

THE MUDDRAKER

Reason to Be

An original musical by Devon Tao

Article & Design by Shivani Manivasagan
Photos by Tom Lam, Mikayla Mann, & Oriole Song

Reason to Be, an original musical by Devon Tao HM '25, premiered on March 28 at Seaver Theatre and saw full house shows throughout the weekend. Read on for a deeper look into the story's themes of hope, music, and climate change, plus exclusive insights into Devon's writing process and behind-the-scenes moments!



A Story About Hope

What do you do when life becomes difficult and you begin to lose sight of your passion — and in some ways, yourself?



Reason to Be follows the story of Val (played by Devon Tao HM '25), a pianist who has just abandoned their music career in the year 2050, overwhelmed by the state of the world during the climate crisis. On Christmas Day, Val sets out on a journey to rediscover their sense of hope and purpose. Inspired by *A Christmas Carol*, the story involves glimpses into the past, present, and future with the help of Val's AI assistant, IVANA (Sage Wong-Davies SC '25), an unexpected reunion with childhood friend Lacey (Priya Sullivan PZ '27), and a visit from the ghost of Beethoven (Rai Wandeler HM '28), among others. In the end, we see how the way Val thinks about their place in the world begins to shift, eventually helping them reconnect with their love for music.

As director Aelin-Alexandria Nyx PZ '25 wrote, the crux of *Reason to Be* explores a question many of us face: "How do we reconnect to the parts of ourselves we lose during times of great stress?" Aelin reflected, "It's easy to lose your joy; to allow the external to become internalized. It takes an immense amount of work to choose joy. To recognize that reality is what it is, and to choose not to drown in it." And this is the message at the heart of *Reason to Be* — in Val and Lacey's words, "Hope isn't given out for free; it's something I must create."



Devon expressed gratitude to everyone who played a part in the production — including the team, friends, faculty advisors and mentors, and the shows' audiences. "The audience's energy absolutely elevates the show, and in turn gives our cast and crew energy," Devon said. "Theatre isn't done in a vacuum — the audience is a very vital part of each show. That's why it's not a movie."

The People Behind the Production

"This is the hardest thing I've ever done, and it wouldn't have been possible without everyone who helped and was a part of it." — Devon Tao



Writing an original musical is no small feat — but bringing it to life on stage involves an entirely new set of challenges. The team behind *Reason to Be* included just seven cast members and eight on the creative team. As cast member Serena Mao HM '25 shared: "Since we were such a small team, everyone had to wear many hats and put in effort beyond their roles to make this happen. For example, four of us from Mudd made multiple trips to and from Pomona to arrange our own bookshelves as Val's bookcase. Rai also made the IVANA prop — they designed, CAD'd, and 3D-printed it, and soldered everything inside so that when it broke, magnets would come apart and the wires would keep the inside in place."

Many cast members played two to four roles each, including a song "Memories" in which Priya notably had three costume changes. Josie Nelson HM '25, who has been a part of the production since its first staged reading in April 2024, smoothly transitioned through a range of roles — from a frightened trapper kid to Val's distraught mother to an ominous neighbor. Devon, who plays Val, stayed onstage for the entire 90-minute show, even during scenes where Val is simply observing other characters. Kishore Rajesh HM '25 mentioned how the cast grew closer throughout the process, from spending almost an hour rehearsing the timing of entrances in the number "Outside," to creating a fun parody of "The Pianist," to sharing other inside jokes.



The attention to detail with props, costumes, and lighting — along with live piano accompaniment performed at each show by Rohan Subramanian HM '25 — tied the entire production together.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS



Dear readers,

Thank you for picking up a copy of this semester's edition of The Muddraker! We hope the last few weeks before summer have been treating you well, and congrats to the Class of 2025 on wrapping up their time at Mudd. We'll miss you!

This issue has a bit of something for everyone. Hold on to hope in the face of climate change by reading about an original musical "Reason to Be" written by Devon Tao HM '25 (pg. 1, 3). Look for our chemist PROF-iles (pg. 4-5) to get to know whether Prof. Brucks is a cat or dog person, which element Prof. Ogba identifies with the most, and what their labs are currently researching! Read about the impacts of recent Trump administration policies on federal funding for academic research (pg. 6-7). Then, get the scoop on how Mudd Core compares to the general education requirements at other engineering schools (pg. 14). Curious about what's new with the Class of 2025 since their frosh year? Flip to our senior survey to learn about their rice purity scores, personality types, and how often they leave campus (pg. 10), and read our former EIC's goodbye letter to Mudd (pg. 11). Are you an underclassman completely lost on choosing your HSA courses and seeking the wisdom of upperclassmen? We collected their tips so you can get a head start on that breadth requirement (pg. 13)!

The weather is finally taking a turn for the better, so it's a good time to explore the best coffee shops in Claremont, and we've got recommendations for you (pg. 8-9). Find out what students really think about Mudd's architecture, and learn a bit of history about the designers and decisions behind it (pg. 12). Finally, forget about the stress of finals and unwind with the crossword (pg. 15) or by baking delicious cereal milk muffins (pg. 16).

Enjoy the paper!
Ella, Isabel, and Claire (Your EICs)

Reason to Be

An original musical by Devon Tao

continued from front page

interview with the playwright ■

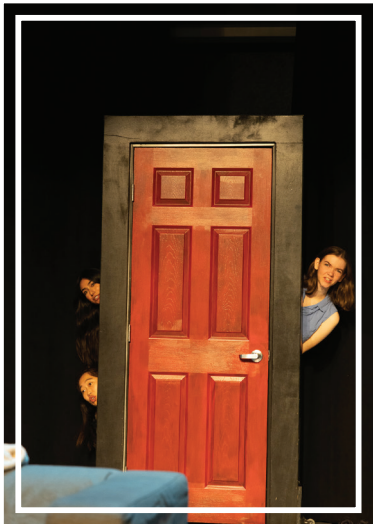
How has the story evolved over time?

The origin of *Reason to Be* traces back to a song called “Orange Skies,” which Devon composed for their Music Theory I class. Now, 2.5 years later, Devon said that “the show has undergone rewrite after rewrite — characters have changed, plotlines have changed, and I could even fill an entire cast album full of deleted songs.”



They reflected, “Until the most recent draft, the story struggled to find its focus.” After the second staged reading in November 2024, conversations with dramaturg and show director Aelin helped Devon understand what the story was trying to say. The musical’s messages — about hope, choice, and friendship — emerged organically; not planned, but through the process of writing.

In Devon’s words: “The more that I write, I realize that this piece is not really about climate change at all. It’s more of a love letter to music, and climate change is the backdrop.”



What’s next for *Reason to Be*?

With nine drafts, two staged readings, and a workshop production under their belt, Devon envisions *Reason to Be* as a thoughtful and intellectual piece — one that audiences can enjoy in a single sitting, or rewatch multiple times and discover something new each time. They have had the chance to be very intentional for some aspects, like specific compositional choices to reflect Val’s mood, and weaving in callbacks to earlier songs. With draft #10, Devon hopes to bring that same level of care to every scene and submit the work to musical theatre festivals.



How do you process feedback?

How do you get the confidence to share your work with others?

This production was based on Devon’s ninth draft, and they emphasize that they are still in the middle of the writing process.



“If you’re creating something, you have to be okay with it starting off bad and making it public,” Devon said. “It’s so important to involve people when it’s bad — because feedback is how you’ll make it better.”

At the same time, Devon is intentional about how and when they consider feedback. Building on years of experience with theatre and musicals, they have learned to trust their intuition and be true to their vision. They especially value hearing about what aspects of the show remain unclear.

Having written nine drafts so far, Devon is no stranger to the revision process. “I’m very willing to get rid of things that I worked really hard on to make room for something new,” they shared.



One example is the song “Just One Jug” from the second staged reading in November 2024. Although the song was a crowd favorite, Devon felt that in its current state, Val was not trying hard enough to imagine an optimistic future. So, they replaced it with “Outside,” a new piece that begins with a light airy melody as Val envisions snow and their ideal life, before turning ominous once reality sets in. And “Outside” ended up becoming a standout piece and audience favorite from the production — reaffirming Devon’s philosophy of staying true to the story’s needs, even if that sometimes means temporarily letting go of something successful.

PROF-iles

CHEMISTRY EDITION

ARTICLE BY IRENE JUNG & ANNA CHEN
DESIGN BY ELLA JOO

Meet Prof. Brucks and Prof. Ogba, who joined Harvey Mudd's Chemistry Department in 2022 and 2024, respectively! Read on to find out about what inspired them to become professors, their research, and some of their interests and hobbies.

Q: Can you tell us a little bit about your journey to becoming a professor at Mudd?

My journey started with my first undergraduate research experience! I was very fortunate to get started in a chemistry lab the summer after my sophomore year. I enjoyed working in the research lab and having my own project, and I also really enjoyed the community aspect of the lab. That was the first time I had thought about a research career, and then I had an opportunity in my senior year to go to an American Chemical Society (ACS) conference. My PI had won an award and offered the undergrads, graduate students, and postdocs the opportunity to go to the conference, and I got to present a poster at an undergrad-only session. I was really excited for that because I'd never been to a conference before. I remember thinking, "Wow, their PIs are here because these undergrads are presenting posters, and that's a really cool job." That got me started thinking about a career at a liberal arts college like Mudd.

I've been really excited to send some of the undergraduate students here at Harvey Mudd to conferences, and this March was the first time that I got to go to an ACS conference with my students and be the professor. Our research group contributed 5 posters to this conference and it was amazing to see everyone's progress and how well-received their work was by the wider chemistry community.

Q: What has been your most rewarding experience at Mudd so far?

I think my most rewarding experience has been working closely with students over their time as undergrads. It's so inspiring to see people grow throughout their time in college. I'm a third-year faculty member now, so I've been here as long as a junior, and there are a handful of chemistry juniors whom I've known since we both arrived on campus. To see them grow from frosh who were thinking about potentially majoring in chemistry to juniors who are now doing their own independent research and leading cool new projects in our department is really rewarding. I feel so fortunate to just be along for the ride with the incredible students who are here.

Q: Can you give us an overview of the work your research group is doing?



Our research group has uniquely opened two distinct programs of study. Previous research groups I'd worked with always had multiple different projects going on in different areas, and I was excited to be able to bring that to Harvey Mudd.

In one program, we're looking at polymer structure and trying to understand how differences on the atomic level between different polymers influence their macroscopic properties at the molecular level. Our other program is looking at probiotic bacteria, the good bacteria in your gut. We've been trying to think about how to support their growth and give them a competitive advantage over pathogenic or bad bacteria. We run both of these projects in our labs on the second floor of Jacobs, and students are the ones executing all of these experiments. We have joint group meetings where we talk about these projects. I hope my students get exposure to a wide range of interdisciplinary topics, from organic and polymer chemistry to biochemistry and chemical biology.

Q: Onto some rapid-fire questions! Are you a dog or cat person?

I'm a big dog person; I don't currently have a dog, but I think a lot about adopting a dog. My family grew up with a dog named Onyx that we got when I was in middle school, and he was an amazing black lab shepherd mix. I could imagine liking

cats, but unfortunately, I'm allergic.

Q: What are some of your favorite hobbies?

I'm a big fan of board games. I really love playing strategy board games with my friends and family. One of my favorites is Wingspan, which is a game about collecting birds into your nature preserve. I also enjoy playing online games with some of my friends who don't live in Southern California.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to share with the readers?

A random fact about me is that I moved to Claremont from Boston, Massachusetts. It was most important to me that I preserve the well-being of all of my houseplants, so I rented a car to drive cross-country. My partner and I did some sightseeing, but we prioritized plant caretaking. There were several nights that we had to carry our two dozen or so plants into a hotel room so that they didn't freeze overnight in our car. The effort was well-worth it: every single one of my plants from Massachusetts successfully made it to Claremont!



Q: Do you have a favorite music artist?

My favorite artist is Taylor Swift. Period. I've been a Swiftie since the album Red came out, and I don't want to date myself but I might say that when Red came out, I was feeling 22.

Q: What was college like for you, what did you study, and how did that lead you to Mudd? Did you always envision yourself becoming a professor?

I was born and raised in Nigeria, and it was around 2006 when I realized that what I wanted to do was “marry” computer science, health, and medicine. I’m a millennial so I started college — this sounds so sad — when Facebook and the human genome project had just been started. Archaic times. I realized there had been an explosion of technology, and I wanted to figure out how to connect it to human health. My first week of college, I went to a faculty-department fair, and the chair of the Computer Science Department told me about the budding fields of bioinformatics, cheminformatics, computational biology, and computational chemistry. I’ll never forget him — his name is Paul Myers and he literally looked like Einstein. And lo and behold, the chair of the Chemistry Department was a computational chemist. I went and worked with him, and that’s when my love for this field started.

I realized I wanted to be a professor my sophomore year of college. I was hired to be a TA for general chemistry, and I became fascinated by how knowledge is transferred and absorbed. Also, whenever I peer-tutored sections, it was a thrill for me to see someone have an “aha!” moment.

I was at Chapman University for 6 years before coming to Mudd. I was having a good time at Chapman when this opportunity came by last year. I told my mentor, “I’m so far into my career here at Chapman and I’m not sure I want to move and start all over again.” My mentor told me, “Look, opportunities don’t come by often. When it’s right there in front of you, you have to take it. Worry about the details later.” This move has been the best career move of my life. It’s been great for my professional life and I’ve found that there’s an excellent fit between me and the students.

Q: How has Mudd been treating you so far? Do you have any favorite aspects of teaching here?

It’s been great! I’ve had two different kinds of teaching experiences. I’ve taught the Core chemistry class and I’m teaching organic chemistry too. I love teaching the Core class because everybody takes it and I’m influencing how people think about science and if they’re going to be in this field. My favorite part is that, at the end of the day, college students are incredibly enthusiastic and filled with so many dreams, hopes, and desires. They have an optimism about life that I can further enhance and crystallize as a professor. So whenever a student lets me in on what their dreams are, I feel very privileged because they trust me to provide guidance. It’s scary to be in a position where you can influence somebody’s life so directly. I take that responsibility very seriously. I love when students open up to me about who they are and who they want to be, and I love when I can help them get there. I’m starting to get that experience with students in my lab and some students in my class who come in outside of class to share things. I hope that at

Mudd, students feel empowered to make that connection. For example, in my research lab, we write and publish papers, but what I’m interested in is what’s happening in the process. How are students changing since they’ve started with me in the lab? What has become of them as a person? What have they learned about how they work? To me, that’s the most special part of being a professor. I started this tradition a few years ago of having a monthly Zoom meeting with all my former research students. My Saturdays are booked from 8 AM to 1 PM every week because I want to keep in touch with them. It’s incredibly rewarding to be a part of somebody else’s life in a meaningful way. I think this job allows me to be that many times over, and I feel very honored to be in this position.

Q: Can you introduce your computational chemistry lab and talk about its ongoing projects?

Whenever anybody thinks about chemistry, there are images that pop into mind: somebody wearing goggles, things exploding, stuff going everywhere. That is a big part of chemistry — us chemists love to make things. However, there are two additional parts: modeling and characterizing. We need to understand exactly what is going on.



So, my lab is interested in understanding how chemical reactions, especially ones that involve catalysts, work on a molecular level. We also want to develop principles for designing and testing better systems. The applications are vast. Humans produce a lot of waste, and chemists are interested in upcycling that waste. For example, could we take carbon dioxide, siphon it back into the chemical process, and create high-value chemicals for drug discovery or biodegradable materials? A lot of the catalysts and reactions we work on take these molecules — whether those molecules are carbon dioxide, fluorinated compounds, or other animal waste — and make them into something else, such as fuel. A lot of our focus is chemical recycling, which is one aspect of green chemistry. We’re trying to understand these steps from a theoretical perspective.

Q: On a more personal note, if there’s anything you’d like all of your students — past, present, and future — to know about you, what would that be?

I’m a huge fan of Beyonce. I’m a millennial, so she’s my era of music. We happen to have produced the greatest musician of all time — don’t @ me, I don’t wanna hear it. I’ve followed her music since 1997 and have been to probably about 10 of her concerts. I’m going to Cowboy Carter this year and will be at three of her shows back-to-back in LA. She can take all my coins.

Obviously, Beyonce’s an incredible artist and performer — she’s killing the charts. But what I really appreciate is that she just keeps growing. She never stops and says, “You know what, I’m done. I’m already on top of the world.” One thing I appreciate about people is when they have a craft or a thing they enjoy; it doesn’t matter if what they’re doing is the most eye-catching or famous, they work hard and outdo themselves every time. It’s that intrinsic motivation. You’re not doing it for anybody else, you just keep on working and being a better version every time. That’s something I would share with students. To me, the most important part of living is that you just keep on growing. Do not worry about who is looking. Do not worry about who is at fare with you. Do not worry about anything external. Do it for you, so that tomorrow, you can wake up and go, “I feel better because I did this,” “I worked on myself,” and “I’m gonna keep doing this for me.”

Q: Now for some rapid-fire questions. What is your favorite chemical compound?

I love a good epoxide.

Q: What element, in the periodic table, best describes you?

I think, maybe, iodine gas? It seems like it’s inert, it seems like it’s not doing anything, but if you put it in any situation, it’ll react. I think that kind of explains me.

Q: What is your favorite food? What is your favorite food that is served at the Hoch?

It’s hard to say what my favorite food is. I’m a food enthusiast, so I just love to eat. If I had to say... what can never go wrong for me is having some protein, vegetables, and rice. Anything, any culture, anywhere. If you can give me these three things in one dish, I’m set. I’m always looking for the best combination within different cultures and restaurants. At the Hoch, I live for the fried plantains. It reminds me of home. Coming from a tropical place in Nigeria — Lagos — I just love a good sweet fried plantain. I eat it every day — it’s like a hidden gem. And they’re well-made! Sometimes someone will mess up fried plantains, and I’m like, how do you mess up fried plantains? Sometimes it’s because they don’t fry the right ones. We need them really ripe, soft, and sugary. The plantains should be nearly rotten.

Visit muddraker.org to view the full article!

FEDERAL FUNDING CUTS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR MUDD?

Article & Design by Tessa Han

Over the past 100 days, President Donald Trump's controversial policies and executive orders have stretched the limits of executive power and fundamentally changed how the US government operates. A notable part of this is his partnership with Elon Musk and his Department of Governmental Efficiency (DOGE), which promises to "improve the American economy," mostly by slashing programs they consider "unnecessary." Cut programs have included the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and some of the most Mudd-relevant departments, the National Science Foundation (NSF) and National Institute of Health (NIH). The NSF and the NIH are the largest funders of general science and biomedical research in the world, doling out billions in grants and supporting research involved in 99% of FDA-approved vaccines. However, the NSF's budget has been cut by 55%, resulting in an immediate cancellation of a billion dollars in active grants, while the NIH has cancelled over 2 billion in grants and laid off over 1,300 employees.

For a school where dozens of professors conduct NSF-funded research, the impact on academia can feel devastating. These federal cuts also impact the type of jobs or internships students can apply for; thousands of programs have been cancelled, and positions are being revoked due to lack of funding. The NIH cuts have primarily impacted biomedical research like child cancer therapies or HIV/AIDS research, while the NSF cuts have impacted research on topics ranging from combating misinformation to bird conservancy. Cutting-edge projects on topics like improving AI deepfake detection, developing sustainable recycling models, or improving political engagement in underserved countries have all been cut. This leads one to wonder what the real aim of all of these cuts are; scientific research has a famously excellent return on investment (former NIH director Dr. Collins estimates a \$2.46 return on every \$1.00 spent, not to mention the immeasurable value of saving and improving lives), and in fact recent studies have found that mass job terminations have actually cost more than what the federal government is saving. The Yale Budget Lab, for example, has found that cuts to just the IRS could cost the government \$2.4 trillion loss in revenue over 10 years. Another study found that in just this fiscal year, Musk's government cuts will cost the country around \$135 billion in unemployment benefits, re-hiring and re-training, and lost productivity. These job cuts aren't even improving government spending; this administration has spent an estimated \$81.2 billion more in this time period compared to the last administration, even when accounting for inflation, according to the Penn Wharton Budget Model. Trump's administration has also threatened to revoke and refuse to award further grants to any universities on tenuous accusations of anti-semitism or that have Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs.

What this really means is that almost any program can be impacted, even if the project itself is fundamentally incredibly impactful for people and for advancing human knowledge, and even if the project seemingly isn't related to these "taboo" topics. At Harvey Mudd, Muddraker writer Talia Green interviewed biology Professor Danae Schulz, whose research is now being threatened. Her research primarily focuses on the African trypanosome parasite's adaptive abilities, which transmits a fatal disease to mammals, like people and cows. Her research has both economic and scientific value; the losses caused by this parasite are estimated to be upwards of \$2 billion, available treatments are not effective against all strains and there are additional obstacles to accessibility for those treatments. This last point is especially important because some areas

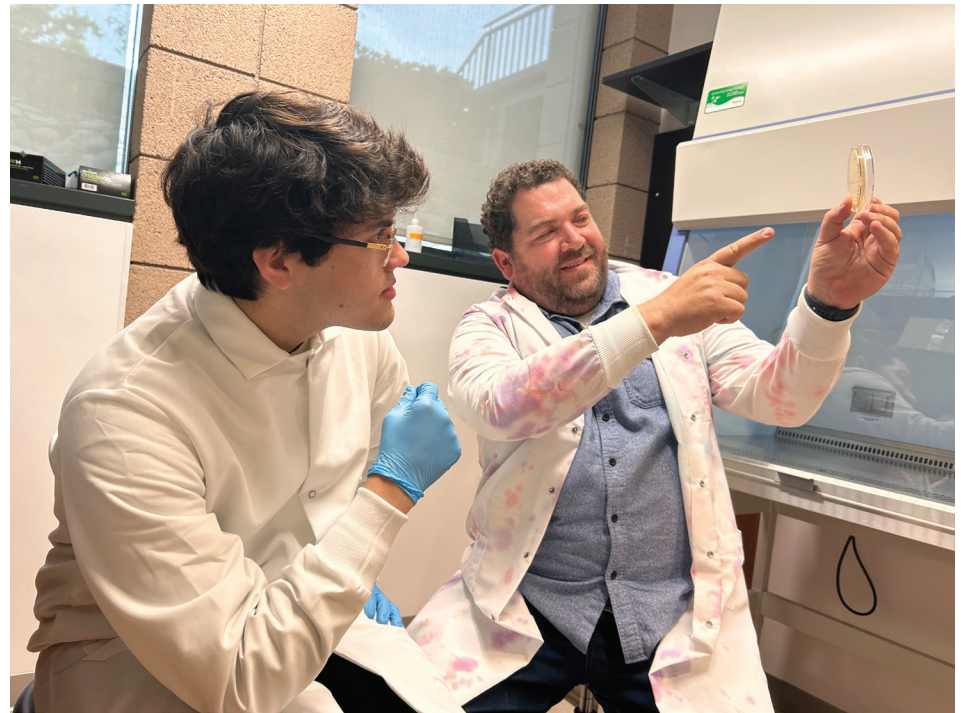


Photo By Ella Joo

Biology professor Dan Stoebel teaches Jacob Sesate (HM '27) in his lab.

that this parasite is more prevalent in lacks strong healthcare infrastructure. Prof. Schulz's work has been funded by the NIH/NSF since graduate school, where she, her research advisor, and postdoc fellowship were all funded by various grants. Since the start of the Trump administration, her NSF-funded research has been temporarily frozen, and could be cut at any time without warning. For NIH grants, areas of concern for researchers include indirect costs being cut to 15%, and potential restriction from applying to further grants. Let's break these down a little further.

First, indirect costs were capped to 15%. As Prof. Schulz explains, NIH grants are generally split between direct and indirect costs, where direct costs are money for salaries and supplies, and indirect costs are for infrastructure like facility maintenance. Indirect costs fund vital parts of lab infrastructure, whether that's animal and specimen handling or specialty facilities like biohazard labs, ensuring that studies can be conducted safely. Previously, indirect costs could range from 25% to 60%; a 15% cap on all NIH grants (both currently existing grants and all future awarded grants) greatly reduces the efficacy of labs by preventing them from complying with regulations and removing important administrative infrastructure.

In January, the administration also froze all grant reviews, meaning no funding requests could be approved. Court challenges were upheld, and grant reviews were unfrozen, but more roadblocks were soon put into place. Something you may have seen in the news in the past couple of months is a list of "forbidden words" that would purportedly flag your grant proposal. It's important to note that this is not an official list, but was compiled from government memos. These words ranged from more so-called "woke" language like "BIPOC" and "LGBTQ" to general grant vernacular like "bias" or "status." Additionally, some words seemed to be compiled without regard for their meanings, with "biodiversity" being flagged because of purported association with DEI initiatives, when it's really about ecological health. The increased barrier to obtaining grants is demonstrative of the administration's lack of understanding

of the importance of different types of scientific research and the direct and indirect impacts research can have.

On top of these new restrictions, grant proposals were being read over by scientists in completely different fields, meaning that projects could be rejected simply because the person reading it doesn't have a strong understanding of what the project is. Prof. Schulz also noted that prior administrations have made DEI a priority for NSF grants, since NSF has a federal mandate from Congress to expand or diversify the scientific workforce. As a result, the majority of current grants have a required DEI component. This has left scientists stressed and confused about the state of their current grants.

As of May 1st, there is another complete grant freeze, meaning that no new grants can be awarded. This is not only intensely worrying, but also could potentially be unlawful; although, as President Trump says, he's not a lawyer. Additionally, President Trump's budget proposal for the next fiscal year was published, where the NSF is proposed to have a 55% budget cut and the NIH has a proposed 44% budget cut. Although these are supposedly driven by funding shortages, economists find that these reductions could result in economic damage to the US, not to mention immense losses to its position as a global leader.

What does this actually mean for me?

If you're a Mudd planning on going to graduate school for a PhD, working in an NIH- or NSF-funded lab, working on projects related to DEI or misinformation, or applying to REUs, then these changes will very likely directly impact you and your chances. As you or your friends might have experienced this year, some acceptances to REU programs and post-grad jobs have already been rescinded during this application cycle. Top-tier US graduate degree programs have started hiring freezes solely due to lack of funding. Research in government labs is being slowed. Studies are being stopped midway through. Not to mention the current tariff war's impact on pretty much every industry; even if your project isn't directly funded by the NSF or the NIH, other administrative actions are still impacting grant and funding availability. Prof. Sophia Bahena, an associate engineering professor at Mudd whose research centers on wastewater treatment, has faced increased difficulty in obtaining both federal and non-federal funding for her research. This reduction in non-federal funding can be largely attributed to current economic uncertainty leading investors to be more wary of funding efforts like engineering research, meaning that even non-federal grants are less available.

At a university where 30% of students pursue graduate school, and hundreds of students will apply for summer research every year, I think it's going to become more important to consider opportunities that aren't reliant on federal funding from an administration that seems to be actively fighting to stop research. Even if you work in a field that seems integral to the current administration, recall that the NIH was an integral part of America's COVID-19 recovery, and if you don't believe in COVID-19 (which...okay) then recall that the NIH has also supported 99% of FDA-approved drugs in the last 15 years. Whether or not you agree with the healthcare system, or whatever you think a country should prioritize, it seems a little odd that agencies that are actively working to improve American health are being cut. I think it's important to re-emphasize here that it's not just research related to DEI or other "woke" topics that are being hit; it's also cancer clinical trials suffering from layoffs, or research into AI literacy getting flagged and rejected for the use of a "banned word" (how 1984!), with no opportunity for appeal. Anything seems to be subject to attack, depending on the whims of a few powerful people.

When looking for better-funded and more secure opportunities, particularly for environmental/climate sciences or for biomedical-related fields, it seems that there are two main paths: private funding or international opportunities. Depending on your situation, one may be much safer than the other. At this time,

many other countries are taking advantage of the current administration's hostility towards science, and it could be good to reach out to international professors or apply to international opportunities. Private funding may be more advantageous if you're looking to stay in the US, but this can be limiting for those looking to conduct research. If you just want to work at a big private tech company, then you'll probably be fine, although it might be prudent to understand how that company interacts with the current administration and how it might be impacted by any volatile actions taken by said administration. Startups, too, are easier than ever to find in a consolidated place; search something like "[industry] startup database," or look at what VC firms like Y Combinator have recently funded.

Next, thinking about post-grad plans, when most of us graduate, we will still be under the same administration. My original plan was to pursue a graduate degree in the US, maybe on the East Coast, but the current lack of security around actually securing a spot with funding has me wondering if I should pivot. If you're graduating, you may already be aware of this struggle. Similar to summer opportunities, some good options to look at for post-grad include international opportunities and private companies. Pursuing a masters or other graduate degrees internationally could be a good way to broaden your cultural horizons while still pursuing your professional field. A gap year could also be a good option. There are also fellowship opportunities; for example, the Watson Fellowship offers funding for a year outside of the US to pursue a personal project. However, there can be a lot of barriers to pursuing international opportunities, whether that's financial, social, or political, and many of us might not be able to follow this path. As such, it is more important than ever to stay well-connected to Mudd alumni, professors, and our greater communities. And as the spread of misinformation will continue to propagate, as research against mis- and disinformation is shut down, it also becomes increasingly important to stay educated, to understand how to verify truth, and to think for oneself.

Collaboration begets progress, as Mudd knows well. Our country is attempting to isolate itself from the rest of the world, cutting off important global partnerships and brushing off objections with slogans like "America First!" With this current trajectory, it is thought that America's innovation will slow as it is shut off from international resources (some analysts think it could take America at least a decade to recover), and America's position as a leader in scientific research and innovation will slip away, not to mention the billions of dollars lost in stopped research and the lives lost by reduced medical research funding. But I do want to end by saying that there are a lot of really smart, wonderful people who are trying to work with the administration to keep agencies like the NSF and NIH alive, to keep grants flowing to important work, and to keep our scientific community strong. We are fortunate to be in a state that has a good amount of state power and that is willing to push policies and provide funding to support research in fields like climate science. At Harvey Mudd, the professors are truly trying to support students by continuing hiring and researching, and are taking the uncertain world day-by-day. As Prof Schulz concluded in her interview:

“ [The] most powerful thing we can do is to not give up and keep fighting for science that should be happening... giving up is what they want.”



COFFEE SHOPS

BY ISABEL GODOY & TESSA HAN

If you're a student at the 5Cs, it's likely that two things about you are true: you're always caffeinated, and you already know about some of the on-campus cafes like the HMC Cafe, the Motley, the Pit Stop, and Cafe 47. You might even save some flex every week for a special treat from your favorite one. But since Claremont has so many cafes, it's nice to get off the 5Cs

and try some new places! This article offers thorough reviews of some off-campus coffee shops. To make these reviews as unbiased as possible, we've formed a team of one coffee lover (Isabel) and one coffee hater (Tessa) (matcha & tea lover) and we'll be ordering a variety of drinks and food to provide the best idea of what each place has to offer. Additionally, we tried to choose places that are easy to walk or bike to and ordered them by their proximity to Mudd. Happy sipping!

LUCKY'S ★★★★★ 4.75 🚶 < 10 MIN, 0.4 MI

If you're on res-end, Lucky's is a good choice. A 5-10 minute walk depending on which dorm you're in, Lucky's offers a variety of locally-roasted coffees and teas (spring specialties include pistachio, ube, and black sesame drinks), as well as a selection of pastries. There's a good amount of seating, but half of it is almost always taken up by students from the Claremont Colleges.

Isabel: I ordered an espresso mule, which has espresso, ginger beer, mint syrup, and a lemon wheel. This was deliciously refreshing; the espresso was smooth and acidic with low bitterness, making it a perfect pair with ginger and mint! There are very few places that offer espresso tonic drinks like this and I really crave them when Claremont starts to warm up in the spring. The overall ambiance of Lucky's is also great for studying. It is a little pricey, but there's almost never a wait. This is basically the closest cafe to campus and they know what they're doing—it's an easy favorite! Rating: 5

Tessa: I got the lavender matcha latte which was so yum. I've tried several of their matcha drinks, and it's pretty consistently good, but I don't like that alternative milks cost a DOLLAR and the matcha lattes in general are a little milky for me. I love that it's really walkable, though, and I really recommend it for a study spot. Rating: 4.5

REV'D UP ★★★★★ 4.25 🚶 10 MIN, 0.5 MI

On the other end of campus, Rev'd Up is just a couple blocks down from ac-end. Rev'd Up has a pretty standard selection of coffees and teas, but the standouts are their seasonal drinks. They also offer delicious (but somewhat pricey) food including sandwiches, burritos, and pastries.

Isabel: I ordered the Hunny Bunny off the spring menu, which is a honey lavender latte with pistachio sweet cream cold foam, and really enjoyed it. I think ordering off the seasonal menu is a safe bet if you like sweet drinks, but if you don't, the regular menu has options you'll like. Sometimes I even come here just for a sandwich! I'm a Rev'd Up regular for a reason—I love the ambiance of the place: the walls are covered in vintage racing memorabilia, they're always blasting 80s rock, and it's a social hub for local bikers and car enthusiasts. Some might find it a bit loud for doing work, but I honestly thrive here. Rating: 4.5



Tessa: For this review, I tried the Hunny Bunny as well as the Lavender Matcha. As Isabel said, the Hunny Bunny was pretty sweet, and I liked it better than most coffee drinks I've had. The matcha was fairly average, and I know their regular matcha is unsweetened, so I don't really recommend getting matcha here. However, I did get their lox bagel, which was \$12 but was really good. Not sure if it was \$12 good, but a very solid choice if you're looking for a breakfast spot with friends. It also has such a cool vibe, and a pretty good amount of seating, so I would definitely recommend trying it out at least once. Rating: 4



PHILZ ★★★★★ 4 🚶 25 MIN, 1.1 MI

Philz is a chain of coffee shops that only exist in Chicago and California, and primarily in the Bay Area. This location is in the Claremont Village, about a 25 minute walk from campus. They're known for their proprietary roasts featured in a couple of specialty drinks, with a pretty expansive menu. They also offer pastries and breakfast sandwiches. The place is large, with a modern vibe and a lot of seating typically occupied by 5C students.

Isabel: At the barista's recommendation, I ordered the Honey Haze, which has the Philtered Soul cold brew (a hazelnut-flavored medium roast), honey, and oatmilk. It was probably the best honey latte I've ever had: perfectly sweet and light with notes of hazelnut from the cold brew. I think it's a great place to get work done since there are a lot of seats and electrical outlets. My only complaints are that it was a little cold inside and the music wasn't very good, but that's to be expected from a chain coffee shop. Rating: 4

Tessa: Philz, unfortunately, has NO MATCHA which was an incredibly saddening discovery. Nonetheless, I got a decaf Rose Coffee with medium sugar and medium cream, as well as an almond croissant. The croissant was pretty standard, and I would even say somewhat better than average, and the coffee was surprisingly good considering I don't like coffee. The flavor was genuinely very pleasant, and it didn't feel too sweet or too bitter. The wait also wasn't very long, and I've found it to be a great place to study this semester, as they have a lot of seating with outlets. Rating: 4



NOSY NEIGHBORS ★★★★★ 4.5 🚶 25 MIN, 1.2 MI

This specialty cafe/donut shop has a simultaneously modern and eclectic vibe, and offers drinks, food, and of course, donut holes. It's a cute place to work, with both indoor seating and an outdoor patio, and is well-decorated with hand-drawn menus and little peeks of personality all around.

OF CLAREMONT



Isabel: I got a strawberry vanilla latte here that I really enjoyed! I come to Nosy Neighbors for their wide assortment of fun flavor combinations and fruit syrups, which aren't common in coffee shops (my other favorite order here is a blackberry white mocha). They were listening to a playlist of Grouper, a slowcore artist I really like, so maybe I'm a bit biased when I say I'd like to sit down with my drink and hang out for a while. Rating: 4.5

Tessa: This was actually the first shop we went to back in February, so I got a Valentine's special drink called the Heartbreaker, which was a raspberry vanilla chai, plus a half dozen cinnamon sugar donuts. It may have been because we went around closing time, but they gave us like 10 donuts instead of 6, which was awesome. I thought the drink was really lovely and comforting, with a clear raspberry flavor. The donuts were absolutely the standout, though; light and fluffy with a little crunch on the outside. Honestly, I'd come back just for the donuts, but I really all-around enjoyed this shop. Rating: 4.5

LAST DROP CAFE ★★☆☆ 2.75 🚶 25 MIN, 1.2 MI

The Last Drop Cafe feels like it should be in a Chinatown or tucked next to a gas station. This small, family-owned cafe ranked the lowest in terms of drinks, but is one of the most unique vibe-wise. Not only do they sell drinks, including some (admittedly subpar) boba; they also sell good, but slightly pricey food items including various American and Asian convenience store snacks, (confusingly) empanadas, and sandwiches. The owner is very kind, and there is as much seating as the small space allows for.

Isabel: I ordered a Vietnamese coffee that disappointingly cost \$7.75, considering it was only filled halfway. That being said, I did enjoy my drink and a similarly overpriced Sicilian sandwich. The owner is nice and it's cool that they carry so many snacky food options, but in terms of coffee alone, it doesn't stack up to other options nearby. Though I understand small places like this may need to charge more to stay afloat nowadays, I can't really justify coming back again. Rating: 2.5

Tessa: I got a vanilla chai with ice, which was good, but a little sweet. At \$6.50, it felt a little pricey for the amount and quality of drink I got, but I guess that is SoCal for you. It definitely could be a nice place to sit and work, and I saw two people (separately) that I knew in there working, but it definitely wouldn't be my first choice if I was in the village. I also had an empanada, which was OK (I am not really an empanada expert though), and it is definitely a pretty cute and chill place. Rating: 3

SANCTUARY ★★★★★ 4.25 🚗 5 MIN, 1.3 MI

You may have actually already tried Sanctuary, even if you've never been; they have a mini-location inside the Honnold-Mudd library. However, the actual location is just a few blocks west down Foothill, and has a spacious interior with a variety of seating options, including an outdoor patio and a conference room. They have a really wide variety of teas, as well as a strong commitment to sustainability and social good, as they donate 100% of their profits and 1 pound of food per pound of coffee sold, and their coffees are fair trade and slavery-free. It's not quite walkable, but you can try carpooling or taking the bus!



Isabel: This was my second time visiting the Sanctuary location on Foothill and it's quickly become one of my favorite places to get coffee and do work. I ordered a Spanish latte, which is a latte with condensed milk and cinnamon, and it wasn't too sweet with a subtle cinnamon flavor throughout the drink. They were playing some jazz music conducive to productivity, and I enjoyed the option to sit at a table, on a couch, or even in a pile of cushions on some big steps. Rating: 4.5

Tessa: I ordered the Eden tea; a blend of black tea, safflower, malva flower, and cornflower, which had notes of fresh mango and passionfruit. I thought it was pretty good but maybe a bit overpriced for tea. Their commitment to sustainability is really exciting, and I also liked that they have board games! Rating: 4

IRON & KIN ★★★★★ 4.75 🚶 30 MIN, 1.4 MI

Probably the most Instagrammable place on this list, Iron & Kin can be found inside the Packing House in the Village. The lines are usually out the door, but we found that going pretty early (~8:30am) or pretty late (after 4:30pm) meant only a 15-minute wait or so. They have your standard coffee and matcha fare, as well as pastries, food, and a good variety of teas, as well as seasonal drinks. However, the Affirmation Lattes are arguably the best thing there, and have a variety of really interesting flavors.

Isabel: There is a LOT of hype surrounding Iron & Kin, so reviewing it was one of my main reasons for writing this article! I'm pleased to report that it exceeded my expectations. As per a barista friend's recommendation, I ordered the "Courageous" Affirmation Latte: espresso with brown sugar bourbon syrup, organic cream, and pink salt. It was undeniably delicious, super creamy with a balanced sweetness. They serve weekly rotating single-origin coffee, which means you're always getting beans that are fresh, in-season, and responsibly sourced. The cafe is a nice place to do work or read—when it's not completely packed, that is. I came in around 4:30 pm and there was almost no line, but I know the mid-morning rush gets pretty busy. I like how much of the vibe revolves around the music. It feels like a luxurious treat at a surprisingly reasonable price point. Rating: 5



Tessa: It's definitely a little bit more of a walk than the other coffee shops in the Village, but I would personally say it's well worth it. I got their "Graceful" Affirmation Latte, which was a matcha latte with lavender, ube, and vanilla notes, as well as a pistachio croissant. Despite the early start I had to get to not wait half an hour, I genuinely really enjoyed this matcha latte; definitely one of the best I had on this list. I wish the pistachio croissant had had more pistachio flavor, but it was still a respectable croissant, and it was a little impressive that they had pistachio at all. The drink was also reasonably priced at \$6.50, which may seem like a lot to some, but I have paid up to \$10 for a worse-quality drink. Would absolutely go back here if I ever wake up at 8am again. Rating: 4.5 ■



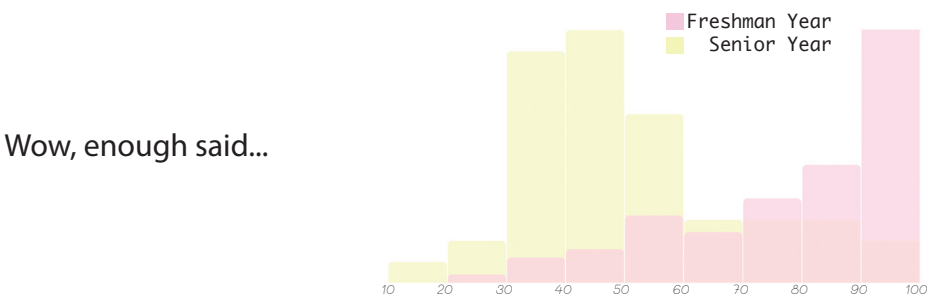
Class of 2025 Senior Survey!

By Avani Anne & Shivani Manivasagan

What’s your personality?



Rice Purity



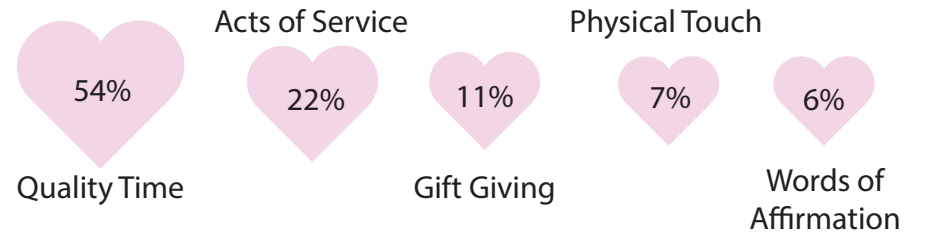
Most Popular Study Spots



I didn’t know people studied at Mudd!? Personally, I’ve never studied a day in my college life.

Attribute icons: Three Musketeers on Flaticon

Love Language



Quality time has the highest votes, but we don’t have any time?? Maybe that’s why 95% of our class said they were single (jk that’s not a real thing we surveyed, but maybe we should have).

Memories

Feeling a little bit sentimental? Us too. Here are some of your favorite memories from the past four years — we loved hearing from you all <3

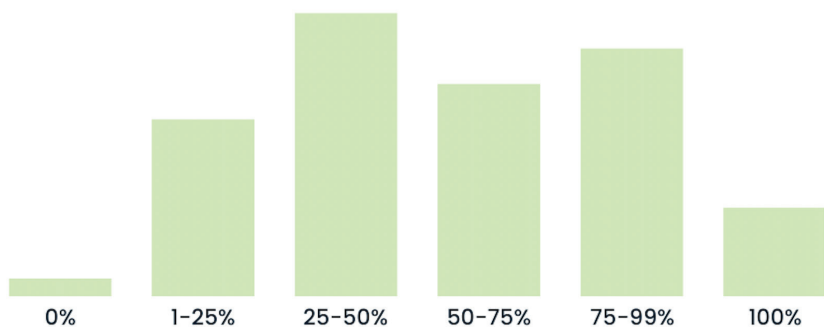
“Community after getting steamrolled by core”

“Seeing Prof Dodds at 3am in McGregor”

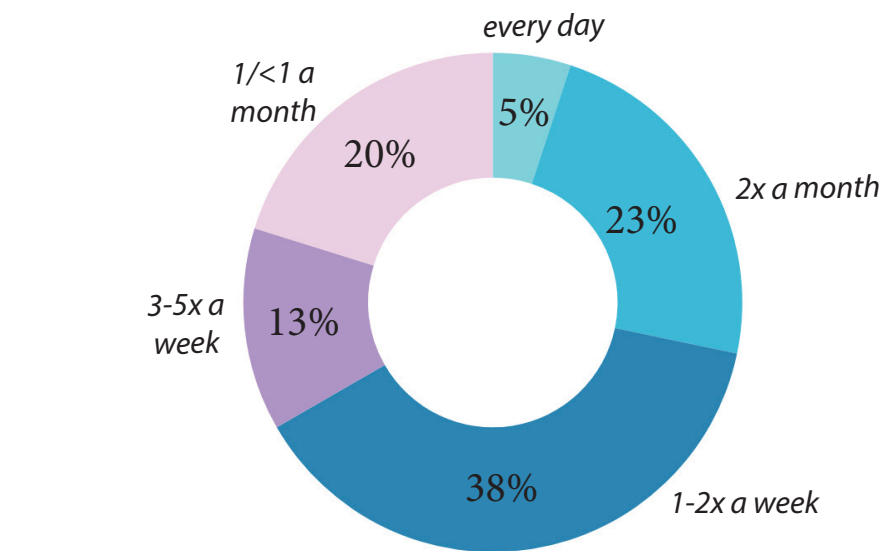
“Living with my best friends and seeing them everyday”

“Delirious laughter during group study sessions at 1am”

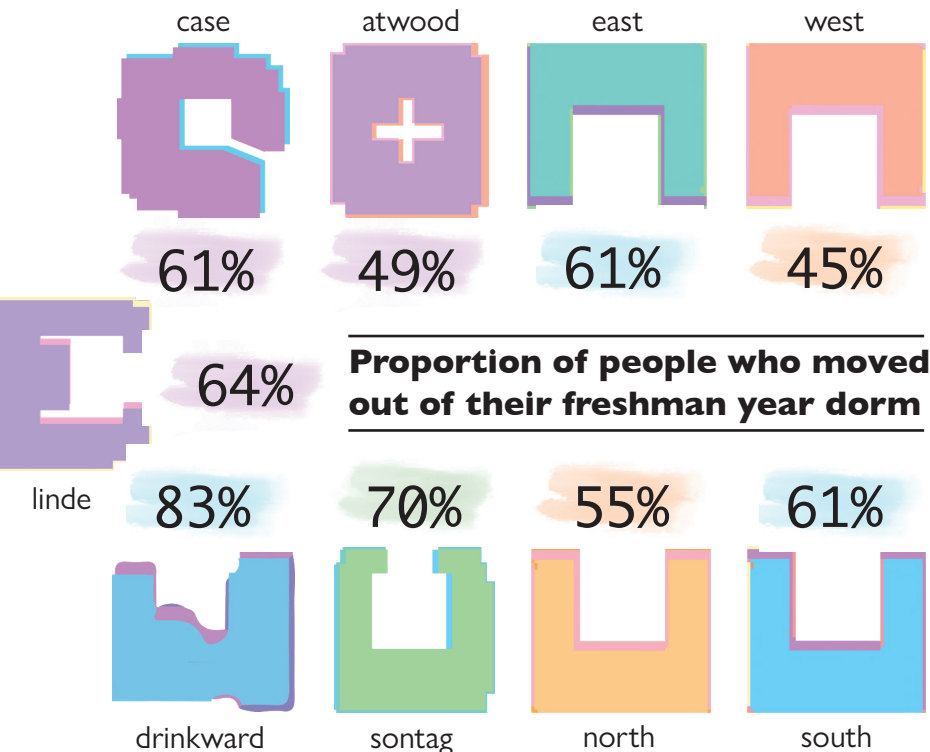
What percent of your freshman year friend group are you still friends with?



How often do you leave campus?



To be honest, we are more adventurous than I thought we’d be. Props to everybody who is able to leave campus every once in a way. To the 13% of you that leave 3-5x a week — where are you going????



Most Drinkward frosh moved out, is it because they are all traumatized by the Drinkward triples? Go West though, y’all have the highest loyalty rates (WIBSTR fr I guess)!

Goodbye Mudd

I want to flashback a few years to my senior year of high school. I graduated in 2020 (I took a gap year), so I was selecting my college when the pandemic started. Eventually, I got accepted into Mudd, but I was dead-set that I wasn't going. My reasons, albeit, were a bit silly — I wanted dorms that were all indoors like you see in east coast coming-of-age movies, and also better school merch. Fortunately, my parents had a bit more sense than me and told me I was going to Mudd. Now, every time I go home, my dad asks me if I'm glad I'm at Mudd, and I always respond that I'll tell him when I graduate. With graduation only a week away, I can finally admit that I am happy I came to Mudd.

I'm happy I came here for many reasons — I learned a lot academically and socially, made some of my closest friends, became more independent, etc. However, these are all just products of growing up. So, why am I glad I came to Mudd specifically? It's a bit hard to sum up into an article and trust me, I've been trying (though very much not succeeding). But, I think I'm most glad I came to Mudd because of the community.

Though cliché, it truly is the community. With Mudd being so small, it lends itself to the special and unique dynamic we all know. We know nearly everybody in our year by the end of our first semester. And, because of that, we really get to see each other grow over the four years and celebrate each other's successes. I often find Mudders to be genuine and to truly want good things for each other.

After freshman year, I would constantly wonder if the type of person at Mudd is just how people are in the adult world or if Mudders are special. I asked so many faculty this question, and many said, it is a unique kind of person that exists at Mudd. While I can't say I know the answer for sure, I do think I'd have to agree.

“*I'm quite grateful for many of the people I've met here and for the situations that have helped me to know such people.*”

To start, I feel lucky to have been placed in a Drinkward triple with two of my best friends, the only people with whom I would willingly choose a Drinkward triple for a second year.

I also am grateful that one of my freshman year Writi profs also happened to be a physics professor, who accepted me into her lab. Even though I

understood 0% of what was happening for that entire first semester in the lab, she helped me decide to major in Physics and Computer Science. I'm also grateful for the physics department and for the fact that all the professors and students now feel like a family.

I'm grateful for Core and the shared struggle we all went through. I fondly remember one of my first Math AE sessions where there were around 40 students and only 3 AE tutors. So many of us were sitting on the floor trying to understand the Tower of Hanoi problem. Finally, one student understood and they spent the next hour and a half trying to help out students whom the AE tutors didn't have enough time to get to. Eventually, we were all able to get closer to finishing our psets (love that trickle-down AE effect). And I'm so happy I get to be an AE tutor now, and connect with the frosh through Core.

I'm also quite grateful for all the people I've met through other homework struggles. Some of my favorite moments at Mudd come from working with classmates in the third floor Algs grutoring room and during Friday morning E&M office hours. I used to look forward to these grutoring hours/office hours all week (because office hours are just social hour ft. homework...). And luckily, I gained a lot, both in academic knowledge and because I met some of my best friends in these places.

Academics aside, I'm glad Mudders have love for life, creating fun events as ways to interact outside of classes. I've loved joining capture the flag games, humans versus zombies, and intramurals (shoutout to everybody who joined an intramural team for a game that we had little hope of winning, and for still making it 75% laughing). This love for life extends even into mundance interactions. I'm probably most going to miss small moments like sitting in front of Shan between classes, waiting in the 30 minute pasta bar line, and going to scrunch.

I'm also grateful to the people who have taught me different ways to show genuine care. For example, the friends who helped me when I got a black eye after falling off my skateboard (common L at Mudd tbh). Or the Cafe staff who chat with me every morning and remember my order. Also, the professors who give me life advice during research meetings. And, the friends that I've chatted with for hours on dorm room floors while we all struggle with imposter syndrome. And especially to the friends that force me to stay an extra 5 minutes at meals so I don't study myself to death.

More generally, I also admire how students have such a diverse set of interests. We see students who create AI glasses and write original musicals and play full concertos and organize political movements. We also see students who are able to and interested in talking about any topic under the sun, from invented traditions to gas bubbles. And there are students so passionate about certain

subjects that they convince profs to offer courses like geophysics that weren't originally in the curriculum.

I'm also thankful for all the opportunities and support to explore new interests and activities — like the opportunity to join Muddraker without any previous journalism experience, or do climate research, or be a part of dance performances. I'm glad I got to explore so many new things without having to compete for the opportunity.

However, I will also say that these opportunities and the pressure to do well in everything does create a bit of a paradox of choice. There are often too many options of things that you can do, or that you think you should be doing, and not enough time in a day. Though collaborative, Mudd is still a high pressure environment. So, while I'm grateful for all the opportunities, I'm even more grateful for the friends that have helped me learn that you cannot and should not do everything all at once (a lesson I know in my head, but not in my heart). I'm grateful for the people I could talk to about day-to-day stressors; for the people that have helped me gain a little bit better sense of self by sharing their opinions and letting me share mine.

I speak about Mudd very fondly, mostly because I have genuinely enjoyed my experience here. However, I do recognize that this article may be written with rose-colored glasses (especially because I am feeling quite sentimental about graduation). But, I want to recognize that Mudd did not come without its fair share of struggles and frustrations and feelings of incompetence. Nonetheless, all the people here made it a worthwhile college experience (even if it wasn't necessarily like an east coast coming-of-age movie). Without this community, and all the people that make it this way, I don't think I would feel as loved. So, I'm glad I got to start my education here.

And finally, I want to say thank you to all the people who have given unconditional love throughout our time at Mudd. Thank you to the F&M staff who keep our dorms and classrooms clean. Also, to the F&M staff who helped me when I lost my key card (five times...). To the staff in the Cafe and Hoch who make gourmet dishes, chat with us in the morning, and make us feel seen. To also, mentors we've gained from clubs and professors who've helped us find our path.

And to all the students: I've been suggesting to my fellow seniors that we collectively fail a class so we can stay another year, but alas, nobody has agreed (and to be honest, it is time). But thank you all for making this such a difficult goodbye, I feel quite lucky that it is.

So, goodbye,
Avani Anne

Harvey Mudd Architecture: Is it too Brutalist?

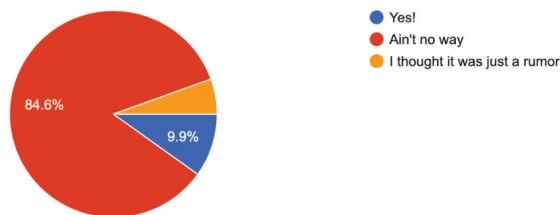
Article by Talia Green | Design by Claire Stuvland



The first time I visited Harvey Mudd's campus, I entered through the parking lot behind Platt, rounding the corner of the lot to pull into a spot facing a beige cinderblock building, which I now know as North. The cinder blocks stretched up toward the sky, punctuated by smaller protruding square blocks — I would later learn to call these blocks “warts.” I was slightly put off, but my parents, two architects with a love for brutalist architecture, were excited.

Did you know that Mudd's campus was designed by the same architect who did the MoMA in New York and JFK Center for Performing Arts in DC?

91 responses



Perhaps I would have been more excited had I heard that Harvey Mudd was designed by Edward Durrell Stone, the same architect who designed the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1937 and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 1959. My peers certainly were surprised by this fact: 91% of participants in a campus-wide survey did not know our campus had such grand connections.

Upon more thoughtful consideration, forgoing any reservations about the unconventional aesthetic of the campus buildings, the campus layout (see figure 1) is classical and quite grand. Olin Science Center, Sprague Center, and Galileo Hall stand prominently at the West end of campus, on axis with our main quad and vast and luscious lawns. The rest of the buildings follow suit, lining the side of campus. This dignified layout is typical of a New England Liberal arts college and is seen at many important sites as well, such as the National Mall in Washington D.C., shown in figure 2.

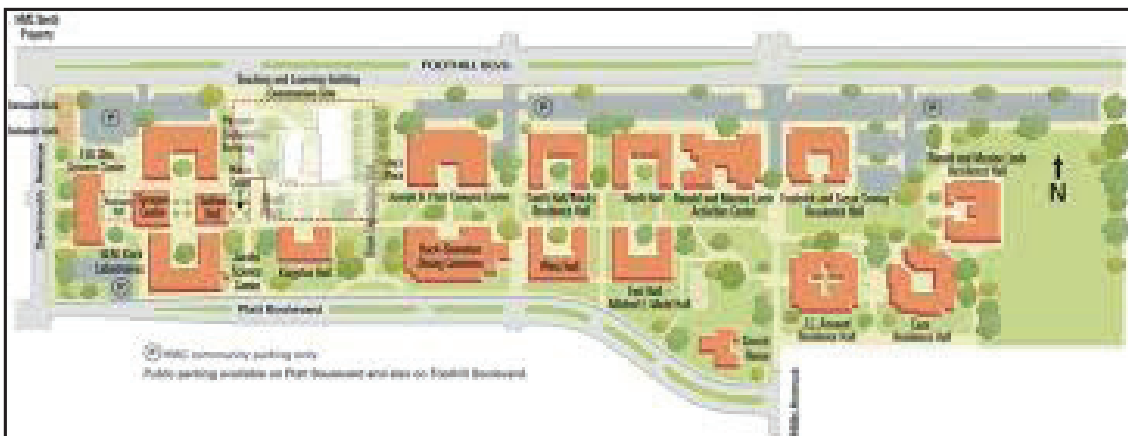
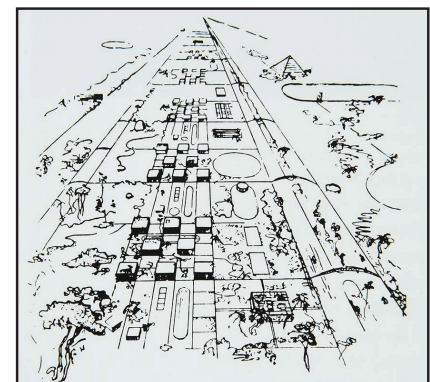


Figure 1: Harvey Mudd Campus Layout



Figure 2: National Mall Layout

This layout proves to be very functional, as can be seen if we compare Harvey Mudd's campus to architect Ivan Leonidov's competition design for a socialist city, Magnitogorsk. Leonidov's vision for this “linear city” emphasizes practicality with a highway off to one side, like our beloved Foothill Blvd. The city is technologically advanced, “located between chemical and metallurgical combine and a giant collective farm,” just as our campus is bookended by Linde field and “Ac End” buildings. It turns out our campus layout is what students love most about campus, with 50% of survey participants naming it as something they like.



Leonidov's Magnitogorsk

Overall, our student body sees room for improvement, with most rating the campus architecture 2-3 on a scale of 1-10. It is unanimous that students want to see more green spaces on campus. Chloé HM '28 says, “I think the places where the landscaping has a couple more free elements, like the way in which the 3rd floor Shan garden has citrus trees, is really enjoyable compared to having all the same shrubbery.” Meanwhile, some students suggested that we need improved lighting at night. One student says, “The nice thing about Mudd is how low the buildings are — often I can appreciate the beautiful sky/weather” (Abigail, HM '26). 55% of students said they would rather embrace the brutalist architecture than to completely start from scratch. After all this research, I'm excited about the possibilities for our campus. Recently, I've taken to pausing along my walks from class to appreciate the pilasters that stretch across the buildings on academic end.

Course Recommendations from Upperclassmen

Article & Design by Claire Stuvland

Have you ever wanted to know which HSA courses or professors are interesting but won't take too much of your focus away from your technical classes? Or wanted some guidance on what STEM classes will be worth your time? The Muddraker asked upperclassmen for you, so read on for recommendations on courses and professors!

Fundamentals of Music with Prof. Alves at Mudd! It's cool to learn the basics of music history, and Prof. Alves gives fun assignments.

Security Studies with Prof. Taw at CMC. It is a tough class and a lot of reading, but if you're interested in thinking about the state of the world, there is no better class. Prof. Taw goes well beyond what we think of "security" to introduce as many frameworks, perspectives, and events as possible to understand security at all levels. This class is directly relevant to your work no matter which major you may be.

Operating Systems is a must for CS Majors. You may suffer through it, but it's one of the most applicable classes in industry that you'll ever take at Mudd. +1 if it is with Prof. Kampe as he is a long-time industry veteran!

Machine Learning! Great class with very modern and relevant topics, and really nice profs!

If you're interested in dance and music, I would recommend looking into Concert Dance History at Pomona with Prof. Anthony Shay, as well as Fundamentals of Music at Scripps with Prof. Rachel Huang.

Music Theory at Scripps with Prof. Cubek! A lot of people don't know this, but it can count as a Mudd Hum* since Prof. Cubek is jointly appointed at Mudd. He's very passionate and fun to learn from, and the class is less of a time commitment than the Pomona music theory class.

Jazz Improv Theory and Practice with Barb Catlin at Pomona! The class is extremely engaging, fun and fast-paced.

Take Ballet 1 at Pomona! The prof is super nice, and the only assignment is to show up to classes.

Jazz ensemble at Pomona! There are auditions for the class, but it's super fun if you like playing in a jazz band.

Any class with Prof. Dyson at Mudd is the best!

Intro to Linguistics at Pomona is very interesting.

Anything tango-related with Prof. Brizuela at Pitzer! She's super knowledgeable about the material and class is so fun. Prof. Brizuela does assign a fair bit of work, but she's generous with grading.

Musical instrument lessons, either from Scripps or Pomona. You can take them at any level of proficiency, the scheduled time commitment is low, you can schedule practice times around your own schedule, it's a break from the homework grind, and it brings some music into your life!

Would recommend math classes with Prof. Jakes! He makes math fun and interesting, especially with his background in physics.

Take Jessie Lee Mills's directing class! She is so kind, supportive, and encouraging, and everyone needs to meet her. She is super into consent-forward teaching and is a huge proponent of ungrading. If you take her Masks class or Talya Klein's advanced directing class, there's a good chance you'll have a class trip to Disneyland! Also, theater is just super super awesome.

I recommend taking Intro to Tennis at Pomona with Coach Walsh. He's an absolute gem and the class is super fun.

German 1 and 2 with Prof. Vennemann at Scripps! Extremely well-taught introductory language class. The material isn't too difficult and you'll quickly make a lot of progress. Prof. Vennemann is good at his job and extremely nice.

Any art history course with Prof. Xi Zhang at Scripps! She's a super sweet prof and her assignments are short readings and two-sentence discussion comments.

If you're interested in economics, take Intermediate Microeconomics with Prof. Lincoln at CMC! It's an easy and well-taught course, although students aren't allowed to use electronics. FYI, if you're having a hard time getting into econ classes, Prof. Lincoln often accepts Mudd students specifically.

Take Statistical Mechanics (Phys 117) at Mudd! It's a good choice for a statistics requirement and you learn some physics along the way.**

* A "Mudd Hum" is short for a humanities course at Mudd. Mudd students are required to take at least four humanities courses taught by Mudd professors.

** I would take some of these suggestions, or maybe just one of these suggestions, with a very large grain of salt.

MUDD CORE VS OTHER ENGINEERING SCHOOL CORE

Article by Tessa Han | Design by Talia Green | Photo from Harvey Mudd College

The Common Core Curriculum at Mudd is known to be notoriously difficult. It requires all Mudders to take courses in every major offered at Mudd, as well as passing the humanities courses HSA10 and Writ I in freshman year. This allows students to try out every major and gain a genuine understanding of what they want to do, but does mean a pretty heavy workload in Mudders’ first semesters. Mudd’s

The Common Core Curriculum at Mudd is known to be notoriously difficult.

strong sense of community, as well as having first semester classes pass/fail, help students adjust to the heavy workload. However, here, we aren’t discussing the impacts of Mudd’s core, but rather how Core at Mudd compares to other engineering schools. We’re going to look at two other top engineering schools, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Olin College of Engineering, and compare their first-year requirements.



its HSA offerings, particularly because Mudd students can also fulfill some requirements through courses at the other Claremont Colleges.

It’s worth noting that MIT accepts AP credits, so it’s common for MIT students to take fewer classes outside of their major. Additionally, MIT’s first semester is pass/no record for students, meaning that if a first-semester MIT student fails a class, that class isn’t recorded on

particularly in the sciences. As an example, to fulfill the chemistry/materials science requirement, students can select from 8 courses with titles such as “Paper Panacea: Part I” or “Materials Science and Solid State Chemistry” or the perhaps-more-familiar “Introduction to Chemistry with Laboratory.” Students also have the option to suggest alternative courses to fulfill these requirements; however, similar to Mudd, Olin does

not accept any transfer credits.

Altogether, these three colleges strive for their students to be well-versed in a diverse range of topics, and to gain both theoretical and practical experience. These colleges also emphasize an interdisciplinary approach, with each requiring students to take classes that focus on gaining interpersonal skills to become well-rounded engineers. Additionally, students at all three schools enter undeclared, and each school offers opportunities for students to explore different majors through courses, talks and seminars, and extracurricular activities.

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All in all, Mudd is definitely unique in its flexibility and willingness to listen to student input, as well as its self-definition as a liberal arts college. And for a lot of us Mudders, it’s an ideal environment to learn and grow as leaders in our STEM fields.

MUDD (ALL MAJORS)	MIT (B.S.)	OLIN (ALL MAJORS)
• 1 Chemistry (+lab) • 1 Biology (+lab) • 1.5 Physics (Mechanics, SpecRel) (+lab) • 2 Math (Multivar Calc [~Calc 3/4], LinAlg) • 1 CS • 1 Engineering (E79) • 11 HSA (at least 4 in same discipline)	• 1 Chemistry • 1 Biology • 2 Physics (Mechanics, E&M) • 2 Math (Calc 1, Calc 2) • Lab (any science) • 8 HSA • 2 STEM electives	• 1 Chemistry/Materials Science • 1 Biology • 4 Math (3 quantitative analysis series & doubles as physics, 1 prob/stats) • 3 Engineering • 3 “design” • 20 credits HSA/Entrepreneurship concentration

Both schools are similar to Mudd in their top engineering programs, but differ in a few key ways. MIT offers a wider range of majors compared to Mudd, but doesn’t focus as much on humanities concentrations and integration. On the other hand, Olin offers a far narrower scope of degrees, with only three majors and five concentrations, all focused on engineering. The final major difference is that Mudd explicitly defines itself as a liberal arts college. Although this in and of itself is a debated topic, it does mean that Mudd places more emphasis on

their transcript. Grades earned in the second semester are only recorded if they are a C or above.

Olin has more requirements as a whole, but also has more options for some requirements,

The final major difference is that Mudd explicitly defines itself as a liberal arts college.

academic circles

puzzle by adrienne baik
design by ella joo

across

- 1 Indie-rock band with the Grammy-nominated song “Kids”
- 5 Petting zoo babies
- 10 The planet Kepler-16b has two
- 14 “Love the skin you’re in” company
- 15 Singer with the multiplatinum albums “19” and “21”
- 16 State with largest Mormon population
- 17 “Anything that can go wrong, will”
- 19 Animal rights org.
- 20 Texas A&M and UC Davis team
- 21 Kind of deposit
- 23 Unspecified amount
- 24 Barbecue feature
- 26 Mixed drink in a gallon jug
- 28 Taper, for short
- 29 Something to chew on?
- 30 Poke bowl tuna
- 31 Nibbles
- 33 New ending?
- 36 Pokémon tagline
- 40 Head locks?
- 41 Go to class, say
- 42 But spelled in reverse?

- 43 “___ me up!”
- 45 CPR giver, often
- 46 Takes up
- 47 Unserious font
- 51 Pen filler
- 52 Increased, with “up”
- 53 Slow ones
- 56 Sit in traffic
- 57 “Kill Bill” co-star
- 60 Pickleball court dividers
- 61 Kind of cup
- 62 Big name in vodka
- 63 Mardi ___
- 64 Without a stop
- 65 Load, like luggage

down

- 1 NYC home of “The Starry Night”
- 2 Swigging sound
- 3 Applebee’s sometimes sells one for \$1
- 4 What “...” may represent
- 5 Ruffles rival
- 6 Annoying popups
- 7 ___ B or ___ C of the Spice Girls
- 8 Make a goat?
- 9 Stitching
- 10 Parent who “does it all”
- 11 Wombs
- 12 Present at birth
- 13 Strong will?
- 18 “Listen here!”
- 22 Most common Vietnamese last name
- 24 Of base 8

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
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36			37							38				39
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47	48	49				50				51				
52									53				54	55
56					57		58	59						
60					61						62			
63					64						65			

- 25 Many a middle schooler
- 26 Help out at a supermarket
- 27 Cry of anticipation
- 28 Nickname that drops a “tor”
- 31 Michelle’s partner
- 32 Like some calls from unknown numbers
- 34 Essential software technique that restricts requests
- 35 “America’s Got Talent” judge Heidi
- 37 Desirable trait in a roommate
- 38 Gender-affirming treatment
- 39 Barbell abbr.
- 44 Certain kind of “science”
- 46 Hoch _____
- 47 Keeping in the loop, in a way
- 48 Jay’s Place request
- 49 Island near Sicily
- 50 The deans and President, eg.
- 51 A.C. unit
- 53 Leave hair everywhere
- 54 Its HQ is in Brussels
- 55 Blanket in winter?
- 58 Cut
- 59 Cookie container



CEREAL MILK MUFFINS

RECIPE BY IRENE JUNG

DESIGN BY ELLA JOO

Most of us have had a bowl of cereal for breakfast or grabbed a muffin for the road at some point in our lives. With this recipe, you can have both at once! Regardless of the type of cereal, these muffins are sure to satisfy your sweet tooth and kickstart your day.

Notes:

- The Hoch has a nice selection of cereals, and you can buy single-serving cups of cereal from the Cafe or Jay's Place if you don't want to get a whole box just for this recipe.
- If you don't have a muffin tin, a cupcake tin works just as well.
- See footnotes for helpful tips and tricks!

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup cereal¹ of choice
- ¾ cup milk², regular or non-dairy
- ¼ cup vegetable oil³
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- A pinch of salt

MATERIALS

- Muffin tin
- Muffin liners
- Whisk
- Some type of scoop
- Two mixing bowls

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a bowl, lightly crush the cereal and add the milk.
2. Let the cereal soak in the milk for about 20 minutes, then strain the cereal out of the milk.⁴
3. Preheat the oven to 400 °F.
4. Add the egg and oil to the milk, and whisk to combine.
5. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.
6. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, then whisk well until everything is just combined.⁵
7. To a lined muffin tin, scoop ⅓ cup of batter into each liner.
8. Bake for about 20 minutes, and let the muffins cool completely before removing them from the tin.

¹ The great thing about this recipe is that you can literally use any type of cereal, regardless of texture, taste, or shape. For the most flavor, I would recommend using cornflakes, cinnamon toast crunch, or a sweeter cereal like fruity pebbles!

² This is a little more milk than will actually be used for the muffins (½ cup) because some milk will be absorbed by the cereal.

³ Make sure to use a flavorless oil, such as canola oil or avocado oil. You'd be surprised at how overpowering some oils like olive or coconut oil can be!

⁴ If you're not a texture person and don't want the cereal to go to waste, the leftovers make for a nice snack!

⁵ It's better to have a few streaks of flour left than to overmix the batter; whisking too much will make your muffins rubbery and flat!

