**The Freshman Experience**

They say time flies when you’re having fun and if you’re in love. Quite reasonably then, it is not hard to believe that the first semester of the frenzied ride known as University is almost over and that we’ve loved it so far.

But the real question is, how much fun have we really had? And have all of us had fun? With piling homework, lab reports, social obligations and adult responsibilities – how much of these 3 months was the fun part and how much have we been disappointed?

One to one conversations with a few freshmen revealed some interesting and verbose opinions.

“I came here expecting this to be exciting, and it is. The social life has blown my mind away, and I love how everything and everyone is just 5 minutes away; that you can meet with drunk people for discussing math and homework on Fridays at 1 a.m.!” revealed Marco David, Physics major – class of 2020.

One cannot agree more with that statement. It’s fascinating to see the campus teeming with activities ever since O-week. From Jacobs Games, which did a phenomenal job of inculcating college spirit in the freshies, to Dance Stoned to the cutest cheer-ups ever– there has been a plethora of events and parties to always look forward to, and as a cherry on the top, we couldn’t have asked for better seniors, seniors who welcomed us with unimaginable amounts of warmth to make us feel at home – miles away from our real homes.

Then there’s the astonishing amount of diversity – 105 nationalities put together within 80 acres of land. It is truly beautiful that, here, borders, prejudices and hatred are forgotten and tight friendships, late night cup noodle sessions, fretting over homework and celebrating the first snow come to the surface. “It’s nice that we get to meet so many people from different backgrounds and get to come to common ground with them, albeit having been brought up in absolutely different ways,” said Dragi Kamov, a Computer Science major. Ignacio Munoz, a psychology major worded the unanimous opinion: “It is incredible how people from all over the world come together and end up sharing the same kitchen and learning from each other.”

Academics at the university has, however, left the freshmen divided in opinions. The most wrath fell on the module system\*. “The university advertises the ‘choice’ year as a year you can study anything you enjoy and want to study, when it is not the same in reality, because of the modules. One *can’t* study anything he or she wants, and that’s ridiculous”, Marco complained, and so did many other freshmen.

But all negativity must be balanced out to keep the world going round, right? So quite obviously there are a lot of students who are beyond satisfied in the academics and study programs at Jacobs University. From prospects of working with the fantastic Professors to being involved in projects beyond the structured syllabus and off-campus – the opportunities provided at this university are endless. “The work is challenging and it is helpful that one can discuss problems with the professors and seniors for a more integrated learning,” was the opinion of Ayshan Aliyeva, Biochemistry – Cell Biology major.

In conclusion, the freshmen are happy. This insane journey of University has just begun for us, and in spite of the workload and adulting, we’re excited, and can’t wait to see where this journey takes us.

~Ushashi Basu

Biochemistry and Cell Biology

Class of 2020