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The Office of Commuter Student Services (CSS) is a University administrative office whose mission is to contribute directly and indirectly to the enhancement of the educational experience of all undergraduate commuter students at Stony Brook University.

We accomplish this by providing services, programs, advocacy, research, and outreach.

The Roads Scholar is the official newsletter of Stony Brook University commuter students.

INSIDE:

Thinking about studying abroad? Find your answer in this issue!

What Does It Mean To Be A Commuter Student?

The Cure For That Early Morning Grogginess!

Stuck in a Rut? Find ways to change things up!

...and many more articles!

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The Scheme of Life
Written by Qurat-ul-ain Gulamhussein

This journey takes forever. My destination is a mirage; however, life is always about getting somewhere—a quality all human lives share.

I can almost hear the clock ticking and see the world quickly running. At times, I'm moving forward; at times, I'm moving backward.

Everyone commutes everyday moving constantly in just a different way. Now from a deep sleep I awake to realize my illusions were fake.

Every now and then, I meet new people on the train who treat life as the stairs to paradise on which they often trip, and finally rise.

Through the glass window I look—the world outside never once shook. Realizing, I had moved ahead in the journey I took, I heard the sweet words, “Stony Brook! Stony Brook!”
Having trouble finding a career path that is both satisfying and productive? Fear not! The Stony Brook Career Center provides an ample amount of information for students. The Career Center will give you the tools you need to declare a major and build experience through internships, community service and part-time jobs both on and off campus. The help doesn’t stop there: after graduation, the Career Center can even help students find full-time positions!

To promote the job search, the Career Center offers career development, and will help you prepare for hire with mock interviews, resume clinics, cover letter demos, and facilitate meetings with employers.

Speaking of resumes and cover letters, do YOU have one? If not, the Career Center offers ZebraNet, a service that provides tips on writing by providing samples used by former students. After the first draft, you can improve your resume and cover letter at the resume clinic located at the Career Center on Monday and Friday (by appointment), or Tuesday and Thursday (no appointment necessary) from 1-4 p.m.

ZebraNet is a great resource for students who are busy 9 to 5. If you don’t have time to visit the Career Center in person, visit ZebraNet to find information on majors, job searches, internship opportunities and both full and part-time job listings.

The Career Center offers helpful events such as: the Career Decision Clinic, for freshmen and sophomores, and Career tests. Two tests, the MBTI and the Strong Interest Inventory, show a student their professional strengths and weaknesses. The MBTI, for example, is a personality based inventory that suggests a student’s career “fit” whereas the Strong Interest Inventory helps define interests that ultimately lead to potential job options to consider.

The Career Center is all about you! If you would feel more comfortable conversing with peers, speak with an Undergraduate Career Counseling Intern. If you are undeclared, you can simply ask how to match a career with a major. In addition, qualified attendants are able to help students on their first visit to the Center, and you can choose from eleven staff professionals. Each professional is knowledgeable in a specific field that would advise a particular major so you can be sure you’re getting the information you need.

If you haven’t done so already, stop by the Career Center or make an appointment. It is never too early to start planning for the future.
What does it mean to be a Commuter student at Stony Brook University? The question, as silly as it may seem to some, is a relevant consideration when it comes to identifying one’s self as a Stony Brook student. As with any university, the process of becoming matriculated to the campus is learning to recognize yourself as belonging to its student body. At Stony Brook, that means becoming a Seawolf. Yet, it is much more than that, and as a Commuter student, the process is somewhat unique and perhaps cumbersome.

I have never quite been able to understand why it is that if you drive your car or take a train to get to school, it somehow marginalizes you from those who walk, skate, or ride a bike. Not that the means of transportation matter, more so the distance. It is as if Commuters are this kind of “otherness” presence on campus – lingering phantoms that come and go as they please, who fill the empty seats in lecture halls and libraries; conquistadors who have come from far off places to lay claim to an alien education. They are among, rather than with. Simply because the bed in which one sleeps and the room which one calls their own is located on the same property as the university itself, it does not mean that Residences are somehow more “Stony Brook-esque” than Commuters. The same services, the same professors, the same courses, indeed, the same food and the same complaints, are shared between both factions equally.

Given this observation, I wonder how this distinction has been perpetuated. Stony Brook currently has 24,594 students enrolled, both undergraduate and graduate (according to the university website). Statistically, Commuters make up a full 46% of the student body at Stony Brook. We must also take into account the 2,986 students from other countries and the fact that most professors and staff commute to campus. Couple this fact with the abundance of Commuters who hold E-board positions in clubs, work in university labs and offices, and contribute to college committees, and the gap between the Commuter and the Resident becomes blurred to the point of illegibility. So why is it that Commuters are seen as minorities in the college society?

“Statistically, Commuters make up a full 46% of the student body at Stony Brook.”

I think the answer lies in the environment outside of the classroom. As with any social situation, we gravitate towards those we are most familiar with. In a crowded plaza or open ballroom, you are likely to begin a conversation with the person you have only seen once as opposed to never before. There is this issue of accessibility. When you reside in one of the many quads on campus, you become familiar with the people who live in your building and in your complex. You go to parties, see them in the lunch halls, and begin to mingle, forming an acquaintance with them that may eventually form into a friendship. When you meet new people whom you are not familiar with (usually through someone you are), the first question you ask is where they reside on campus. There is this process of interconnectedness that contributes to this build-up of acquaintance into friendship. This process appears to be somehow lacking in the Commuter. Once again, it is a problem of accessibility. The assumption is that if you do not live on campus, you are not likely to be on campus, nor are you likely to attend campus events. When you live on campus and you meet someone who doesn’t,
initially there may be a period of acquaintance. However, the frequency with which we interact with these acquaintances is at risk of dwindling due to our being a Commuter, both the reality of not being on campus as often as Residents and the stigma associated with being a Commuter. That stigma is simply this: The Commuter not as involved on campus as the Resident.

This stigma is a gross misassumption. There are Resident students who are just as and more so under involved as some Commuters, just as there are some Commuters who are harder working and more dedicated to their studies than some Residents. The Resident assumes when they attend campus events that they are among Residents, especially when these events take place on weekends. This assumption, however, is entirely false, and the idea that the Commuter is just somehow filling in the void is inaccurate.

This additional issue of an interconnected network of friendship and acquaintance is what some might argue characterizes the college experience. Unfortunately, the Commuter is at increased risk of falling out of this loop due these same factors: Presence and stigma. The remedy to avoiding this risk, in my opinion, is disproving the stigma, which in turn dissolves the issue of presence. The Commuter must, therefore, become significantly involved on campus, and what better way than being at the forefront of the culture? As Commuters, we have to put in that extra bit of effort to come to weekend events, to take on E-board positions, and become involved with Student Government. We have to keep ourselves in that loop of acquaintance and friendship—so mingle, explore the quads, put your name out there, and don’t be afraid to spend a little more gas and time to become a prominent figure on campus; it will pay off! Run for USG president, wear red every Friday to show your pride, join an intramural team, and make sure you walk away with more than just a degree. Throughout this article, I have made an inference between Commuter and Resident, as if they are two different identities. This was done simply for the purpose of convenience. If anything, my hope is that the student reading this does not choose to identify with one or the other. If anything, I want this article to perpetuate the destruction of such stigmas and to bring unity in one common identity. Whether you travel sixty-minutes or sixty-seconds to get to class, whether your dinner is cooked by your mother or by a chef, whether you dorm or live at home, each of us are part of the Stony Brook community and contribute to it’s kinship and culture. We are individually and collectively one in the desire to acquire an education, and that is something that cannot be given an identity.

So what does it mean to be a Commuter student at Stony Brook University? It means having to put in an extra bit of effort to assert your amalgamation among your peers, but it also means walking away with an appreciation for that position that some may have achieved haphazardly. It means becoming a Stony Brook student, equally endowed with that title as the next. It doesn’t matter if you reside in a country thousands of miles away or the same quad; if live across the tracks or down them and across the state; undergraduate or graduate, we can all rise up and declare with clarity, sincerity, and unity what we are— I’m a Seawolf!
The scent of leaves
Falling to the ground;
The cool breeze
Trying not to make a sound.

The sun begins to hide
Behind the clouds of white;
The weather trying to decide
Should the rain be heavy or light?

The weather at Stony Brook is strange,
It can’t help but be very cold or hot,
Nobody really minds the change,
Except for those who park in the South P Lot.

Students huddle together,
Trying to save themselves from the cold,
Someone says we are Seawolves forever,
We are big, brave and bold!
Break the Routine
Written by Holly Riordan

A jam-packed day, clogged with back-to-back classes can be as unnerving as dealing with a string of hour long breaks. Stretches of uneventful fractures in your class schedule can result in dreaded routine monotony. However, there are a number of miscellaneous activities that will swiftly shift your breaks from listless to lively.

Exercise and Enjoy the Scenery:
An added benefit to Stony Brook’s beautifully broad campus is the workouts received from walking and climbing innumerable sets of stairs. Walking is a convenient and manageable form of exercise which strengthens your heart while burning calories earned at Jasmine and the Union Commons. Furthermore, with Stony’s large array of flowers, fountains, and student constructed sculptures, your eyes will be just as occupied as your feet.

Indulge:
Whether you’re buying required materials or frivolously splurging on unnecessary items, college students love to shop! Purchase the newest tabloid from the bookstore, some new SB clothing at the SAC, or seek out a snack from one of the legions of eateries.

Relax:
College life can be quite hectic and sometimes a spell of pure relaxation is an essential portion of a healthy day. The benches situated by the fountain near the humanities building, along with the area encompassing the Simons Center, are both excellent spots to bask in some carefree time with friends. No companions with the same break as you? Take time to read a novel, listen to your iPod, or get a head start on the homework just assigned.

Get Creative:
The main aspects of life surround us here at Stony Brook: people, scenery, and an abundance of work. Test your photography skills by freezing these memories in time. Or if art is more of your strong suit, dig out a sketch book and capture a fraction of the campus’ gorgeous landscape on paper.

Phone a Friend:
Is college hampering the amount of time spent conversing with family and friends from out of state? Pick up your cell, shoot them an email, or go ‘old school’ and send them a handwritten letter. Although college is the perfect place to meet new people, it’s also important to keep the old ones from falling out of your life.

Whether you have a few minutes or a couple of hours to spare, the aforementioned ideas are guaranteed to keep you occupied. By making good use of your free time, rather than squandering the seconds away, you can learn to be more productive in all areas of life.
How To Be A Morning Person

Written by Aimee Pomeroy

1. Go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day. This sets your internal clock and eventually your body will know that it is time to get the show on the road, and eventually, you may not even need an alarm clock.

2. Keep your blinds open to allow natural sunlight into your room. If that is not possible, turn the lights on as soon as you wake up. This tells your brain the day has begun.

3. Avoid big meals close to bed time. Your body will be using energy to digest instead of to rejuvenate and you may wake up feeling groggy.

4. Wake up to your favorite song—sing along, or do a crazy dance. The best way to start your day is with a smile.

5. Eat a healthy and balanced breakfast. Include fruits, vegetables, and light carbohydrates to give you energy. A full stomach will help you stay focused and jump start brain activity.
Top 10 Reasons To Study Abroad
Written by Joanna Sroga

1) See and experience a different part of the world!
2) Get credit for classes you take while abroad!
3) Meet amazing people!
4) Learn a new language!
5) Discover new interests!
6) Gain independence!
7) Taste great food and immerse yourself in a new culture!
8) Personal Growth!
9) Explore!
10) Memories that will last a lifetime!
Across

1. Go to a CSA Meeting during Campus Lifetime to get a ______ lunch

4. Students can purchase lockers in the SAC or Union Basement, or in the Commuter _____.

5. If you have a ______ you don’t have to pay tax for food on campus

11. Stop by the Student Health Center on campus to get your flu _________.

12. Call 632-______ to see if class is cancelled during the winter months.

Down

2. Call 632-______ if you need a lift to your car after hours.

3. SB ______ is the Emergency Notification system on campus to help keep students safe and informed.

6. Students new to campus can request a Commuter ______ to help them acclimate to campus life.

7. Use the Changing _____ Checklist if you are a resident moving off campus.

8. Save money and gas by _________ with a friend.

9. Students get FREE _____________ at monthly Commuter Connections.

10. Check out our _________ page to win “Give ‘Ya Trivia.”
 EVENTS TO LOOK OUT FOR!

Winter Safety!
Thursday, December 1st at the Commuter Commons (SAC144)

Commuter Connection
Tuesday, December 6th at the Commuter Commons (SAC144)

CA Recruitment Sessions
Mid-February!
Commuters have 1 New Notification

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