

their academic struggles raise two questions:

- 1) Is their schedule so rigorous that they simply do not have the time necessary for academic success?
- 2) Does academics receive the appropriate emphasis?

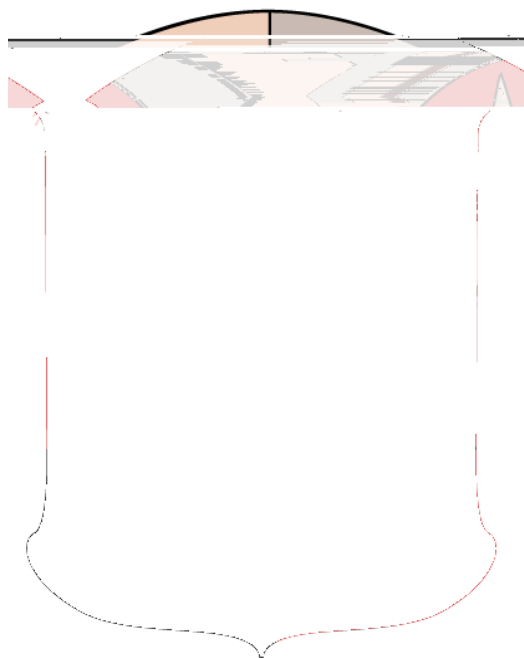
Clearly these questions need to be answered, because unless legislation brought against the NCAA forces them to change their definition of “student-athlete” this will always be a problem for SMU’s athletic teams. Athletic gifts can offer the opportunity to learn at a school that would normally be difficult to gain admittance to, but on arrival the playing field is level again. If we do not find a way to ensure our student-athletes succeed consistently, then no matter how good a team we assemble there will always be a risk that said team won’t last the year. For fans who can’t wait for the day a victory parade brings the NCAA trophy back to SMU, that would be a heartbreaking way to lose a season.

Honors Program Redesign in the Works

by Camille Aucoin, UHP Office Coordinator

Change is brewing in the University Honors Program. Currently, a task force comprised of Dr. Doyle and Sally Spaniolo of UHP, Marta Harvell and Stephanie Amsel of the Hilltop New Century Scholars Program, and other staff and faculty affiliates have been meeting periodically to evaluate the current state of the Honors Program and determine its future. Task force members are hopeful that the result of these efforts will produce a more cohesive program that will have many more opportunities for students to be involved and to seek academic excellence. The task force plans to have a student forum to hear current UHP students’ opinions on the matter once they have created proposals for the future of the program. Keep an eye out for announcements of this special meeting.

Until then, follow us on Facebook to keep up to date with UHP events. In early April, we will be screening the film *12 Years a Slave* to relate to the curriculum of Discernment & Discourse 2306. Details on this event will come soon. Additionally, the Fall 2015 course list is in the works! UHP will host a reveal event featuring professors and delicious food sometime in the near future!



Tower Scholars Program Offers Real-World Experience

by Kenny Martin

If you have an interest in public policy or international affairs, the new Tower Scholars Program may be just the thing for you. Accepting applications for its second class of students in Fall 2015, the Tower Scholars program offers a select group of students the chance to obtain a 15 credit-hour minor in Public Policy and International Affairs while gaining unique and valuable experience in those areas.

During sophomore year, Tower Scholars will take Gateway to Global Policy Making. During junior year, they will meet with actual clients, work on real policy issues, and then report back to those clients with recommendations on those issues. This real-world experience is part of the junior year Policy Seminar. During the fall of senior year, Scholars will have an internship in an area of personal policy interest, and they will also be required to take Principles of Public Policy, which is open to all SMU students and can be taken at any time in a Tower Scholar's undergraduate career.

It's only five classes, and the program presents a wonderful opportunity to learn about and make a tangible impact in policy issues that you care about. It's also a great chance to work to improve the lives of people across America and perhaps the globe. There are a few prerequisites to application, and students are only able to apply during the fall of their sophomore year. The program accepts 10 students per year.

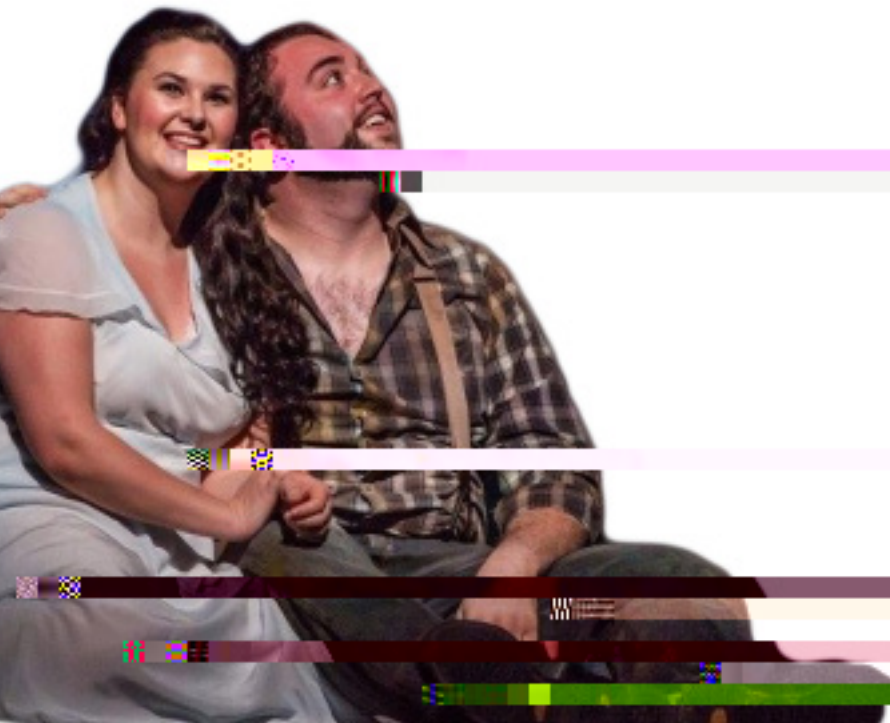
For more information, visit the Tower Center website.

SMU Freshman's Buzzer Shot Pays \$18,000

by Jacquelyn Elias

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Everest Makes Its Mark on Dallas

by Kenny Martin

The Dallas Opera stirred up quite the storm with its recent world premiere of “Everest”, an opera by Joby Talbot and Gene Sheer that tells the story of a climbing expedition that goes woefully wrong. Based on the true story of Rob Hall and his May 1996 expedition that was the inspiration for Jon Krakauer’s *Into Thin Air*, the opera was a phenomenal success.

After the evening opened with the well-done but rather drab-by-nature fourth act of “La Wally” by Alfredo Catalani, I found myself wondering if opera still has a place in our modern creative consciousness. After all, there are so many hip things happening in the art world these days, and especially for young people the appeal of opera is certainly dwindling. But “Everest” quickly banished all my fears—from the start, the work draws you in better than any modern movie or musical. The set design was brilliant—a sort of techno-modernist arrangement of white cubes stacked seemingly randomly on the catwalk. It filled the entirety of the stage. Onto this set were beamed the projection and lighting design elements, which miraculously managed to evoke everything from Snowy Spring to the



Singles Awareness Day

by Alec Petsche

As many of you have undoubtedly noticed, I took a semester off from writing for Hilltopics. I was taking a hiatus in order to do some soul searching and fight crime in the greater north Texas area (complete failure on my part. If anything, I increased petty theft in Plano by seven percent). Last month however, when I was being thoroughly pummeled by several members of the surprisingly vicious gang known as the Pink Pansy Crew, I began to ask myself an important question: Is it necessary to be in love to be happy? The answer? Yeah, probably. Was that going to stop me from seeking validation in my current state of loneliness? Absolutely not.

