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## From the Director's Desk

From the director...

As the spring semester draws to a close, we can look forward to some important changes in the fall.

We anticipate a surge in freshmen based upon preliminary figures. The total freshman class in CV will probably approach 170 or 180 by census day; over half may be National Merit Finalists. But student numbers are only part of the story. Other changes are also in store for the program.

First, Dr. Eva LaDow, Ph.D. from the University of California at San Francisco, will be joining us as a senior lecturer in neuroscience. Her undergraduate degree was from Smith where she was Phi Beta Kappa and a Goldwater award winner. Dr LaDow will be teaching courses in neuroscience and biology beginning in the spring 2014 semester. She also will be helping to coordinate linkages between CV students and UT Southwestern for summertime research. Once she gets settled in to Dallas in October, we plan to have her lead a few roundtables so that she can get to know interested students.

Second, following up on our successful physics courses, we will be offering our first ever CV honors classes in calculus in the fall. While this might not directly help many of you who have finished calculus, it will help integrate Collegium V and the math faculty more closely together.

Third, we will be offering some new readings classes in the fall and spring, including one on deafness and compassion offered by Vice-Provost Emily Toby. This class will provide a rare opportunity for honors students to work with a well-respected faculty member who primarily teaches graduate students.

Fourth, plans are underway to sponsor a number of group trips to dinner and opera/symphony/theatre throughout the fall and spring. The idea is to turn these trips into larger cultural experiences where people can discuss the event with faculty and other mentors interested in sharing their knowledge with honors students.

Finally, we plan to expand the faculty roundtable, bringing in faculty from a variety of fields to discuss their careers and areas of expertise. If there is someone that you would like to invite to present a roundtable let Mr. Seeligson know as soon as possible.

Enjoy the summer.

-Dr H



# Announcements

**Lost and Found:** Any items lost in the CV Lounge and classroom are often given to Valerie. Please go see her if you have lost something.

**To graduate with CV Honors:** 24 hours CV coursework, 3.5 GPA, and a senior thesis/project and poster presentation. Please see Valerie if you have any questions.

**Food in the Lounge:** Please do not leave food out in the Lounge. Pest control will be treating the Lounge on Fridays.

*"Please go see  
[Valerie] if you  
have lost  
something"*

**Graduation/Commencement dates (Spring 2013):**

Honors Convocation ..... Thursday, May 16  
Commencement.....Thursday, May 16 – May 18  
Degree conferral date ..... Saturday, May 18

# New Courtroom

Carter Plotkin

Pre-law at UTD would like to thank the prison inmates of Huntsville, TX for their excellent work on the new courtroom. Dr. Champagne encourages students to stop by FO 2.608 to take a look at the new courtroom!



***“Stop by FO  
2.608 to take a  
look at the new  
courtroom!”***



# Interview with Valerie

Shravik Sethi

There are a few things that remain constant in the life of a CVer: hearing someone knock on the CV Lounge door while you are inside the lounge, running into Dr. Harpham somewhere in Green Center, and not understanding what people write on the CV Lounge whiteboards. One of the biggest constants, though, and one that we take for granted sometimes, is Mrs. Valerie Brunell as Honors Program Coordinator. She is always there in her office helping us with our problems, keeping track of our requirements, and much, much more. During this busy class registration time period, I decided to interview her and learn a little bit about the person who does so much for us.

**Name:** Valerie Brunell

**Years with CV:** almost 2, started in August 2011

**Hometown:** Huntington Beach, CA

**College and degree:** University of California, Irvine (go Anteaters!), B.S. and M.S. in Chemistry

*"I would take  
one of the  
readings  
courses"*

**Shravik Sethi:** Is this time period (CV class registration time) the busiest time of the year for you?

**Valerie Brunell:** Registration during the spring is probably the busiest time of year for me because there are also applications for new CV students to review, senior poster presentations, graduation activities, in addition to all of the normal stuff I do.

**SS:** If you were able to enroll in any of the upcoming fall 2013 CV classes, which class would you take?

**VB:** Understanding Art would be my first choice. I have always regretted not taking an art history class when I was in college. But since it is full, I would take one of the Readings courses because the books and films always look interesting to me.

**SS:** How similar is your job now to your previous job as an advisor with NSM (School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics)?

*(continued on next page)*

# Interview with Valerie

Cont'd...

**VB:** My job now took the best parts of my advising job, interacting with students and advising them, and combined that with a job that is constantly changing and challenging me. I love working with everyone in the Honors College, the students and the other university faculty and staff that coordinate with our office. We are so fortunate to get to work with some of the best people on campus.

**SS:** What is it like working with Dr. Harpham on a daily basis?

**VB:** It is wonderful. He is so smart, considerate, and supportive. A big part of the reason I love my job (besides working with all of you fun and super intelligent students) is that he has created a very positive and student focused work environment. He is always thinking and planning to make our program better. And he always makes me laugh.

**SS:** What would your ideal office room look like?

**VB:** It would look just like my office now but it would be a lot neater!

**SS:** What has been your favorite CV event so far that you have attended?

**VB:** My favorite event was definitely going to see Sunrise at the Texas Theater with Dr. Dow. If you ever get a chance to attend one of Dr. Dow's film outings, do not miss it. It was probably one of my favorite events (not limited to work) last year. I also love the Senior Poster Presentations. It is so nice to hear what the seniors have worked on and then hear all the interesting questions from their peers.

*Edited by: Anandini Rao*

"If you ever get a chance to attend one of Dr. Dow's film outings, do not miss it"

# First World Problems

Mikaela McMurtry

Layla\* is cradling her phone in both hands, her brow knit, the slide keyboard open and her thumbs poised to type. She's holding absolutely still, and her look is one of distress. Friends are looking at her with mild worry, wondering if her cat died or something. Her eyes scrunch, hands drop and her voice rings out in anguish—"I don't know which emoticon to use!"

There's a beat. Then the tension drops like a student after finals week and Lyle rejoins, "First World Problems." Layla and the others laugh, and the evening commences.

The phrase "First World Problems" has been meme-ified and is used as commentary on our carping. While it may seem silly, and while some may be skittish of internet tropes, I advocate its usage, especially among the privileged.

The concept of First World Problems is a simple one. Harkening to the Cold War-era stratification of countries into First, Second, and Third Worlds, First World here means rich and advanced, and Third World means poor and lacking in amenities. Thus, Third World problems are starvation and unclean water, and First World problems are Hostess going out of business (and the dining hall discontinuing guava juice).

There is an obvious discrepancy in severity between the two. We tend to contentedly complain about our lives, and then someone BAM! slaps you in the face with: "There are people starving, and that's all you can worry about?" If said right, we feel intrinsically guilty, not because of what we have done, but simply because of the suffering of others that, by the grace of human nature, makes us feel penitent about what we have allowed.

The tone of such a rebuttal completely changes the way we, as individuals, will take it. Say someone shoots off the old, "Are you going to eat that? There are children starving in Africa." Generally, there will be one of two responses—neither of them considerate of the fate of disadvantaged youth. One reaction is guilt about the fact that

*"Are you going  
to eat that?  
There are  
children  
starving in  
Africa "*

*(continued on next page)*

# First World Problems

Cont'd...

someone noticed your eating habits (which it is generally preferred stay as incognito as your toilette habits). The other is defiant dismissal, based upon the fact that the dad-gum food is in America and there is nothing that you can do to put it in a starving child's mouth.

This can't be considered an exactly productive reaction. Maybe they will consider with shame their choice for a moment, but not for a moment are they considering those in real need. People on the defensive tend to hold their clubs too tightly to be able to reach out to others.

And here re-enters the rejoinder of "First World Problems." It is a salient distinction between histrionically life-or-death scenarios and literally life-or-death scenarios. It is also a joke. As such it serves the dish of perspective with the sweet glaze of humor.

**"Honors students  
are still people  
(despite rumors  
to the contrary)"**

Honors students are still people (despite rumors to the contrary) and we are just as likely to complain. If we feel entitled, perhaps we are more so. Yet do we ever consider that we have the best problems? Our food was snatched—from our private, convenient second kitchen. We're so busy—seizing opportunities others yearn for.

So are we afraid of sending the wrong message with the wrong emoticon? First World Problem. Do we "hate playing Jenga with [our] schedule[s]?" First World Problem. Sure, they're "problems"—but their very existence betrays a wealth of hope and choice and luxury.

I'm not saying we're ungrateful...but you know all that horrid studying you have to do for finals? First World Problem.

*Edited by: Kinsey Cline*

# MAY 2013

| Sun                           | Mon                           | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri                           | Sat                           |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                               | 1                             | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5                             | 6                             |
| 7                             | 8                             | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12                            | 13                            |
| 14                            | 15                            | 16  | 17  | 18  | 19<br>Washington<br>D.C. Trip | 20<br>Washington<br>D.C. Trip |
| 21<br>Washington<br>D.C. Trip | 22<br>Washington<br>D.C. Trip | 23  | 24  | 25  | 26                            | 27                            |
| 28                            | 29                            | 30  |     |     |                               |                               |

## THIS SUMMER:

**Texas Theatre with Dr. Dow** (June 7/8th): Texas Theatre outing with Dr. Dow for Oak Cliff Film Festival. Details will be emailed out closer to the date of the event.

**CV Freshman Orientation** (Aug. 24th): Email Helen Roth (Helen.Roth@utdallas.edu) if you want to help!



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**Calendar/  
Announcements:**

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## Special Thanks To:

Dr. Harpham

Dr. Dow

Valerie Brunell

Dr. Scotch

Dr. Champagne

Michael Seeligson

## Collegium V: Learning That Never Sleeps



The Collegium V Honors Program at The University of Texas at Dallas was established in 1997 to provide an undergraduate honors experience that extends beyond the classroom. Small classes, innovative instruction, world class faculty, bright and inquisitive colleagues, and an array of extracurricular events offer Collegium V members special opportunities for professional and personal growth at the university.

If you are interested in learning more about Collegium V, please visit our website at [cv.utdallas.edu](http://cv.utdallas.edu) or contact us for an application or to set up a tour.

## CV Contact Information

### CV Council

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### CV Lounge Phone

972-883-6605

*The CV Lounge (GC 1.202) is located on the 1st floor of the Green Center between the McDermott Library and Green Hall*

*If you have any questions/comments about the CV newsletter, please email Kelsey Drake at [krd093020@utdallas.edu](mailto:krd093020@utdallas.edu).*

