe to return to CAPPA South. They even joked with one another about finding fleas upon their return. Somewhat shockingly, students and professors alike did, in fact, find fleas! One student noticed a small brown bug on her arm which jumped away when she tried to kill it, and a professor also noticed a bug and confirmed it was a flea from his students. One architecture student, Melissa Rodriguez, when interviewed just last month stated,

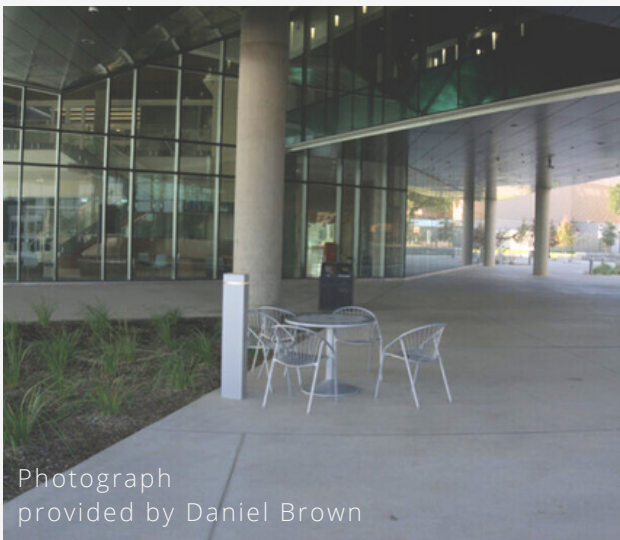
ATTACK OF THE FLEAS!

“We have active flea traps inside our building to this day.”



Photograph provided by Daniel Brown

Overall, UTA is committed to providing the best conditions of learning for their students, and that includes upgrading buildings and providing improved facilities for both faculty and students. Although we don't know what buildings are next for renovations, we hope that the CAPP South building is on the roster, given the series of events that have transpired and the current conditions of the CAPP South building.



Photograph provided by Daniel Brown



Poppy
Bod



Poppy



Poppy's back!

VENERATIO STAFF

Fall 2023

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DISCLAIMER.

The experiences detailed within the above articles and the opinions shared by interviewees are that of individual students within the Honors College and do not necessarily depict the sentiments of the College as a whole.



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IF YOU'RE NOT
HAVING FUN, YOU'RE
DOING SOMETHING
WRONG.

Groucho Marx