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## The Grizzly, February 23, 2017

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Students work at the Technology Support Center located in the basement of Myrin Library. Photo Courtesy of Sydney Cope

## Laptop Program Comes to an End

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Incoming students at Ursinus will no longer get a new laptop, starting next year.

The 17-year-old program, which guaranteed each Ursinus student a laptop throughout their entire four years, has run its course, according to Gene Spencer, chief information officer.

“It was put in place at a time that technology use on campus was limited and frankly underfunded,” said Spencer, via email. “The program helped Ursinus move forward beyond many limitations at the time ... and it was

developed at a time when computers cost upwards of \$1,500 each, and were out of the reach of many. Today, those conditions and corresponding assumptions are very different than they were at the turn of the century.”

Spencer specifically cited the fact that an original goal of the program was to make tech on campus mobile. At the time, many students were still coming to school with desktop computers, effectively making it impossible to work in groups or outside of the dorms. Now, however, most students opt for laptops anyway.

Spencer also said that the technological needs of incoming students aren’t met by the program as it is. He said that 30 percent of

See **Laptop** on pg. 2

## Digital Humanities Opportunities Take Off

*Ursinus’s digital humanities programs are continuing to thrive after the first digital humanities course last semester.*

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Students on campus have been delving more into a new frontier of academia: digital humanities.

Last semester Ursinus held its first digital humanities class, Bears Make History. This semester, students and staff are getting more involved with digital humanities programs with classes such as Mapping Realism and through independent research.

Digital humanities classes help students create research projects that are different from traditional papers.

“We’ll create maps from novels and we’ll also create digital collections,” librarian Elena Althaus explained. “We also have an Omeka site, [a web publishing program,] where students are creating their own digital projects.”

There are currently three different student projects on the Ursinus Omeka site: “Bears Make GSA History,” “Breaking Ground: A History of Construction, Destruction and Renovation at Ursinus College,” and “Ursinus Remembers: Experience and Memory in the Face of Tragedy.” These projects were made by groups of students as part of the Bears Make History course.

The Bears Make History class was funded by the U-Imagine center and was co-taught by English professor Dr. Kara McShane and history professor Dr. Susanna Throop. The projects in the class focused on digitizing materials from the college archives.

“Bears Make GSA History” curated the first ten years of the Gender and Sexuality Alliance and the controversies surrounding the group; “Ursinus Remembers” looked at campus responses to tragedies, such as Pearl Harbor and 9/11; “Breaking Ground” examined the history of three build-

See **Digital** on pg. 2

**Digital** continued from pg. 1

ings on campus: The Berman, Myrin, and Bomberger.

McShane thought the class was a good experience for students.

“The cool thing about [digital humanities] when it’s done well is that it’s really a space for students to do original research,” she said. “We didn’t want [the class] to have an agenda. We wanted students to care [about] and design the projects from the ground up.”

McShane also discussed the practical skills students gain from creating digital humanities projects as opposed to writing research papers.

“We emphasized marketing and networking,” she said. “Students thought about how to build a network and promote a project.”

This semester, English professor Meredith Goldsmith is teaching the English course Mapping Realism, which is also working with digital humanities projects.

Goldsmith explored digital humanities projects during her residency at Duke University last year, where she created her own digital project in the form of a website called “Mapping Literary Visions” about her work on Edith Wharton’s novel “Age of Innocence.”

Goldsmith also discussed the differences in digital humanities courses from typical humanities classes.

“It’s a little different from a traditional literary approach because you’re focused on data—whether developing, harvesting, or curating—and sometimes less traditional close reading,” she said. “But my hope is the data-driven approach can take you to new interpretations of texts.”

Junior Sarah Gow is currently taking the Mapping Realism class.

“Essentially my mapping

class is the same as a normal 300 level English class as far as the level of discussion and reading, only we also have to learn and incorporate QGIS, [a digital mapping program], to help us interpret the literature with a new tool,” Gow explained.

Goldsmith emphasized the significance in a liberal arts education using new digital technologies.

“It’s an important direction in the field,” she said. “If we’re going to embrace a 21st-century approach to liberal arts, the digital is certainly included in that.”

Gow also said that they would recommend the class to other students because learning how to use new technology is a great resume booster.

“Employers want people willing to engage with new technology and who aren’t afraid to learn new skills,” they said.

*“My hope is the data-driven approach can take you to new interpretations of texts.”*

— Meredith Goldsmith  
English Professor

This course is not the first time Gow has worked with digital humanities. For their 2016 Summer Fellows project, they made an online exhibit for Mabel Dodge Luhan, a historical figure and patron of the arts. Gow looked at all of Dodge’s documents from 1910-1919 and examined her role in counter-culture movements. Without digital humanities, a lot of Dodge’s work would have been lost.

“Most of her work is out of print or not even attributed to her, so by digitizing her work, my project not only examined her role in history but also helped preserve her influence as part of the work of reclaiming women’s voices,” said Gow.

Ursinus currently has plans to

offer digital humanities courses next semester as well. McShane was optimistic that Bears Make History would be returning in the fall. She also said that English professor Jon Volkmer was interested in offering a DIY publishing course, and Environmental Studies courses were also using digital mapping.

Gow is excited about the movement towards digital humanities projects.

“I think the power of literature studies comes from connecting outside of just that academic bubble,” they said. “I think using digital humanities is one way to interact with literature in a new and more accessible way.”

McShane was also enthusiastic about the future of digital humanities at Ursinus.

“A lot of schools are starting to have this interest,” she said. “One of the things that’s distinct about Ursinus is that it extends the kind of research opportunities we have for [undergrad] students.”

Students who are interested in checking out the current digital humanities projects can access them through the Ursinus Digital Commons found on the college’s website.

Check out our new podcast “The Half-Credit Audit” featuring faculty interviews with Emmett Cawley at [ursinusgrizzly.com](http://ursinusgrizzly.com)

**Laptop** continued from pg. 1

current students don’t even use the school-provided computer as their primary one.

“One big change in assumptions is that the use of technology has become more of a personal choice,” said Spencer, via email. “All of us have certain needs for our technology environment and different ideas about what will fit. A ‘one size fits all’ approach to computing has become increasingly out-of-sync with individual desires.”

A few years ago, Ursinus’ committee on technology and computing (CTAC) did a study on the necessity of the laptop program. Based in part on that study, the college decided to keep the program in place. The more recent decision to phase out the program, according to CTAC chair and English professor Matthew Kozusko, was unrelated. Kozusko said CTAC was not involved in the decision.

While Kozusko said he was initially disappointed to see the laptop program go, he thinks the decision makes sense.

“I support the decision ultimately because it returns Ursinus to the vanguard in terms of technology on campus,” he said.

Kozusko used the analogy of Apple’s ever-changing technology to explain how he sees the change in the college’s technological trajectory.

“Think of Apple’s decision to eliminate various drives and ports from tech products: These moves were deeply frustrating for people (like me) who had built habits around those drives and ports, but they were early adopters/shapers of new use patterns. Ursinus is investing in infrastructure that serves new and emerging use patterns,” he said via email.

“Most important, however, is the investment in a campus technology plan that will help all of

us—students, faculty, staff—who use many different devices and who will, increasingly, need those devices all to work together on campus as seamlessly as possible,” he added.

Spencer also cited some new technologies that Ursinus will be able to explore without the program. There will be a new system of touch screen projector system that will be able to incorporate multiple students’ screens, and a new tool called XenApp that will allow for much of the computing to be hosted on an on-campus server while still allowing for remote work by students.

And then there is the cost.

In an additional interview, Spencer said that Ursinus spends \$800,000 on the program in its current iteration. That money could be re-directed towards more interesting and effective technology like XenApp.

Additionally, Ursinus will continue to provide free installation of Microsoft office, and tech support can still help students out, though they won’t be able to do hardware repairs like they do now.

Spencer stressed that there will be options available to students who cannot afford a laptop for school.

“We expect to provide a safety net to make sure that no one gets left behind, although details are still under discussion,” he said in an email.

This change doesn’t affect any students currently on campus. Spencer said that the school will honor the promise it made to everyone when they enrolled. That said, there will be a buyout option for students already here.



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Photo courtesy of Katrina O'Donnell

Katrina O'Donnell studied abroad last semester in Ireland.

## International Perspective: A student's thoughts on technology use while living abroad

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One thing people don't often think about before deciding to go abroad is limited availability of the internet and cell phone service. Depending on the type of phone you have and what you want to spend, there are options to have international data plans and SIM cards which will allow more access, but I believe that the best option is simply using Wi-Fi when it's available.

When I went abroad to Ireland last semester, I decided to use my iPhone for internet use when I had Wi-Fi access and to buy a cheap Irish phone that would allow me to make emergency phone calls. Throughout the semester I only used the Irish phone a few times to make calls. To be honest, it was a waste because of how little I used it. I bought the phone because of the fact that before going abroad, I was paranoid that I wouldn't be able to call someone in an emergency. I soon realized that needing an emergency phone was unnecessary. If there was an emergency, I could reach out to the nearest person with a phone who would most likely know who to call. In my opinion, the only time buying a phone or a data plan would be necessary is for solo travel depending on whether you can understand the language that is being spoken in the country you plan to visit.

Because I decided to use my iPhone only with Wi-Fi, I could not communicate with SMS texting or calling, but iMessage

(which relies on the internet) was still available. I used this to contact relatives and friends from home who also had iPhones (iMessage can only be sent through Apple devices). When I wanted to contact my abroad friends and people from home who did not have an iPhone, I used WhatsApp. WhatsApp is an app that allows you to send messages through the internet on most smart devices. It works similarly to iMessage because it allows you to send group messages, pictures and audio messages. Overall, these forms of messaging worked well for me when it was necessary.

Staying connected only started to get tricky when I began travelling around Ireland and to different countries in Europe. Wi-Fi was always available at my abroad university and some of the businesses around the local city, but it is difficult to stay on a Wi-Fi connection while constantly traveling from one place to the next. The easiest places to find Wi-Fi connections are usually in chain restaurants and local coffee shops. These places usually have a free and easily accessible Wi-Fi connection because they can afford to pay for it as opposed to other local businesses.

Although it was difficult to stay on stable Wi-Fi connection while traveling, I think that this factor improved the overall experience. Unfortunately, I couldn't post a continuous thread of posts to my Snapchat story throughout the day, but ultimately this allowed me to focus on the experience and the places I explored.

Without stable internet access and constant communication with my friends and family at home, I was more immersed in the experiences that I had. I know it sounds cliché, but being disconnected allowed me to make better memories in real-time and not just on social media. Even though I didn't have access to the internet all the time, I could still document the experience. I enjoyed writing things down, saving memorable items from the cities I visited, and taking photographs that didn't immediately need to be posted to social media.

Another aspect of traveling without internet was not being able to use GPS for navigation. Without GPS, I relied on maps that were previously downloaded through Google Maps, in addition to actual paper maps. It surprised me how much my friends and I were able to go and see without it. I think often people rely too heavily on GPS because they don't trust themselves, but I would recommend using maps that don't track your location. You'd be surprised how much you can find if you rely on your gut for navigation. And if you do get lost, you may find something interesting that you never would have found.

Overall, my experience with limited phone communication and access while traveling abroad was a positive one. It allowed me to be fully immersed and have experiences that I probably would not have had otherwise. It also gave me confidence because it showed me that I can be much more self-reliant than I think.

## Here's why the Wi-Fi has been so rough this semester

*Technology services have been working to improve the internet connection.*

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Students have struggled with poor internet connection on campus this semester.

On Feb. 2, Tech Support sent a campus-wide email reassuring students that they identified a piece of faulty equipment at the regional internet hub in Philadelphia, so the connection should have improved.

James Shuttlesworth, the director of Network Systems and Infrastructure, explained that while the user's location did not affect their connection during this outage, streaming media or downloading large files would have been more affected by the poor connection than just web browsing.

Shuttlesworth also provided more insight about Ursinus's dependence on the internet hub.

The campus has two connections to the internet, he explained. This issue in particular affected the primary connection, a direct fiber optic connection to the regional internet hub at 401 N. Broad Street in Philadelphia. Because the fiber optic transmitter in Philadelphia that sends traffic to campus degraded, a lot of data was delayed or retransmitted. This connection was estimated to be about 20 percent of capacity.

While the campus's secondary connection was not affected, it was not strong enough to support the connection by itself. Shuttlesworth said that technology services will upgrade the secondary connection over spring break so that the connection could support a similar problem without causing disruption, if any more connection issues were to occur in the future.

"By design, our secondary link is not dependent on 401 Broad Street, so we were and are not at risk of a total internet outage if 401 goes down," Shuttlesworth said. "However, 401 Broad is an important part of the larger internet, so it's hard to say exactly what the impact would be if there were a major issue outage there."

Since the faulty equipment, later identified as a transmitter, was replaced, Shuttlesworth said that tech support has not had sig-

nificant reports of connection issues.

"We do try to monitor traffic flows and network performance regularly," he said. "We've seen an uptick in network traffic that indicates things have significantly improved since our ISP replaced the transmitter. Retransmission rates have dropped to less than 1 retransmit per million packets, prior to replacement as many as one in 14 packets were retransmitted."

However, students still report connection issues from before and after this outage.

Main Street resident adviser Courtney DuChene claims there have been lasting internet connection issues in Fetterolf. She explained that the Ursinus Secure network sometimes fails to connect for up to a half hour, while the Ursinus Guest and Registered networks do not work at all on her computer.

"From what I've heard, it does this a lot to Main Street residents," DuChene said. "The problem hasn't stopped since we got the email claiming the internet was fixed."

DuChene said that even last semester, she had poor internet connection in her residence hall. Particularly during finals week, the lack of connection would impact her coursework.

Shuttlesworth encourages students to contact tech support if they are still experiencing issues with internet connection.

"The network and internet is a very complex system, with thousands of pieces of equipment working together on campus to deliver service," he said. "We monitor network performance carefully, but sometimes issues occur in ways we can't detect remotely. So, it's important for users to let us know if the network isn't performing the way they expect; sometimes the problem is simple, and we can quickly fix it, and other times repairs may be more involved, but we investigate and remediate every report we receive."

Students can contact tech support at techsupport@ursinus.edu or call 610-409-3789 or visit their desk in the basement of the library.

# Exploring campus culture in a plugged-in world

*UC students and faculty share their thoughts on how social media and internet use shape our everyday lives*

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Sometimes, if you walk around the library late at night, the stress is palpable. Students pound away on their keyboards and flip through their notes at breakneck speed, eager to finish their work and get back to their rooms for a few hours of sleep. Casual observers will note something strange, however: despite the clear stress and piles of work, most students will have an open tab designated for social media or their phone in hand, scrolling endlessly.

Social media has become a crucial part of modern life throughout the world, and Ursinus is no exception. Much ink has been spilled on whether or not this is a problem, with nearly every publication devoting column inches to think pieces and counter-points on the topic.

But UC seems different. Students seem to be extra-plugged in here, and so much of our social lives are tied into social media. For better or for worse, Ursinus culture has gone digital.

It's nothing new. When Facebook swept across the nation in

2004, it was aimed primarily at college campuses. Thumbing through the archives of this newspaper shows that our digital culture on campus has been years in the making.

The first issue of 2005 contained a satirical primer on how to create a more attractive profile (it proclaimed, in quaint disbelief that "yes, 'friend' is now a verb now"). An issue a month later laid out the pros and cons of "MySpace vs. TheFacebook." By 2007, skepticism was starting to set in, with one opinion piece asking "Is Today's Generation of Crusaders Too Online?" and another proclaiming a few years later that "Facebook and cell phones impede learning." In 2012, it seemed that social media had become so normal that it didn't even warrant examination, except for the occasional profile on a clever UC meme page or the obligatory warning of screen addiction.

"It seems that many students have deeply ambivalent feelings about social media," said Tony Nadler, a media and communication studies professor currently on sabbatical. Nadler studies political culture, news, and social media, and has taught courses on

social media in recent semesters. "It feels kind of essential to them, they spend a lot of time with it. But they also have some negative feelings associated with social media."

Nadler's point was validated as I researched this article: many students expressed a sense of exhaustion with social media, but a fear that if they disconnected they would be excluded from events and groups on campus.

*"Screens aren't a replacement of human interaction, they just embellish it."*

— Kayla O'Mahony  
Ursinus junior

"I definitely feel that people here are always on social media," said Solana Warner, a junior currently studying abroad. We corresponded via email. "When they're working on homework or projects, most of that is done on the internet, and any short breaks from work are almost solely composed of visits to Facebook and other social media."

Warner said that most of her socializing with friends happens

"under the guise of 'studying' or 'doing homework,'" even though the main activity is toggling between work and social media.

"I understand that my friends are going to spend a great majority of their time on work for class and clubs and that our daily routines don't always line up, but I can't help but wish sometimes that things were different," said Warner, who only uses Facebook. "I've noticed that everyone's productivity level goes down when in a half-working, half-socializing state, so I've spent the past year doing most of my serious work by myself." This allows her to focus on socializing when she is socializing, and work when she is working.

"It really becomes like another obligation, and I have enough obligations for my classes and clubs," said Warner.

Another common complaint was the sense that everything about everyone was public knowledge.

"I just feel that everyone can kind of just ... be in each other's business all of the time," said Lauren Geiger, a senior who consciously and seriously limits her time online. She keeps up with

messages, but only checks Facebook once a day, and never looks at Twitter anymore.

This isn't necessarily an Ursinus problem, though. According to Nadler, people tend to use social media not for global connections, but more for "microscopic" ones. He said that most of the students he talks to use social media to connect with people they know and see in real life.

But in a community as closely connected as Ursinus, this can amplify pre-existing tensions. Unlike at larger schools, it's just harder to avoid people here, both online and off.

"I've noticed that it gets heated really quickly, and I don't know if that's the most productive way to resolve conflict," said Geiger. "It has a weird way of polarizing people."

That said, nobody I spoke with opted to completely write off social media. Both Geiger and Warner agreed that it has been an effective way of organizing friends and staying in touch with people off campus. These are some of the reasons why junior Kayla O'Mahony actively defends so-

See **Culture** on pg. 5

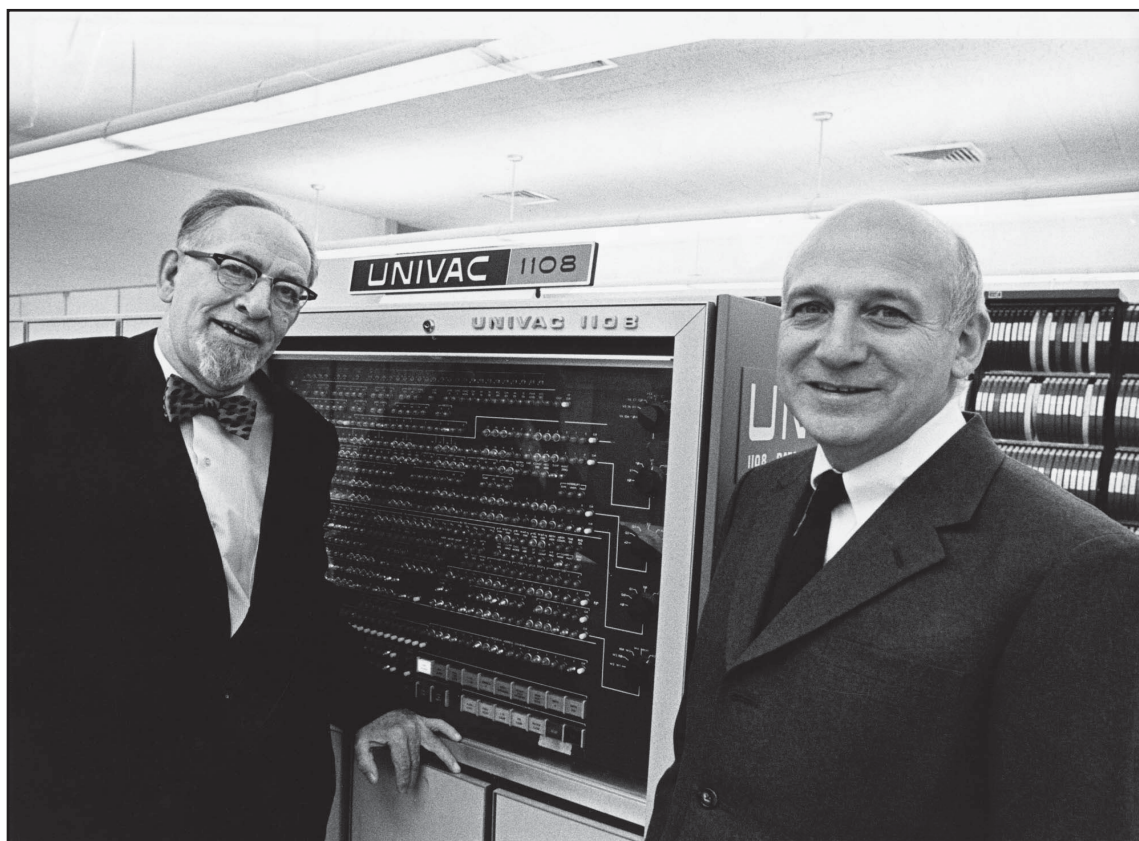


Photo courtesy of Ursinus College Archives

Inventors of the ENIAC computer, John Mauchly (left) and J. Presper Eckert (right), with the UNIVAC, another computer they designed. Mauchly taught physics at Ursinus in the 1930s.

## Revisiting Ursinus' lost connection to computer history

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As a college with a rich history spanning nearly 150 years, it may come as no surprise that Ursinus has a few urban legends floating around.

We've all heard stories of J.D. Salinger's semester here, but a tale many are unfamiliar with is that of the ENIAC computer – or, as it was first told to me, "Did you know the first computer was invented in Pfahler?"

This, technically speaking, isn't completely true, but Ursinus' tie to the invention of one

of the first high-speed computing machines is more than just an urban legend. With help from college archivist Carolyn Weigel, I did some digging to find out exactly what it is people are talking about when they mention this mysterious "Pfahler computer."

The story of the ENIAC, it turns out, is less about the machine than it is about the man behind it. In the 1930s, Pfahler Hall was home to beloved physics professor John Mauchly. When Mauchly arrived at Ursinus in 1933, Ursinus didn't have a physics department yet, and although

See **ENIAC** on pg. 5

Culture continued from pg. 4

cial media use.

“I have found that social media is a great place to cultivate incredible relationships and discourse. To really cultivate understanding and to educate yourself and to educate other people,” said O’Mahony, who says she spends multiple hours per day on social media.

“I’ve made so many incredible friends on Facebook, on Tumblr, on Twitter, who I would not know if it were not for those platforms. And they are people who have come to challenge me to grow and develop as a person. So it is really hard for me to hear all the negative backlash against social media when it has done so much good for me personally, and so many people that are around me,” she said.

O’Mahony said that much of the criticism of social media is ill-founded, since it is essentially a mirror of how people behave in real life. The things that many people claim to dislike about social media—the superficiality, the high levels of stress, the competition—are certainly not in short supply in the corporeal realm.

O’Mahony, who lives out of state, cites her grandmother’s immigrant experience in defense of her social media use. When her grandmother crossed the Atlantic from Ireland, she could only communicate with her family was through handwritten letters. Now, there are few barriers.

“Screens aren’t a replacement of human interaction, they just embellish it,” said O’Mahony. “I live four hundred miles away from my family while I’m at college, and to be able to see their face ... that’s incredible. It’s not a replacement of my human interactions with them, it’s just in addition to it.”

It’s a good point. It’s hard to

deny that Facebook has just made communication easier—our interview was conducted by exchanging voice messages over Facebook.

But while most of the feedback surrounded Facebook as a default, it seems that Facebook is starting to fall out of vogue. According to Professor Lynne Edwards, who studies social media use and teaches courses on it, things may be changing.

“I think FB isn’t used as much as it once was because of competition from other social media that meet different needs,” said Edwards, via email. “The visual power of Instagram requires very little extended engagement like FB does and the same goes for Twitter. I think FB is used more like email once was—check in, fill-in, and share-in.”

It’s unlikely that Ursinus students of the future will opt out of social media, and that’s probably a good thing. Despite the distraction and disconnection cited by students, social media has made organizing events and parties easier than ever.

And it seems that UC students are trying to strike the right balance. Geiger, Warner, and O’Mahony all said that they have limits on when they use social media, even if they were different. They all agreed that there were boundaries, and that they had no problem disconnecting when they needed to.

It can seem impossible to navigate the internet sometimes. A barrage of headlines amp up the sense of impending doom (one prime example is “Social Media is Ruining Everything,” via The Huffington Post). But it seems like Ursinus students are figuring it out. It can get messy, and it can get out of hand, but the upside is huge, and students here recognize it.

ENIAC continued from pg. 4

students couldn’t major in the subject, Mauchly paid special attention to those who showed a strong interest. According to an article in the 1985 Ursinus Bulletin, “John Mauchly was the physics department.”

Mauchly, who the Ursinus website describes as “an eccentric, brilliant professor of Physics,” began working on his idea for a computer during his time at Ursinus. ENIAC, which stands for “electronic numerical integrator and computer,” was not his first invention, though. Mauchly, according to the Ursinus Bulletin, had previously helped invent four computers, and even had three personal computers at his home.

*“The history of computers should be enriched by more attention to the start at Ursinus.”*

— John Mauchly  
Ursinus professor 1933-1941

Mauchly’s original intention was to build a computer that would help with his meteorology research, which would provide him a means of statistical analysis to prove his hypothesis that solar activity directly affected changes in weather. He began this work in Pfahler, and according to the 1946 Alumni Journal, “his frequent burning of midnight oil in the physics laboratory of the Science Building was observed by many students.”

Mauchly left Ursinus for the University of Pennsylvania in 1941, and the onset of World War II took his innovations in a different direction. The prospect of the U.S. entering the war led the government to mobilize science and engineering reasons, anticipating the need for a machine that could

decode encrypted messages. The possibility of Mauchly’s computer was now in high demand, and he joined forces with engineer J. Presper Eckert at Penn’s Moore School of Engineering to further develop his ideas. The result was the ENIAC: the world’s first electronic, digital computer.

The ENIAC took the two engineers 30 months to assemble, used over 18,000 vacuum tubes and cost a reported \$400,000. The machine weighed 30 tons and took up an entire room, wrapping in a U-shape around three walls. Most importantly, though, it was a thousand times faster than any other computer in existence at the time.

Mauchly’s innovation was ahead of his time. The Ursinus Bulletin stated that “the work which he started at Ursinus was misunderstood by almost everyone on campus.” Even at Penn, Mauchly and Eckert’s work was viewed with skepticism.

In 1946, after months of testing, the ENIAC was presented at a press conference. This was Mauchly and Eckert’s “moment of acclaim,” according to the Ursinus Bulletin. Proving wrong everyone’s doubts, the computer worked, and began solving addition problems at the rate of 5000 per second.

The original machine became property of the U.S. Army and was installed at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland.

Despite the ENIAC’s success, Mauchly and Eckert were fired by Penn one month after the computer was unveiled, after they refused to sign over all patent rights to the University. Later, the two inventors went into business together, but faced financial problems, patent battles, and others trying to claim credit for their work.

In light of these struggles, the work of John Mauchly and J. Presper Eckert was fundamental

to the advancement of computer technology.

Computerhistory.org states that in a decade of operation, “ENIAC may have run more calculations than all mankind had done up to that point.”

Mauchly never forgot his Ursinus roots. He resided in nearby Ambler with his wife Kathleen until his death in 1980. In 1977, Ursinus’ then-president Richard Richter presented Mauchly with an honorary doctorate of science at that year’s commencement ceremony.

In a letter to Richter following the ceremony, Mauchly reflected on his time at Ursinus and how the college influenced his work.

“I think it is proper to comment that the history of the first electronic computer does not really start at the Moore School of the University of Pennsylvania; that it was a continuation of what I was beginning to work on and think about at Ursinus College,” he said. “The history of computers should be enriched by more attention to the start at Ursinus.”

Today, parts of the original ENIAC can be found residing in Pfahler Hall, a piece of national technological history returned home.

More information on John Mauchly, and countless other undiscovered bits of Ursinus history, can be found in the College Archives on the second floor of the Myrin Library, accessible by appointment.



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Happening on Campus

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
By the Way, Meet Vera Stark 7:30 p.m. Daily to Feb. 25 Lenfest Theater	Nerd Camp: My Parents Want to Know What I Can Do with a Theater Degree 2 p.m. Kaleidoscope 215	Substance of Our Souls Concert 6 p.m. Lower Wismer		Manic Monday Guided Meditation with Art 12 p.m. Berman Museum	Dr. Aasim Padela: Toward a Comprehensive, Holistic, and Theologically-rooted Islamic Bioethics 7 p.m. Olin Auditorium	Test Anxiety Workshop 12 p.m. - 1 p.m. Olin 107

# Excessive technology use harms student learning

**Steve Mohapp**  
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We have all had professors who incorporate varied forms of technology into every class. They show videos, create assignments using computer software, and post all of their PowerPoint presentations online. We have also had the exact opposite in a professor: You're not sure if your professor has used the internet since the annoying sound of dial-up was no longer necessary.

Personally, I have mixed feelings about the use of technology in the classroom. On one hand, I think that technology that directly connects to the course material and provides a novel way to learn is great. On the other hand, the unnecessary use of technology can be distracting and can take away from the learning experience.

A myriad of technologies can be helpful in the classroom. Videos and films can add to students'

understanding of material in various courses. Surprisingly, using projection screens to watch films in film classes is helpful! Videos are also useful in any other department because they can help students engage the information in a way different than they do during lectures. Computer software programs can also allow students to engage with course information in a new manner. The environmental studies department now offers a geographic information systems course, which would not be possible without computer software.

In a 2011 study at University of Michigan's Center for Learning and Technology, a group of researchers--Erping Zhu, Matthew Kaplan, R. Charles Dershimer, and Inger Bergom--compared a classroom utilizing interactive laptop software called LectureTools to a control classroom allowing students to take notes on their laptops during conventional lectures. The authors found that "about 60% of the LectureTools students strongly

agree[d] or agree[d] that laptops increased their engagement versus only 39% of the control group."

This study demonstrates how helpful technology can be to increasing student engagement with course material. When technology is carefully and deliberately incorporated into the classroom, it can enhance the learning experience because it allows students to engage with the curriculum in new and useful ways.

However, technology can negatively impact learning if it is not necessary or fully incorporated into the class. The most apparent example of this phenomenon at Ursinus is using laptops to take notes during a conventional lecture or a discussion-based class. Taking notes on a laptop can be distracting for the student. Instead of focusing completely on the class, the student can go on social media websites, play games, or just play with the mouse and buttons. I know I am guilty of repeatedly highlighting sections of my

computer screen when my attention flickers.

In a 2008 study about laptop use in a college course, Carrie B. Fried, a psychologist at Winona State University, found that "the level of laptop use was negatively related to several measures of student learning, including self-reported understanding of course material and overall course performance."

In this instance, laptop use to take notes during lecture proved detrimental to the students' learning. The laptops were distractions to both the students using them and other students in the classroom. Taking notes on laptops also does not allow students to draw diagrams.

Additionally, I believe that professors are occasionally guilty of unnecessarily using technology to the detriment of their students. I know that many students enjoy PowerPoint presentations, especially if they are uploaded to Canvas. They provide students with

neat, verbatim notes that can easily be accessed outside of class.

However, I do not think that they provide the same learning opportunities as notes written by the professor on a chalkboard or whiteboard. First, old-fashioned notes require students to copy them down in a notebook, rather than just looking them up online. But written notes on a board provide other ways to learn that a PowerPoint presentation cannot. Students can recall the order a professor wrote the notes or the spatial relationship of the notes on the board. Students may also remember a professor erasing a point and rewording it in real time. Both the original thought and the revised phrase are important!

At the end of the day, the helpfulness of technology comes down to how each individual student learns. But, technology will more likely be useful if it has a specific function within the classroom, rather than replacing tried-and-true teaching methods.

# Students should use technology to stay organized

*A student examines the usefulness of Outlook and phone settings for student scheduling*

**Jordan Scharaga**  
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As a senior, I can safely say that organization at college is not only the key to success but also the key your sanity. Technology, like online calendars and reminders, can lessen stress and make time management simple. However, the way you use technology is completely dependent on your environment and community.

At Ursinus, students are constantly busy. Between the heavy workload from classes and the time demands of practices and club meetings things can seem a bit overwhelming. And if you are remotely similar to me, you might become so overwhelmed that you freeze and accomplish nothing.

In fact, the Ursinus Institute for Student Success webpage titled "Time Management" stresses the importance of making a weekly schedule as a solution to this problem. They offer a few suggestions for making a calendar including an Excel spreadsheet and using your

desktop's notes feature, which are viable digital tools for your scheduling needs.

I know when I was a freshman I was overconfident in my ability to remember every single thing on my to-do list. I soon realized that I would forget paper deadlines until the last minute or I would rush between each activity because I did not plan my time well.

While Excel and notes are okay, I would argue that at Ursinus Outlook is queen. It is the glue that holds students, faculty, staff, and administration together. However, for scheduling and organization many of us wonder if Outlook is worth all of our adoration and exclusivity. While Outlook may not be my first choice due to the application failing to update regularly on my desktop, for an online calendar it has become a priority in staying in touch here at school.

Outlook Calendar features a section called Categories, which allows you to name and assign colors to classify what each event is in your schedule. This is really great if you are part of teams or

clubs since you can assign each group its own color--if visual organization is for you.

You can also download your class calendar from Grizzly Gateway and add it to your Outlook calendar or you can manually input each class as a recurring weekly event. Either way it can help you coordinate your breaks and meal times based on your to-do list.

In addition to coordinating times to do homework or eat, you can extend this to scheduling yourself some free time. By marking your free time as busy on your calendar, you can focus on yourself and your needs rather than on your other commitments.

If you have an iPhone with your Ursinus email account logged in, you can sync-up your Outlook calendar to your phone's calendar. Also, if you need to schedule a meeting you can check the availability of the people you are inviting if their calendar is updated.

Phone settings are also really useful for staying organized. On your phone email you can set certain email addresses as VIP and

have those show up on your lock screen. Personally, each semester I edit and add contacts to my VIP list based on my professors or campus job. This offers a way to stay up to date on whether class is cancelled or if a meeting location changes.

There is no single, best way to stay organized at school, so testing out options is the only way to know what works for you. If you are a student who has trouble keeping up with your written planner or would like to condense your schedule into one place, then digitizing your calendar and schedule is the best option for you.

Technology allows you to plan events, share them with contacts, and set reminders at pivotal times during your day. In addition to learning how to write papers or conduct experiments, college is a great place to learn how to stay organized.

This time of experimentation can extend beyond creating your calendar and can help you when you leave Ursinus as well. While many of us are reluctant to change

we need to use the resources available to us here and now, rather than dreaming of better systems or applications for the future.

Learning how to use technology in your environment can be useful; it is a skill that will assist you in the future as you apply for jobs or enter a new work environment. If you would like to learn how to use career-related websites and applications like Handshake or LinkedIn, you can find the information on the Career and Professional Development webpage. Their webpage includes instructions and tips about digital job searching tools and how to use them.

And if the future is too far away, then I highly recommend trying Outlook and your phone's applications to stay organized and stress-free with your current schedule. If you could minimize the amount of stress in your life, wouldn't you? And if you do I suggest that you embrace your technological surroundings and give applications like Outlook a chance.





Photo Courtesy of Sydney Cope

Snell field, where Ursinus' field hockey team plays, on a warm day in late Feb. 2017.

# What they want: athletes speak about dream equipment

*The athletes of Ursinus give their input on what technologies and equipment would help improve their*

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Imagine you had an unlimited amount of money to buy anything that could enhance your athletic career. You could pay for personal facilities and new fields, buy new equipment, and afford an unlimited supply of whatever technology you needed. Obviously, at a small liberal arts school not particularly known for its sports this hypothetical is especially unlikely. However, this did not stop Ursinus athletes from weighing in on this imaginary scenario with their dream equipment and facilities.

There are a few technologies

players noted would be beneficial within their Ursinus sport.

"If I could use anything I wanted to, I would use BESR baseball bats in games," said senior baseball player Jay Farrell. "Unfortunately, they are no longer NCAA legal."

BESR bats, otherwise known as composite bats, make the ball leave the bat much faster and harder than the current BBCOR bats used in high school and the NCAA. Before BESR, aluminum bats were used, which lead to a huge disadvantage for pitchers against hitters, especially power hitters. When aluminum was used, the scores of college games drastically rose. The NCAA first banned aluminum, then went to

composite, and, as of six years ago, have been using BBCOR bats that play more like wooden bats than anything else.

Junior pitcher Pierce Greenleaf expressed a desire for an unusual piece of equipment.

"I would buy myself a bionic arm. It'd be awesome because I could just throw as hard and as long as I wanted and I would never even get tired. I'd be striking guys out," said Greenleaf.

Greenleaf is a key member of the Bear's bullpen this season; they rely heavily on him to give the Bears solid innings in relief. It would be beneficial for such an athlete to not have fatigue when pitching several times a week.

Another issue that athletes

have had is the facilities and lack of practice space. No athlete seems to have a problem with quality or size of Patterson Field or the Floy Lewis Bakes field-house but rather the lack of space to train in the offseason.

With the fields being booked every single season for different sports, it is difficult for athletes to train in certain spots when they're not in season. Because of this, it can be difficult for them to get back in the groove when their season starts.

Having limited space also makes it difficult for athletes to train in the space where they compete, which can really throw off the athlete's game.

"It would be really great if we had an indoor field," said senior soccer player Katie O'Shea. "The transition between surfaces gets really tough: having to go from the grass field to the turf and then back to the field house to practice, the ball takes different bounces."

Senior soccer player Gavin Reeves also gave his thoughts.

"I would definitely just build my own field," he said. "I would build it right on the roof of my house so I could play all the time and get better and not have to worry about not getting on a field."

Junior soccer player Phoebe Shoap would like to have better filming technologies and viewing capacities.

"I wish we had a way to watch certain parts of the game without having to watch the entire thing," she said. "If we could just watch important aspects of the game, it could save a lot of time."

Shoap added that more locker room space would be nice, as the team's current quarters are a little cramped.

Transitioning from land to sea, the swimmers would like to see some improvements as well.

"If I could I would use a full body swimsuit like the ones they wore in the 2012 Olympics," said

senior swimmer Brett Felgoise. "The swimsuits were banned, but they make you go really fast, so I would definitely wear one."

Of course most of these items are non-existent, against NCAA rules, or far too costly. Nonetheless, it is interesting to think about how much some of the teams and athletes would achieve with absolutely no restrictions on what they could use and have at their disposal.



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Join us for our weekly news meeting

Mondays,  
6 p.m.  
Ritter 141

## Scores as of Monday, Feb. 20, 2017

M. Basketball (14-11)	W. Basketball (13-12)	Wrestling (18-3)	M. Swimming (5-3)	W. Swimming (9-0)	M. & W. Track (0-0)	Gymnastics (1-2)
Feb. 15; Ursinus 86 - Muhlenberg 59	Feb. 18; Gettysburg 57 - Ursinus 42	Feb. 18; Ursinus 59 - Williamson 0	Feb. 19; Ursinus vs. Centennial Conference Championship 3rd place; 533 points*	Feb. 19; Ursinus vs. Centennial Conference Championship 1st place; 815 points*	Feb. 11; Ursinus vs. Keogh Invitational*	
Feb. 18; Gettysburg 74 - Ursinus 69		Ursinus 53 - Penn State - Mont Alto 5	*For full results please visit ursinusathletics.com	<b>Congratulations on an undefeated four years!</b>	*For full results please visit ursinusathletics.com	
		Ursinus 47 - Penn College 3				



Photo Courtesy of Ursinus Communications

The staff of the 2016-17 HEART lab. The HEART lab is currently working on projects to understand cardiovascular health in a more in-depth manner. The HEART lab works with the wellness center.

## Ursinus HEART Lab at the cutting edge of cardiovascular research

*Heart research is conducted regularly by Dr. Deborah Feairheller along with her 19 student researchers*

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Ursinus College is known for its excellence in the biology and pre-medical fields. Helping to further this reputation is the Ursinus Hypertension and Endothelial function with Aerobic and Resistance Training laboratory, fondly known as the HEART lab, led by Dr. Deborah Feairheller and her team of 19 Ursinus College students. The main study of the lab has its focus

on how resistance training impacts patients' hearts.

"The goal of study is to examine how resistance training improves cardiovascular and vascular health," said Dr. Feairheller.

In their most recent four-week long study, patients of all ages and fitness levels are examined. During the study, patients are to complete a circuit-based weight training program three times per day, three days per week. A fitness test and a fasted test are given to each patient at the beginning and end of their

four-week program. These tests are engineered to provide the researchers with bottom line fitness and cardiovascular marks.

Ursinus senior health and exercise physiology major Casey Derella has been involved with the HEART lab since her sophomore year.

"I was always interested in research, but nothing stood out to me," said Derella. "Dr. Feairheller became my advisor and helped me get involved with her lab."

Along with running the tests,

Derella's main task is to help recruit patients and train them for the program. As one of the many offshoots of the main study, Derella has also been conducting a study of her own that focuses on the changes in blood pressure in volunteer firefighters and EMTs when their pagers go off. "I recruit patients, complete a fasted study and set up patients to wear an ambulatory blood pressure monitor for 12 hours," said Derella.

Both the main study and Derella's study are aided by different types of medical technology. The fasted study in which patients do not eat, is implemented to measure a patients' blood glucose and cholesterol level, according to Derella. This is done using a finger stick and a quick read machine.

"We put a small amount of blood into a plate and run it through the machine," said Derella. "We complete a body composition measurement using little electrodes on the patient's hand and foot—this measures the water in the body between the electrodes."

Derella and the other researchers monitor blood pressure through the use of a tonometer, an instrument designed to measure blood pressure through one's wrist. "We measure clinical blood pressure each time patients are in the lab," said Dr. Feairheller.

Lastly, the researchers use an ultrasound machine in order to make their final few measurements.

"Dr. Feairheller measured the flow mediated dilation of the right brachial artery and we then measured the thickness of the carotid artery," Derella said. "This system uses the ultrasound tonometer and records a video of each artery, allowing us to go back to images."

Derella's own personal study also uses most of these instruments to gather valuable information.

Since the study is still ongoing, the researchers had no final conclu-

sions to report at this time, but they are beginning to see some mixed developments.

"We are seeing a large spike in blood pressure in the second study – which was expected," said Derella. "However, the diastolic (bottom number of blood pressure) is also jumping very high which we did not expect and are concerned [about]."

She also made sure to note that they are seeing improvements throughout the populations. Looking toward the future, Dr. Feairheller and the rest of the researchers have high hopes for the study; if everything stays on course, they hope to finish up the resistance testing by the conclusion of the spring semester.



"We have plans to analyze data and publish this in a vascular health or exercise physiology clinical journal in the next few years," said Dr. Feairheller.

As the study moves forward, the researchers are sure to see some incredible and interesting developments. With the help of the great staff and resources provided by Ursinus, these students are working not only for themselves but to help out their patients as well.

"To me, my favorite part of the HEART lab is getting to work with the patients," said Derella. "Seeing how motivated and excited they are at the end of their four weeks is an incredible feeling."

As noted above, the study is still ongoing, and the researchers are actively seeking prospective patients. If interested in participating or learning more about the HEART lab, please reach out to Dr. Feairheller for more information.

### Upcoming Games

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sat. Cont.	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
	Wrestling vs. NCAA East Regional	Wrestling vs. NCAA East Regional	W. Lacrosse vs. Albright 1 p.m.	M. & W. Track vs. Centennial Conference Championship		
		M. & W. Track vs. Centennial Conference Championship	M. Lacrosse @ Mary Washington 3 p.m.	Gymnastics @ Ithaca 1 p.m.		