



Free Speech and Political Polarization at Nobles



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

Clare Struzziery  
Staff Writer



Talk of cancel culture and polarization has been increasingly present on the assembly stage and in classrooms. However, Nobles is not usually riven with political conflict. Is this because students are cautious about sharing their beliefs? The Nobleman sent out a survey to a randomized list of 40 students from each class in the Upper School. Ultimately, 124 out of the 160 students responded. The responses were kept completely confidential and were not viewed by any member of The Nobleman staff. Of this sample, 42.7% of students agreed that, at times, they feel or have felt intimidated sharing in class. 14.5% of students strongly agreed. On the other end, 19.4% disagreed and 5.6% strongly disagreed. 17.7% of the population surveyed said that they neither agreed nor disagreed. The results of this question have a 7.61% margin of error. Margins of error are calculated using a 95% Wald confidence interval with a finite population correction factor. Inside and outside of the classroom, Nobles students seem to avoid controversy. If and how students express their political beliefs is something that they give significant thought to. “The fact that I have to mince my words despite not feeling as though anything I say is offensive, just speaks to the extent to which people feel restricted in their speech at Nobles,” Colin Levine (Class I)

said. Steering clear of difficult topics altogether is an approach a lot of students adopt. “When there are conflicts, we tend to just avoid it because we don’t want to be controversial,” Phiona Nabagereka (Class II) said. Part of what prevents Nobles students from speaking out in contentious conversations is a lack of confidence in their knowledge of a given topic. “There’s definitely give and take if you want to say something controversial because you need to be well-informed and stand by it,” Leah Farb (Class III) said. Speaking on a hot-button issue is putting oneself in a vulnerable position. For some students, to shy away from these issues is to avoid being drawn into an argument. “When I went to share, I second-guessed myself and didn’t just because I didn’t want to offend people with different beliefs,” Zach O’Connell (Class II) said. Students’ identities play into what parts of their beliefs they feel comfortable sharing at school. Some students don’t feel like they can speak freely in the classroom. “I feel like in certain spaces, being a minority, there are certain things that you can and cannot say. If I’m with, for example, more minorities, I can say: ‘Oh, this makes me uncomfortable.’ But when you’re in a room full of white people, who probably don’t know what you’re going through, it’s a bit hard to say what you feel,” Kate Osakwe (Class IV) said. It’s difficult for anyone to share an opinion that they think goes starkly against what those around them believe.

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Acceptance Stigma

Owen Harrington  
Staff Writer



The past few months have been incredibly stressful for our Seniors as the college admissions process began in earnest at the start of the school year. As underclassmen will come to know, it is a long and arduous process that consumes so much time and energy during your final year at Nobles. Aided by the College Office, students spend months perfecting their applications, yet so much uncertainty remains. For some, this grueling process ended back in December when early admissions decisions were released, while others will still be waiting until late March or early April to hear regular decision results. A number of student-athletes have also had their commitments finalized since junior year. Because of how stressful this time can be for Class I, combined with the fact that each student is in a different situation, it can be challenging to provide support to friends. It can feel wrong to ask candidly about the processes of others for fear of offending them, while simultaneously, se-



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

niors are nervous to share their own news for fear of hurting others who are still waiting to hear back. All these factors combined make this a difficult time to navigate as we try to support and celebrate the senior class in their final semester at Nobles. Early decision results can feel like a particularly touchy subject due to the unique nature of these applications. Early decision applications are binding, which means that if accepted, you are required to attend the school. As a result, students will often choose their favorite college or

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Claudine Gay’s Resignation

Alan Cai  
Business Manager



On Friday, January 2nd, at exactly 1:18 in the afternoon, Dr. Claudine Gay, the embattled president of Harvard University, sent an email to all faculty, staff, and students at Harvard University. From the Divinity School to the Business School to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard College, Gay penned her resignation in a concise letter. The next day, The New York Times (NYT) ran an editorial from Gay, where she defended her decision to resign and denounced the “campaign against [her]...to unravel public faith in pillars of American society.” Nobles is only a few miles away from the shiny gates of Harvard Yard, and many members of the Nobles community have some connection to Harvard. Thus, the controversy surrounding Gay’s resignation and related developments may feel close to home for many. In her NYT opinion piece, Gay explained that she resigned due to her numerous controversies, claiming that she didn’t



(Photo Credit: New York Post)

want Harvard’s reputation to be harmed by the dissension that was mounting against her. The controversies against Gay were twofold. Firstly, during a hearing on Antisemitism by the House Committee on Education, Gay failed to make a firm statement denouncing Antisemitism on Harvard’s campus in support of Harvard’s Jewish community. Secondly, Gay faced allegations of plagiarism, for which she submitted corrections. The Harvard Corporation internally investigated the allegations of plagiarism, and in an email to the Harvard community, concluded that their “analysis found no

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# EDITORIAL

Dear Nobles,

In the wake of adult reaction to the fantastic Fortnite gameplay we witnessed last Friday, *The Nobleman’s* Editorial Board is concerned about the sanctity of the assembly space. It has been drilled into students repeatedly that there exists a strict set of rules that attendees of Lawrence Auditorium assemblies must follow. Indeed, assembly has been referred to as “Nobles’ Church,” underscoring the importance of the space and justifying its rigid guidelines. It then stands to reason that students who arrive late are not allowed in and performers who go off-script are arbitrarily reprimanded by higher-ups. After all, we need to keep the space “sacred,” right?

While the student body does its best to respect the sacred assembly space, we make mistakes. But we are always held accountable. Still, when teachers choose to present in assembly on topics that students are uninterested in or disagree with, students sit, listen, and show respect and courtesy to the presenting individual.

We urge faculty members to consider how they can positively contribute to “Nobles’ Church.” Faculty announcements and participation have often proven to be entertaining and engaging—think of Ms. Dolan and Ms. Garber’s donut eating contest! Lawrence is a sacred space for faculty as much as it is for students, and we should all work together to uphold its sanctity by respecting the ways that community members choose to share their passions.

Moreover, students frequently see teachers scurrying into Lawrence well past 8:00 a.m. without consequences. Students receive detention after missing assembly three or four times per season. Yet, faculty members are permitted to open the doors, often disrupting performances, to attend assembly after arriving late to school. Teachers are strict about us adhering to their expectations, yet they violate these standards themselves.

Not only are teachers permitted to be late to assembly, but many teachers skip this school event altogether. As adults often remind us, assembly is a “sacred” part of our community; students respect this tradition, showing up day in and day out to support and watch each other. We would appreciate it if our faculty did the same.

With Deep Concern,  
The Editorial Board

# WAVELENGTH

Guess the number 1-10 based on the answers to the categories below, 1 being the worst and 10 being the best, unless otherwise specified.

OG Fortnite location: Retail Row

Nobles bathroom: HAC gender neutral

Nobles chair: Patterned, cushioned, swivel library chairs

Historical figure in AP Euro: Napoleon

Castle lunch: Super bowl lunch

The correct answer is hidden somewhere in this edition! Keep your eyes peeled.

# The NOBLEMAN

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*The Nobleman is the official student-run paper of the Noble & Greenough School. The paper recruits a diverse, dedicated, and intellectually engaged staff that creates stimulating, relevant, and exciting written and digital content. This content, while sometimes covering national and world news, will always strive to be both representative of and primarily for the Nobles community. The entire staff is cognizant of the power that The Nobleman holds, and thus each member seeks to use that power responsibly. The core editors and faculty advisors promote, foster, and enforce the following: anti-racist and anti-hate rhetoric; just, factual, honest, and respectful work that seeks to give voice to as many community members as possible; and a safe, creative, respectful class culture that enables and inspires staff to produce content they love.*



# Featured Article



(Graphic Credit: Max Daniello)

## Low Faculty Retention at Nobles: Exaggerated Myth or Troubling Reality?

Many students think that Nobles has a revolving door of teachers who arrive and leave within a few years. But is this really the case?



**Eli Schotland**  
Staff Writer

When passing through the halls, one often hears unfounded rumors that Nobles’ teachers are fleeing in droves, and the cause is often attributed to any number of wild and fantastical tales. But is this really the case? *The Nobleman* set out to differentiate fact from fiction. Head of School Cathy Hall generously supplied us with her time

*“The faculty who do those things and enjoy it, they’re the ones who want to stay here for longer.”*

to answer a few questions and explain the challenges inherent in retaining teachers. Hopefully, this article will clear up uncertainty that may exist and convey the administration’s efforts to support and provide for their faculty.

Firstly, the primary question: is Nobles experiencing unusually high levels of turnover? While some students may see the departure of several teachers in a single year as alarming, it is important to keep the larger picture in mind. Students are only here for four to six years and often do not look at data spanning a longer period of time. One year may stand out as having more retirements than its predecessor, but the next may have fewer. Thus, it stands to reason that the administration, possessing greater longevity than the average student, may have a

better understanding of the reality.

Hall said “There’s really a national challenge around retention...There’s been a pretty massive exodus from the profession of teaching. At Nobles, we’re facing significantly less attrition than we’re seeing nationally, but we’re certainly facing some of the same issues that the country is facing.” Nobles, despite its independent school status, still grapples with the same problems affecting public institutions.

Compared to public schools in Massachusetts and across the nation, Nobles teachers are definitely sticking around longer. But Nobles’ numbers don’t just stand out from public schools—the turnover rates are very low when it comes to other ISL schools, as well. Hall shared that she “gets a lot of data from benchmarking groups...When I talk to peer heads of school in the ISL, I am humbled in realizing – even in our biggest turnover years – it [our turnover] tends to be a fraction [of our employed faculty].” However, the administration doesn’t rest on its laurels. Instead, Nobles seeks to find the root cause of every faculty departure. “That doesn’t

mean we’re okay having higher turnover years. We’re interrogating that all the time,” Hall said.

Secondly, why are faculty departing? The main issue troubling teachers—especially younger ones, who have not been working long enough to earn the highest salaries—is rising inflation and food prices combined with the deplorably expensive state of the housing market. Teachers, while already underpaid, have been spread thinner and thinner in the current economy. Hall commented on this, saying, “The profession of teaching has never been one that’s been highly lucrative, but I would argue that the market itself is pretty broken.” Add to that childcare costs, which in Norfolk County are the third highest nationwide, and it’s

*“There’s really a national challenge around retention... There’s been a pretty massive exodus from the profession of teaching.”*

no wonder teachers struggle to make the job work. “Nobles looks to pay top-of-market, but then you look at what top-of-market is, and you realize that, on that sala-

ry, there’s no way to afford a dignified quality of life in this area.”

So, what is Nobles doing to improve retention? In addition to the best-in-class financial compensation, Nobles also offers additional benefits to its employees. Many teachers receive tuition remission for their children whether they end up attending Nobles or another independent school. Nobles also offers greatly reduced rates at Nobles Day Camp, Nobles’ premier summer program, to help offset sky-high Norfolk County childcare costs, at least in the summer. Furthermore, the close-knit Nobles community helps to increase faculty retention. When asked what makes some teachers stay around for so long, Hall said, “A huge differentiator is the faculty who see it as a privilege and a joy to be involved across the board at this place. They’ll be showing up tonight at the hockey and basketball games. They’ll be showing up at the art gallery opening. They’ll be there for the instrumental music concert. They’re there not because it’s an obligation, but because it’s part of what fills their well... The faculty who do those things

and enjoy it, they’re the ones who want to stay here for longer.”

In conclusion, Nobles faculty are trying their best to make do with what they have in a difficult situation.

Even with so many stressors like childcare, housing, and the economy, it is amazing to see how our teachers pour their hearts into teaching, coaching, advising, and more. They stay up as late as their students do, crafting lesson plans, scheduling meetings to help students, and reviewing game film. The Nobles community is extremely grateful to the faculty, as without them, this place would not be as fun or as incredibly educational as it is. The administration is also doing its best despite the deplorable situation to compensate faculty in a manner deserving of their hard work.

*“The profession of teaching has never been one that’s been highly lucrative, but I would argue that the market itself is pretty broken.”*



News

Grappling with Distraction: Work vs. Play in the Library



Clare Struzziery  
Staff Writer



(Photo Credit: Avery Winder)

When walking into the Putnam Library on any given week-day (excluding Wednesday) between the hours of 9:35 and 10:40 a.m., one can expect a buzzing Reading Room, students working around the stacks, and of course, the more scholarly or stressed crowd studying in the infamous Quiet Room. The library is widely regarded as the school’s social hub, particularly for Class I and II students. With the new schedule’s Community Time period, the building is busier than ever. This poses the question: is the social nature of the library a hindrance to student productivity? The Reading Room is the

center of campus for many Upper Schoolers. It’s a place to spend time with friends, play the occasional game of President, and attempt to get work done in what, for many students, is a sea of distractions. Contrary to what the name might suggest, it is sometimes very difficult to read in the reading room. “It’s just way too loud. It’s too much fun happening around you,” Noah Brauner (Class II) said. However, what creates a distraction for some students is a welcome benefit for others. “My peers encourage me to get work done and force me to be a better student,” Annie Spring (Class II) said. Though Spring’s attitude and

laser focus aren’t exactly common, there are tools students can use to minimize the noise. “I tend to put headphones on to block out any noise that might distract me,” Phiona Nabagereka (Class II) said. When even AirPods can’t mask the sound of a rowdy game of Guess Who, students flock to the Quiet Room for an atmosphere free of any distractions. For some, it’s an absolute necessity. “I can’t study at all unless I’m in the Quiet Room,” Irene Gao (Class I) said. The room’s zero-tolerance policy for noise of any kind, including the unfortunate notification or cough, is a peaceful respite from the sometimes chaotic reading room. This year, Community Time has increased the volume of students in the space, making it a challenge to secure a seat during the period. “The Quiet Room is certainly busier this year. I’ve noticed that if I want to get my favorite seat there, I have to arrive a bit earlier,” Brauner said. If the Quiet Room is full, things get a little trickier for students. “The Quiet Room tends to fill up, and then you have to struggle to find a quiet place,” Nabagereka said. A less densely populated but still notable library study spot is the “coffee bar.” This long wooden desk provides an appreciated middle ground for many students. The coffee bar strikes a balance

between the bustling Reading Room and the silent Quiet Room, offering, as the name suggests, coffee shop noise levels. This is appreciated by certain students. “I prefer the coffee bar because it’s somewhere in between,” Nabagereka said. In fact, Brauner coded most of the Nobles App at the coffee bar, specifically, in the seat closest to the Reading Room. “I like [working at] the [coffee] bar because I feel like there’s always a constant hum of background noise, which is really relaxing when I’m doing my work,” Brauner said. Working in the Reading Room during Community Time can be distracting. Trying to focus on finishing an English paper or prepping for a Euro DBQ can feel impossible when sharing a crowded table with ten other students and hearing countless overlapping conversations. The social nature of this building does prove useful when working on a group project or studying with classmates, though. “I find it quite helpful, especially when there’s a bunch of people who can help you study the same thing,” Nabagereka said. Many students also feel totally comfortable pick-

ing up and going to the Quiet Room if and when the Reading Room proves too distracting. “It’s not like if you need to get work done, you’re missing out on the big social time,” Brauner said. A library is typically a place to study in near-silence. At Nobles, it’s different. Though noise levels are carefully monitored by the librarians, it’s impossible to deny that the Reading Room is a social center. However, different options exist for students seeking a quieter place. Though everyone and their studying habits are different, one thing can unite nearly every Nobles student. At the end of the day, when trying to cram for a massive Physics test or daunting in-class essay, students will turn to only one location: the Quiet Room. “That’s where I can really focus, not worry about any distractions, and work productively,” Brauner said.

“It’s just way too loud. It’s too much fun happening around you.”

Nobles’ Spending Agenda: Upcoming Initiatives



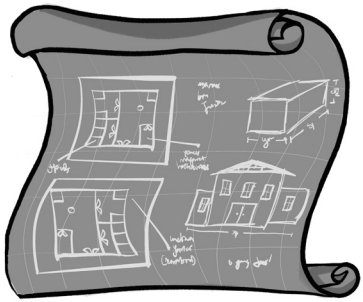
Emma Sawatzky  
Staff Writer

As the essence of ‘strategy’ continues to evolve at Nobles, what constitutes a true financial priority?

When analyzing priorities at Nobles, the end goal is always fundamental to discussions of priorities. “We always start with more of a vision of where we’re hoping to be,” Head of School Cathy Hall said. Since the school’s inception, administrators have wrestled with the need for an adaptable mission. Above all, the power of connections has persevered as the institution’s primary purpose. “Connections sit at the center of everything we do,” Hall said. “We’re working towards a program that is innovative and thriving, but ultimately, it helps us to live out our mission.” Certain aspects of life at Nobles emerge each year as primary candidates for funding and development. “It’s all based on the strategic goals of the school,” Chief Financial and Operating Officer Steve Ginsberg said. “You’re kind of balancing the needs and the wants, asking, ‘What are the things you think will propel our school forward strategically?’ And then you have to find out how much it costs to do that.” Currently, among the biggest “needs” on campus is a renovation of Shattuck Schoolhouse. “While it is part of the heart and soul of our campus, the building is dated in many ways and in need

of some love,” Hall said. “There are parts of the building in walls, ceilings, and the basement that need attention that students don’t see.” Particularly, the 30-year-old internet wiring requires an update, as well as the antiquated heating and ventilation system. Maintenance projects like this will improve Shattuck’s functionality, preserving it as a beloved academic building. However, there are other plans for Shattuck with a more tangible effect on student life. One such plan involves the reconfiguration of Gleason Hall, aiming to transform the space into an idealized social hub. Additions like an expanded school store and adaptable seating similar to the Putnam Library’s Reading Room have been proposed. In addition, the Shattuck classrooms are projected to see updates, such as writable walls and more versatile furniture. “This kind of reinvigoration is strategic because if it’s the place where teaching, learning, and connection between students and adults happens, it should be brought up to speed,” Ginsberg said. Furthermore, although our hockey teams are dominant in the New England sphere, this prowess is not reflected in the

current Omni Rink. The 60-year-old building is essentially falling apart, existing as the oldest rink in the Independent School League. The suggested renovation for this space aims to accom-



(Graphic Credit: Wudiana Fevrier)

modate spring tennis and offer indoor practice facilities for fall teams, while also providing advantages for the hockey program. While there is visible demand for a rink renovation, it’s indisputable that from a holistic angle, this endeavor is not crucial to the Nobles mission. “Hockey isn’t something that the school is saying we are recommitting to. But we have a building that is 60 years old and has a risk every year of not working. So because of that, it becomes a priority,” Ginsberg said. More likely to be classified as a “want” in terms of strategic planning, the potential construction of a track around Turf

Field has gained support year by year. The 80-person track-and-field program uses campus speed bumps as hurdles and boards a bus to Northeastern University’s facilities when the Nobles fields and trails do not suffice. In addition to the logistical benefits of having a track on campus, the program’s accessibility is one of many factors that keep this initiative in conversation. “Track is a sport that is inclusive to many kids who may have never done it before,” Ginsberg said. Turf Field, around which the track would be constructed, also needs a renovation, rendering the initiative even more costly. However, building a track would serve the entire athletic program and give the track team a home on campus. The well-being of Nobles faculty continues to be a critical consideration of funding allocation. “I believe the market for educators is very, very broken. I can’t fix that, but I can be responsive to it so we can do what is in our control to make a difference for our faculty,” Hall said. Nobles remains committed to hiring and maintaining the best group of educators possible. Each year, it becomes more difficult to live and work near Nobles, designating faculty housing as a primary concern. Of existing homes on campus, a large percentage were built

to be temporary. While updating current buildings, adding new housing will allow more faculty to spend their careers at Nobles in a dignified manner. Further, the physical presence of faculty on campus cultivates the sense of community that is held sacred at Nobles. “We know that the faculty who live on campus both receive a significant benefit both in compensation and in their connectedness to students, colleagues, and our campus,” Hall said. In any case, the administration remains committed to institutional progress at Nobles. With every step taken towards completing these projects, we are allowing our campus and community to evolve with the needs of a modern independent school.

“It’s the place where teaching, learning, and connection between students and adults happens, it should be brought up to speed.”



# News

## Same Tests, Less Time: The End of Exam Days



(Drawing Credit: Wudiana Fevrier)

**Owen Harrington**  
Staff Writer



Emotions always run high towards the end of the second quarter. Seniors are waiting on early decision results, winter afternoon programs are in full swing, and everyone is just holding out for a relaxing winter break. There is, however, one major obstacle that stands in the way of this three-week respite: final assessments. For years, these essays, oral exams, and tests have consumed students’ lives for the final two weeks of the semester. This year, we were expected to complete the usual assessments while

also balancing a normal school schedule after the elimination of exam week. This came as a shock to many returning students who had become accustomed to the old style of exam days, where no classes would take place, and students were only required to complete their assessments. The removal of these days elicited strong reactions from across the school community, while the administration’s reasoning behind the changes went mostly unshared. An overwhelming theme among students’ reactions to the new system was the reduction in study time for these assessments compared to previous years. Andrew Humphrey (Class III) said,

“Now we still have exams, but they are mixed in with other classes. That means that we need to study for those tests while also doing regular homework and going to class.” Lauren Velasco (Class II) shared a similar sentiment saying, “Exam days gave more time to focus on one exam, and I felt more prepared because it was the only thing on my mind.” Forcing students to deal with classes as well as exams may also result in adverse effects on their assessment performance. Cristobal Zuluaga (Class III) said, “I prefer the old exam days because they created less stress, and I could focus on fewer classes each day.” Another major complaint about the new schedule among students focused on the content of classes after their respective assessments had been administered. Many students stated that these classes were unproductive and spent more time studying for remaining assessments than learning new content. Humphrey said, “We just didn’t have anything to do during those last couple of classes...even if there was content to cover, most people wouldn’t focus on it.” Jade Qian (Class I) went as far as to say, “Classes after exams are done just feel like a waste of time.” Humphrey and Qian’s opinions seem to represent much of what the community felt

during these final days of school. While the removal of exam days seemed like an extreme change this year, it is a natural progression after the elimination of the final cumulative exams that took place up until a few years ago. Upper School Director of Studies Shannon Clark said, “We used to have cumulative exams at the end of both semesters, and we needed to set aside dedicated days for assessment so that they actually had time to study...Then we decided, okay, it’s still too much. We’re going to cut back to unit assessments instead of cumulative exams.” These unit assessments were no different than those administered during school days throughout the semester, yet they had their own assessment days, which remained from the days of cumulative exams. By eliminating designated exam days, these final unit tests became even more like normal mid-semester assessments

that we are all accustomed to. The new schedule also played a significant role in informing the administration’s decision to shift away from exam days. Clark said, “When we moved to this schedule, the number of times a class will meet in a semester has shrunk. And we were mindful of that.” In order to compensate for this, classes were added back into the exam days, giving classes enough time to meet each semester. Although these final classes tended to be less productive, they still allowed many teachers to cap off the semester in a more effective way than was possible in previous years. As with any major change to the school community, there is going to be disagreement over its implementation. I personally loved the old exam days and missed them dearly this year. Once you were done with your tests, they were some of the most fun and festive days of the year. You could finally take a deep breath and relax as you turned your mind to the upcoming holiday season. There was an overall cheer on campus that cannot be easily replicated. It is sad to think that new generations of Nobles students will not know the feeling of those days, even if they are no longer required for the unit assessments we have under the new schedule.

*“Exam days gave more time to focus on one exam, and I felt more prepared because it was the only thing on my mind.”*

## Sorrow and Satisfaction About the New Schedule

In recent months, students and teachers have adapted to the new schedule implemented this year to decrease the amount of homework and increase the overall well-being of students. As initial excitement dies down, student opinions reveal the positive impact of the schedule to productivity and workload levels, while also acknowledging the negative implications of longer periods, which were extended by 20 minutes. As classes are longer and meet less frequently, homework is assigned over multiple days and students have more free periods to complete their work. Many enjoy this change, reporting greater

to finish their homework for the day. “I like the longer periods because it makes my free periods longer. It’s nice to have more free time,” Andrews said. Additionally, some students reported their teachers assigning more in-class projects to optimize the lengthened time. With more in-class projects, less homework is being assigned in some classes, especially language blocks. Andrews said, “We have more in-class projects because we can be more productive with the long periods.” However, despite numerous positive reactions to the

**Kate McLaughlin**  
Staff Writer



meets every other day, students believe that teachers are giving greater amounts of total work to compensate for the break. “If there’s a few days in between classes, teachers are more inclined to give more homework, especially reading assignments,” Andrews said. Extensive amounts of homework are typically as-

plans that last the full period, and students have struggled to maintain their attention span the entire class. Andrews said, “The classes can feel long, especially in a class where the teachers talk the whole time.” Similar to workload, longer periods have been reported as particularly burdensome for History and English classes. Caitlin Driscoll (Class I) said, “I can’t sit still for that long.” Another important issue with the new schedule pertains to students involved in music groups. From wind ensemble to private lessons, these students experience over-

loaded schedules compared to much of the rest of the student body. Despite the administration’s guarantee that no student would exceed three classes in a row, this promise is broken by the schedule of most students in music. Manz said, “[The administration] said we were never going to have [three] classes in a row but, with music, I do [have four classes in a row at times].”

*“The classes can feel long, especially in a class where the teachers talk the whole time.”*

Despite mounting expectations throughout the spring and summer for this year’s schedule, student opinions remain mixed. The effect of longer and less frequent classes on general workload and well-being remains debated. Some, like Andrews, have found greater productivity amidst the flexible nature of the periods. She said, “I was surprised by how much I appreciate the new schedule. . . Overall, I like it much more than the previous one, and it’s better than I expected it to be.” Other students, especially those involved in the music department, find the change overwhelming to their daily course load. Like Manz, many believe the new schedule closely resembles the workload of last year, defeating the purpose of the changes. He said, “It was a let-down; nothing really changed.” With mixed opinions after the first semester, the new schedule continues to face scrutiny from the student population.

*“You have more freedom over when you’re getting [your homework] done, but it’s still the same amount of work.”*

levels of efficiency throughout the day and less homework to finish after school. Hayden Andrews (Class II) said, “It’s helped me be more productive during the day. I’m able to go home and have much less work, and it’s nice not to worry about as many classes and their assignments each night.” Along with the extended classes, free periods for students are also longer. The 50-minute frees of last year are now 70-minute opportunities for students

to finish their homework for the day. “I like the longer periods because it makes my free periods longer. It’s nice to have more free time,” Andrews said. Additionally, some students reported their teachers assigning more in-class projects to optimize the lengthened time. With more in-class projects, less homework is being assigned in some classes, especially language blocks. Andrews said, “We have more in-class projects because we can be more productive with the long periods.” However, despite numerous positive reactions to the change, many students have faced issues managing their workload and completing assignments in a timely manner. Although classes meet less frequently, some students argue that they still receive the same amount of homework as last year, and therefore are responsible for managing their workload outside of class. Emilio Manz (Class II) said, “You have more freedom over when you’re getting [your homework] done, but it’s still the same amount of work.” Furthermore, many students claim that teachers are more willing to give homework with the new schedule. Since class



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

signed in the History and English Departments, undermining the original aim of the new schedule to decrease student stress. Although some students appreciate the benefits of longer class periods, others find the sessions tiresome and dull. With more time, some teachers have found it difficult to make lesson



# News

## Claudine Gay’s Resignation

(continued from page 1)

violation of Harvard’s standards for research misconduct...” However, further allegations of plagiarism emerged subsequent to the Harvard Corporation’s initial review conducted on December 9, 2023. These additional allegations stemmed from further investigations that revealed several previously unknown instances of “duplicative language without appropriate attribution” in Gay’s dissertation, according to an article published in The New York Times in December 2023. Perhaps Gay should have resigned. Her behavior was inappropriate and unacceptable, particularly damaging to efforts against growing Antisemitism across America, only made more severe by her position as the president of one of America’s most distinguished universities. However, Gay’s case also presents another side. Her resignation was clearly the byproduct of strong political

pressure and disturbing abuse, harassment, and personal attacks toward her, which has only served to harm and stain the reputation of credible movements seeking accountability for Gay’s actions. At the same time, it is worth recognizing that academic freedom is under assault across America and that this case simply presents another chapter of external, politically motivated interference within the institutions responsible for shaping America’s future professional classes. There is no question that Gay’s comments were highly inappropriate and even outright disturbing, especially given her important position as the president of Harvard. However, the calls for Gay’s resignation were ultimately hijacked by those pushing thinly veiled racism and sexism, whose actions continue to risk the precedent of academic freedom in one of the world’s largest imperiled democracies. There is absolutely no justification for Gay’s actions, but was

she afforded due process? Was this a decision by herself and the Harvard community, or rather a decision pushed upon the school by political bigwigs in Washington and Tallahassee or conservative pundits on their talk shows? The truth is that Gay was scrutinized under a magnifying glass, an extreme degree of close monitoring that previous Harvard presidents did not face. From Florida, as reported in a January 2023 article by the Orlando Sentinel, where Governor Ron DeSantis has replaced numerous members of the Board of Trustees of the New College of Florida in a controversy resembling a hostile takeover of an educational institution, to Gay’s case, the independence of our nation’s educational institutions is under threat. Furthermore, in recent years, the foundations of our democracy and other vital institutions of civil society have faced growing uncertainty due to interference from interest groups

seeking to exert greater control on these vital, independent educational bodies. Additionally, according to Gay in her NYT op-ed, the attacks against her have been marked by racism, death threats, and other forms of verbal abuse, where her race and gender have, disturbingly, served as a source of cruel vitriol toward her. This behavior is highly disheartening and only damages the credibility of genuine efforts toward seeking accountability for Gay’s actions. Overall, Gay’s resignation and the controversies surrounding it have been highly complex and chaotic. However, throughout the course of this controversy, billionaire investors, such as Bill Ackman, and conservative actors from across the country have mobilized against Gay, clearly motivated more by her race and gender rather than her actions. Yes, Gay’s actions needed to be denounced, and she should have received some form of punitive action. Yet, the movement to seek account-

ability from Gay was hijacked and twisted by actors across the conservative spectrum to specifically lock onto and knock down another woman of color from a post traditionally held by white men. Even more, Gay’s being the president and public figurehead of an institution with a reputation for progressive politics only added additional fuel to the fire of her critics. At this point, it is high time that America realizes that Gay’s case is merely another disturbing symptom of our fraying contemporary political and social regimes. We must finally look beyond petty partisan politics and heed the warnings of generations past to unite against hate in all its forms and to work together in rebuilding the cornerstones of America’s democratic ideals.

## Acceptance Stigma

(continued from page 1)

“dream school” to apply to early. Getting accepted can be amazing because you are into one of your top choices, while early rejections can be crushing. Because of the intense emotions surrounding this time, many students refrain from mentioning the process to their senior friends, instead waiting for the topic to come up naturally. Jerry Qin (Class I) said, “Personally, I’m comfortable with talking about my early decision [application], but I could defi-

*“No one knows the actual circumstances behind someone’s acceptance or rejection.”*

nately see why people wouldn’t want to share their ED results if they didn’t get in because they don’t want to be judged as a ‘worse’ applicant.” Zach Green (Class I) agreed, saying, “I feel totally comfortable talking about my early decisions, but can totally understand if someone wouldn’t want to share theirs.” Ben Guenther (Class I) said, “Once that decision comes out, it’s tough finding out whether people did or didn’t get in. Some people who did get in are pretty vocal about it, whereas others aren’t.” Guenther added, “It’s a messy time, but I don’t think people are handling it too poorly.” Each class deals with this process so differently, with some being more supportive of their peers than others, and that is one of the reasons why an overarching school policy that remains the same year to year is

such a challenge to implement.

In the past, the problem of discussing admission results was solved by the College Office, which would publish a list of every Class I student’s college destination at the end of the year. However, this information is no longer publicly available. Director of College Counseling Kate Ramsdell said, “We stopped about 15 years ago...we noticed something happening where juniors were looking at the rejection wall, and seeing that a particular student was not getting into a bunch of colleges and it was sending them into a spiral.” Overall, the release of this information only served to cause stress for underclassmen who were judging their own future prospects based on another student’s performance. “No one knows the actual circumstances behind someone’s acceptance or rejection,” Ramsdell said. Because the final results never tell someone’s full story, they are not a good metric for comparison, and yet that is what they were being used for, and overall, they ended up being more damaging to the unity and mental health of the school.

As seniors continue to receive their admissions results, it is important to respect their privacy, allowing them to share what they want, celebrating with them in their successes, and supporting them when they need it. The college process is long and challenging, but it is soon coming to an end for our current Class I students, and I wish them all the best in the coming months.

**Submit your completed crosswords to [nobleman@nobles.edu](mailto:nobleman@nobles.edu)! The first student to submit a correctly completed puzzle will receive a \$20 gift card to the School Store (13 muffins).**

1	2	3	4	
2				6
3			4	
5		5		
6				

**Across:**

- Yap
- Chewy and refreshing brand
- Gym bro’s peak
- Dragon Warrior, say
- \_\_\_\_\_ people, conquered by Pizarro
- Worst Nobles travel buddy

**Down:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ of discussion
- One ribosomal ribonucleic acid
- Imperial weight unit, abbr.
- Jewish headwear
- Constitution state, in short
- T in EGOT



News

Shoutout to the Sabbath: Nobles’ Fifth Annual Shabbat Dinner



Eli Schotland  
Staff Writer

“Shabbat Shalom!” Some of you may have heard these words uttered by Jewish friends or classmates on Friday evenings. But what do they mean? “Shabbat Shalom” is the traditional greeting exchanged by Jews on Friday nights before Shabbat. Shabbat is a Jewish festival that marks the end of the week. In the Old Testament of the Bible, which Judaism views as its central text, it is said that God created the world in six days. On the seventh day, or Saturday, he rested, and so many Jews rest on that day as well. Some Orthodox Jews refrain from any work-related activities, even going so far as to wear clothing without buttons or zippers and asking neighbors to turn on light switches or press elevator buttons for them. Before Shabbat begins, Jews often hold celebrations with lots of food and the lighting of candles.

Our own 5th Annual Nobles Shabbat Dinner was no different. The event was hosted in Loring Dining Hall, where tables were overlaid with lovely white tablecloths. Students and their families were in high spirits throughout the evening. Many delicious dishes were served. My favorite has to have been the macaroons.

Macaroons are a type of pastry made with sugar, egg whites, and almonds or coconuts. Originally a food of French monks, Jews adopted the yeastless food, since Jews are prohibited from consuming leavened bread (made with yeast) during the religious holiday of Passover. FLIK’s macaroons were some of the best I’ve ever had. Many students wore Nobles-branded kippot (sg. kippah), also known as skullcaps. Kippot are little cloth caps worn by some Jews during religious events or festivities. The kippot that were provided at the dinner were donated several years ago by a parent. Intentionally, the kippot were not labeled with the year so that they could be reused again and again. Unfortunately, our supply is beginning to run low, but Librarian Sokoll remains confident that more can be ordered as needed. I tried to rock a kippah, but my hair did not cooperate, and my kippah kept falling off. Typically, I bring a barrette clip to keep it on, but I didn’t have one that evening.

The planning for the Shabbat dinner is complex and involves many people from different parts of the Nobles community. Last year, Librarian Sokoll, a

faculty advisor of Kehilla, began planning for the event a year in advance. They first worked to find a time: “We try to look at a date when graduates will likely be home, so usually that’s why it’s in early January.” Then, during early fall, the Kehilla faculty reached out to parents of Jewish students to arrange the event. Librarian Sokoll highlighted the important role that parents play in helping to organize the event, saying, “[Parents] provide some of the additional things that we don’t have as a school: the grape juice, the challah, the centerpieces, things like that.” After that, the order of the evening was developed in conjunction with the senior leaders of Kehilla. Both the faculty and the student leaders wrote speeches that they eloquently delivered at the dinner.

Senior Kehilla leaders Asher Bernstein (Class I) and The Nobleman’s very own Joshua Levine (Class I) spoke about their experiences leading Kehilla and being Jewish at Nobles. Jewish faculty and Kehilla Faculty Advisors Talya Sokoll, Michael Kalin, and Michael Polebaum (N ’08) gave moving speeches. Notable Jewish alums such as Noa Fay (N ’19), Alex Janower (N ’22), and Molly Hughes (N ’23) were present. We sang the Kiddush and Ha-

“We try to look at a date when graduates will likely be home, so usually that’s why it’s in early January.”



(Photo Credit: Ben Heider)

motzi, the prayers for wine and bread, respectively. Kehilla Katan (little community), the Middle School’s Jewish affinity group, led one of the prayers. Naturally, since every student in the room was underage, grape juice was substituted for the traditional wine. FLIK provided us with delicious challah (Jewish bread). Challah is not typically cut with a knife and is instead torn into pieces by hand. I happily ripped a whole loaf to shreds and ate it by myself.

To sum up, it was a great evening and a very enjoyable celebration. I encourage everyone

who identifies as Jewish to attend next year and to bring their families. Kehilla means “community” in Hebrew. As someone who is (half) Jewish, the community that Kehilla creates in so many different ways is really important to me. From large events like the Shabbat Dinner to our fun, casual meetings during the school day, it’s a great way to connect and make friends. To everyone at Nobles who can, I suggest you take advantage of the wonderful opportunities provided by whatever affinity spaces you identify with. Shabbat Shalom!

NGVBB @ TD Garden: Bigger than Basketball



Morgan Gibson  
Staff Writer

On Sunday, January 14, 2024, the Nobles Girls Varsity Basketball team (NGVBB) had the amazing opportunity to play a game against Dexter Southfield at TD Garden in Boston. Well known for being the home of the Boston Celtics and Boston Bruins, TD Garden is recognizable by those in Massachusetts and nationwide. But you may be asking yourself, how did the Girls’ Basketball team make its way into playing at TD Garden?

It all started with the “She’s Got Game” Basketball Tournament. Games for the tournament/showcase took place at Nobles and Dexter Southfield on Saturday, with some teams being fortunate enough to play at the Garden the next day. The tournament was in support of the Andrew James Lawson Foundation, which is a non-profit organization that honors the memory of Andrew Lawson, a 27-year-old man with Down Syndrome who grew up in Norwell, Massachusetts, and passed away after a 2-year battle with cancer. “Steve Gibbs, the owner of Hoop Mountain Basketball, took it on to put together this day to raise money for the An-

drew Lawson Fund,” said NGVBB Head Coach and Athletic Director Alex Gallagher (N ’90). Every year, different high school basketball teams are invited to compete. The last time that Nobles was invited was in 2015. Following the girls’ win over Dexter in the Double-A Championship game last spring, Steve Gibbs reached out asking if they would want to play a rematch against Dexter as a part of the Andrew Lawson Day. Gallagher said, “[Nobles] jumped at the chance because it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the kids and a real honor to be a part of it.”

Going into the tournament facing an opponent as formidable as Dexter in an unfamiliar environment with a larger court size, Gallagher said, “You just try to treat it like a normal game even though it’s not...From a coaching point of view, you’re doing everything you can to block all of that out and just remind people to just a game played between lines, you know, you just got to play with those lines.”

The three pillars of the NGVBB program are love, serve, and care, and the team sought to uphold those pillars on and off the

“We all agreed as a team that we would go to support because they always show up and cheer for us.”



(Photo Credit: Ben Heider)

court during the game. NGVBB Player Gabi Thompson (Class III) said the team’s focus’ going into the game was “just taking away their threes and just executing and playing how we play.” Captain of the team, Tahira Muhammad, said, “They’re a physically strong team and have high IQ. They also have a great point guard.” Adding on to Thompson, Muhammad said that the team was mostly focused on “not letting the environment take over and overwhelm us and just playing the basketball that we always play, and doing the things that we do well.”

To make tickets more accessible for all students, the school covered the cost so that

Nobles students could view the game for free. It’s safe to say that this method of incentivization worked. Going into the game, there was a large showing of Nobles students sporting the black-out theme in support of the team. The fan section was absolutely electric and Addy Dean (Class I) leader of Dawg Pound said, “It was really nice to see everyone show up and support such a dominant team.” Many members of the Nobles Boys Varsity Basketball (NBVBB) team were also in attendance at the game. NBVBB Player Sean Taylor, said, “We all agreed as a team that we would go to support because they always show up and cheer for us.”

The game started off very even, with both Dexter and Nobles trading points, and Dexter led Nobles 17-13 after the first quarter. As NGVBB started to get in their rhythm in the second quarter, they went into halftime leading 35-29. NGVBB Player Brynn Bryant (Class III) said, “In the 1st half, we struggled to gain our bearings and rhythm, but during halftime, Coach Gallagher came to us and said, ‘We know we can compete with this team, and we know we can win, they’re the ones who don’t think that they can. We just have to play our game, it’s just a court it’s just a basketball game.’” In the third quarter, the team did just that. The girls came together and began to pull away, ending the third quarter 57-47 and finished strong in the 4th quarter to win 76-64 Nobles.

After the game, NGVBB Player Jasmyn Cooper (Class II) spoke about what the experience meant to her and the team. “Playing at TD was a surreal experience. To play on a big stage with my team was one of those moments that just stick with you for the rest of your life. We fought hard and when we were faced with some adversity, Nobles’ crowd showed up and brought the energy we needed in that tough time. Our team truly appreciates those who showed up and gave us a little extra push to get a great win for the school,” Cooper said.

“It was really nice to see everyone show up and support such a dominant team.”





# New Year, New Me: New Year

Jayden Yee (Class II)



*“Right now, [I am] just trying to be mindful of when I’m using my phone and not just going on it for [such a long time]. Something I’ve been doing a lot over break is using my phone and wasting a lot of time.”*

Michael Timmins (Class I)



*“My New Year’s resolution is to be more authentic even when I’m feeling a little bit down, because I think that’s really important. I think it’s been going well. I felt happy going into the new year.”*

Sofia Branco (Class I)



*“My new year’s resolution is to live 2024 for the plot. It’s going pretty well.”*

Ben Guenther (Class I)



*“This year I was trying to both get [better] and [more consistent] sleep every night and work out [every day]. It hasn’t been going too well, but I’m trying to get on it for the second half of January and into February.”*

Christian Hess (Class II)



*“My New Year’s resolution is to have at least eight hours of sleep every night. It’s working very well. I am feeling very rested, [so] I think it is the best resolution I have ever given myself.”*

Mia Kim (Class I)



*“My New Year’s resolution is to get more sleep. [I think] it’s been going well because I have been going to bed earlier than I used to.”*

Sophia D



*“My New Year’s resolution is to not go on my phone. It’s going pretty well because I haven’t*





# New Year's Resolutions at Nobles



Leaving (Class I)



My resolution is to not use my phone before school. It's going pretty well [so far] because I haven't done it yet."

Matthew Loose (Class I)



"My New Year's resolution is to read more. It's been going pretty well, [I've been] reading Game of Thrones."

Altan Marvi (Class II)



"My resolution is to read more. I guess I have been reading [a bit more] since we're reading Hamlet in English class, [although] I did buy The Shining but haven't started reading it."



Ella Berger (Class I)



"My New Year's resolution is to be more on time. It's not going well, but I'm working on it."

Colin Levine (Class I)



"My resolution was to keep going to the gym this year and to eat well in accordance with that. It's going very well so far."



Nahyon Lee (Faculty)



"[My resolution is to] workout more... It has been going pretty well! I signed up for a program called Couch to 5k, so I have started following that."

Ollie Donovan (Class II)



"My New Year's resolution was to put on 10 pounds. I've put on three pounds so far, [so] it's going pretty well."

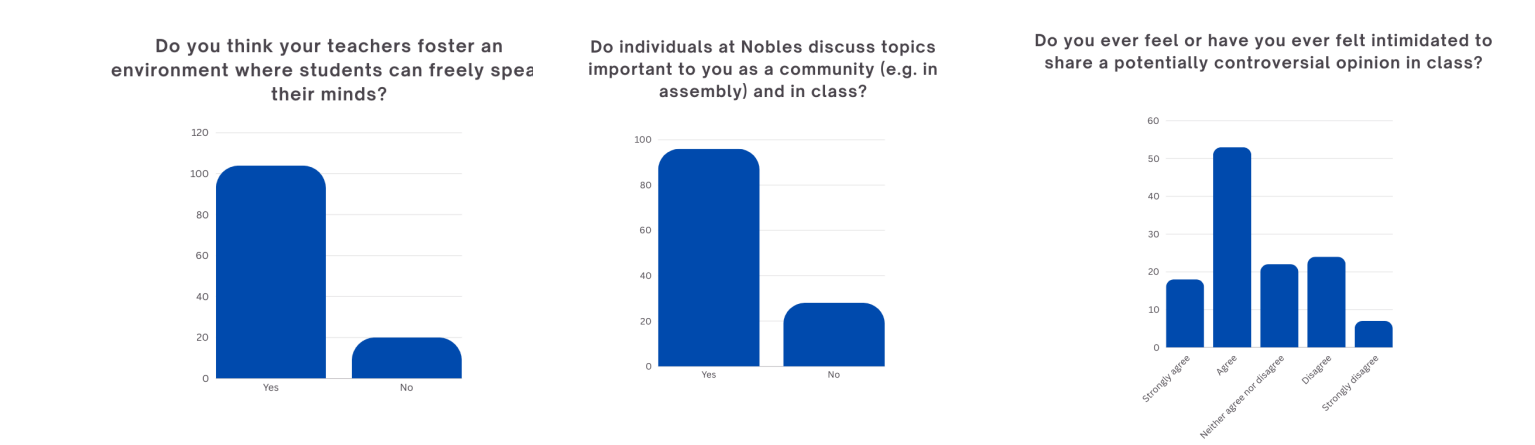


# Student Life

## Free Speech (continued from page 1)

When speaking out inside and outside of the classroom, students fear pushback from their peers. “In the social world at Nobles, you can get disciplined for any sort of political difference from the mainstream, left-wing perspective,” Levine said. This apprehension extends to teachers, as well. “It could be super tense, especially if a teacher that I really respected disagreed with something I fundamentally believe,” Farb said.

In the survey, 83.9% of students ( $\pm 5.66\%$ ) reported that they think their teachers foster an environment where students can freely speak their minds. The way teachers approach both curriculum and also diving into current events outside of it can dictate whether students feel like their freedom of speech is protected. “I do think there are a lot of teachers at Nobles: Mr. Day, Mr. Baker, Mr. Bryant, and others who really encourage free thought in their classroom, despite the fact that everything they’re teaching is from a liberal perspective, with the exception of Mr. Baker,” Levine said.



(Photo Credits: Clare Struzziery)

According to the survey, 77.4% of students ( $\pm 6.44\%$ ) said that individuals at Nobles discuss topics important to them as a community and in class. Over the course of the school year, various current events have been touched on in assembly. Most notably, a group of History Faculty gave background on the Israel-Palestine conflict in early October. Discussions of world and national news vary from class to class, however, and some students feel the issues most important to them—

from the war in Ukraine to the crisis in Congo—are being ignored. The ongoing Israel-Hamas war is an immensely pressing current event. Some students feel it should be talked about more at school. “I feel like we didn’t discuss the Israel-Palestine issue.

Especially in history, it was kind of glossed over,” Olivia Golhar (Class II) said. Others echoed a similar sentiment. “I think we’ve addressed it, but we haven’t had many conversations about it,” Nabagereka said. Having these

open conversations about the conflict is difficult. “I was definitely hesitant to speak out [in class],” Jonas Zatlyn-Weiner (Class II) said.

A host of issues are important to different members of the student population, yet opportunities for free debate and discussion are scarce. “I feel like a lot of the current political issues we don’t mention until it’s over or years later,” Golhar said. Students are concerned about sharing differing opinions, but some say that having these conversations will lead to a more well-informed and

politically engaged student body. “I think that the first step to making it a less awkward environment for people who have unpopular beliefs is just to start sharing them and talking about them, just having more opportunities to do so,” Toby Gauld (Class II) said.

## Nobles-Cotting Basketball Game: Our Connections and Impact



Emilie Andrews  
Staff Writer

“[the Cotting students] are always so fun and energetic. They really have a pure love of the sport, just like us.”

When Will Randle (N ’09), approached Nobles Girls Varsity Basketball Head Coach and Athletic Director Alex Gallagher (N ’90) with the hope of connect-

ing the team with The Cotting School’s athletic program, he began a tradition that would become the highlight of both teams’ seasons. The Cotting School is a wonderful institution that provides students with special needs a welcoming place to maximize their academic and social-emotional learning. Their mission is “To enable students with special needs to achieve their highest learning potential and level of independence.” Randle’s sister, Lizzy Randle, attended Cotting, and he saw the potential that bringing the two teams together could have. The annual Nobles-Cotting basketball game first began as simply a practice after school. Nobles students spent an afternoon at Cotting, getting to know some



(Photo Credit: Tim Carey)

new faces and helping out with practice. Since then, the event has grown into a game often hosted at Nobles, with upwards of 65 Cotting students attending. Cot-

ting School Director of Adaptive Physical Education and Physical Education and Coordinator of Supplemental Services Daniel Cuddy said, “It’s really become a great tradition and something that we look forward to every year.”

The Nobles-Cotting game takes place each winter, usually on a Friday when friends, family, and teammates can come to watch and participate in the event. The Cotting School brings their cheerleaders, boosters, and three basketball teams, totaling nearly half of the student body. The games begin with the Cotting JV team out on the court, composed of students who have just begun learning the sport or need more assistance from Nobles’ players and faculty. The next two games

are played by the Varsity Gold and Varsity Blue teams, both of which are a little more competitive and play against the Nobles girls. All three games are full of celebration and smiles. Girls Varsity Basketball (NGVB) Captain Tori Balser (Class I) said, “[the Cotting students] are always so fun and energetic. They really have a pure love of the sport, just like us.”

In addition to being an exciting opportunity, the Nobles-Cotting game provides just as much learning and new experience for the Nobles basketball team as it does for Cotting. Nobles is a predominately able-bodied school, and spending the afternoon with students from Cotting allows players to build friendships and relationships with people they may not otherwise get the chance to meet. Balser said, “This was the first time that I’ve ever really interacted with students with disabilities for a longer period of time, so it’s just a great experience and I know all of the girls on the team love it as well.” Like Nobles players, Cotting athletes don’t often get the chance to play a team like Nobles. It is an equally exciting experience for both teams.

Before the big game, the NGVB team spends time preparing younger athletes for what to expect at the event and how to contribute to the positive, encouraging environment that both schools value so much. Captain

Tahira Muhammad (Class I) said, “Initially, it can be kind of intimidating because you are going to be with kids who are very different than you in various ways. We want to be as open and positive as we can.” As new generations of players join the team, captains and older girls with past experience in the game discuss the need to keep the game fun and treat

everyone with respect and excitement. Muhammad said, “We help new players understand just how we carry ourselves. We tell them that we are going to fully submerge ourselves in the event; no matter if you are a quiet person or an outgoing person you can be involved in many ways.”

Spread across the walls of Rappaport Gym are the many flags of the Independent School League (ISL). To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Nobles-Cotting basketball game, Gallagher hung the Cotting School flag. “The flag is a sign symbolic of our partnership with Cotting. It shows that we really see them as a competitor school of ours. We really care about and appreciate that partnership,” he said.

Nobles Varsity Girls Basketball is lucky to spend time with Cotting students, and the partnership is widely popular among both schools. Cuddy said, “Working with kids with disabilities can be an eye-opener. But, the more you do it, the more you don’t see the disability. Right now I have been working at Cotting for so long that I don’t see the disability anymore. I just see kids.”



(Photo Credit: Tim Carey)



# Feature

## A Reminiscent Return: Study Away Recap

Emma Sawatzky  
Staff Writer

Each year, Nobles bids farewell to members of Class II who choose to embark on a semester away. We plow ahead with classes, athletics, and extracurriculars as these select few expand their worldview in a transformative way. Having recently returned to experience their second semester on campus, they now share some key takeaways that will follow them into the foreseeable future. To spend months without cell phones is to live in the moment. This is a truth that resonates with our semester-away students and will continue to serve them when thrown back into a world consumed by technology. For Noah Peters (Class II), a tech-free fall at The Mountain School was game-changing. “It’s taking a moment to put your phone down and just connect with the people around you—I think that is one thing I learned most,” Peters said. Quinn Maley (Class II), returning from The Island School in the Bahamas, echoes the sentiment of strong connections formed in the absence of technology. “The connections you make are so strong, especially not being in contact with the outside world and not having technology. So there’s

very little distractions, which makes strong bonds that can almost never be created at home or in another place,” Maley said. Study abroad experiences offer a unique sense of autonomy, calling upon new forms of independence and self-sufficiency. Students commonly report an increased sense of security in their own lives after managing themselves in a new environment. “Being able to live on my own for a couple of months was really cool, especially to experience it at such a young age before college,” said Maley. When considering a semester away, the main concern is usually what will be missed back at Nobles. After spending years on our Dedham campus, it can be difficult to envision a different educational experience. How-



(Photo Credit: Quinn Maley)

ever, those worries prove to be trivial compared to what students gain from a break in routine. “I thought I would feel like I was missing out here while everyone else was having fun together. But being there, I made so many new memories and had so many new experiences. And when I came back here, everyone was still doing what they were doing when I left,” Maley said.



(Photo Credit: Quinn Maley)

According to Peters, living in the moment proved to be most important in fighting similar thoughts. “I definitely missed my friends, but by two weeks in, I had completely forgotten about everything at Nobles. I was just thinking, ‘You’re here now,



(Photo Credit: Noah Peters)

and you need to just enjoy the time you have here,” Peters said. After spending months testing personal boundaries, students emerge with learned skills as well as vivid, fond memories. “One really good memory is when it had just snowed a whole bunch. We maybe got like six inches overnight, and everybody thought it was kind of sad to go to classes. And they gave us a snow morning, where the only rule was you had to be outside. Me and a bunch of friends went sledding, and I know I’ll remember that day,” Peters said.

Though there isn’t much snow in the Bahamas, Maley also

shared a standout memory from her time away. “We had all just returned from Expedition, which was a three-week period where we were all away from each other. We got ready for dinner, and then we had a karaoke night in the boat-house, and that was the first time we were all together in a really long time. I think we just enjoyed each other’s company so much more. We all were just so happy to be with each other,” Maley said.

When prompted about what they will miss most, both Maley and Peters return to the authentic friendships forged during their semester away. “It was 50 kids, so it was small enough that you know everybody. I’m just going to miss the small connections that I had. I know there are people that I’m probably not going to see at least for another year that I would talk to every day,” Peters said.

“We all go through so much, and we share so many experiences together,” Maley said. “You were thrown into this situation where you’d have to share a tent with someone you met 48 hours ago, and you’d have to trust these people that you barely knew. And then once you got to know them, it was so much easier and so much fun.”

## Renavigating Nobles: How Students Abroad Transition Home

Emilie Andrews  
Staff Writer

In search of a sunny escape from the depths of Nobles’ winter seasons, many students consider applying to study away programs. Before the COVID-19

different academic and experiential activities built in. Caroline Jennings (Class I), who attended The Island School in the fall of 2022, shared that her most significant adjustment home was to Nobles classes. “Taking tests was probably the hardest [thing to adjust to] because they didn’t

already have a system for the ways in which they run.” While other students have had upwards of an entire semester to adjust, students returning to school need to catch up on their study habits.

When considering if a study abroad program is a good fit, one must consider which courses they plan to take within their next two school years. Students who plan to take time away from Nobles are not permitted to take an AP course, as it can be difficult to catch up on AP exam content after returning home. Study Away Coordinator Elizabeth Benjamin-Alcayaga described a process many students go through when considering which classes to take during their time at a study-away program. “If you know that you’re not going to be taking AP classes, you might have to make some sacrifices in terms of some other courses too,” she said.

Additionally, some honors-level courses, mainly in the science department, are restricted from students returning from

a study-away program, as their rigor requires a full year of learning with a consistent teacher and class method. Additionally, many study-away programs offer different course options than Nobles. Jennings said, “[The Island School] does not teach language, though they have all other classes, including marine ecology and environmental art.

I had a really difficult time adjusting to Spanish class because of it.”

Like Jennings, Shannon Day (Class I), who returned this fall from a year at SYA France, discussed how her course choices factored into her study-away experience. “It worked out for me because I didn’t want to take AP Euro and ended up taking the electives offered because I thought they were more interesting that year,” Day said. The course selection with time away from Nobles is compromising.

Like the difficult choices students may have to make related to courses while studying away, athletics are also often a leading factor in students’ debate.

*“It has been a little bit jarring because all of [my] classes already have a system for the ways in which they run.”*

*“If you know that you’re not going to be taking AP classes, you might have to make some sacrifices in terms of some other courses too.”*



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

pandemic, around fifteen Nobles students attended study-away programs each year. The numbers dropped during the pandemic but have since risen close to where they were before 2020. Despite these programs’ countless exciting experiences, the transition home can often be a more significant challenge than the initial leap of faith to take an extended period of time away.

Nobles’ student life revolves around a rigorous academic schedule. Unlike the fast-paced schedule at Nobles, the majority of study-away offerings rely on a more relaxed schedule with

give us any [tests] there. Everything we did there was usually followed up with some sort of writing piece,” she said. Similarly to The Island School, other study-away programs often run classes differently than Nobles.

Whether related to pacing, participation, or evaluations, adjusting to new class schedules at Nobles from a more relaxed experience off-campus can be challenging. Noah Peters (Class II), who recently returned home from spending the first semester of the school year at The Mountain School, said, “It has been a little bit jarring because all of [my] classes



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

Peters said, “[Crew] was my main factor. I knew that I wanted to take a semester away, but there was no way I could take the spring season off of crew. When I applied to programs, I only applied for the fall semester.” Athletics can often be the most significant factor for students who wish to experience a study-abroad program. Benjamin-Alcayaga said, “I think it’s probably a big deterrent for a lot of students who otherwise would want to do a semester away.”

If you have decided to participate in a study abroad program, the best advice from study-away alums is to take advantage of the unique opportunities you have been given. Day said, “You have to make sure you can have the best experience while learning the most but also having the most fun.”



# Student Life

## Framing the Future: A Spotlight on the Seniors in Photo I



Nathan Nozea  
Staff Writer

“I saw a senior playing Brawl Stars on their phone the other day.”

Known to many as one of the most exciting and stressful times in their high school career, senior year is packed with highlights: prom, yearbook signings, graduation, and...Photo I? In what seems like a shock, a vast majority of freshmen see at least one senior in their Photo I class. While some might claim the reason for the sudden enrollment is obvious (getting an “easy” class), the reasons behind this phenomenon aren’t as straightforward as some might think.

The most significant driving force behind senior participation in Photo I is to obtain a required art credit—each student is required to take at least one visual art class to graduate. The options to complete the credit include ceramics, painting, drawing, and photography. Christian Grosso (Class I) said, “I signed up for [Photo I] because I needed the visual art requirement...if there was no requirement I most likely would’ve never taken this course.” However, Grosso does acknowledge that Photo I has greatly exceeded his expectations. He said, “Photo I has been a ton of fun for me so far. Mr. Mann

is a great teacher and has been super helpful to me...he’s [very] inclusive to the seniors despite the fact that [the class] is fresh-



(Photo Credit: Max Daniello)

man heavy.” Similar to Grosso, Ellie Gates (Class I) has also enjoyed her experiences in Photo I. She said, “[It’s] an excellent class.”

Though the seniors seem to have no trouble adjusting to the course, their presence has created a tense dynamic in the

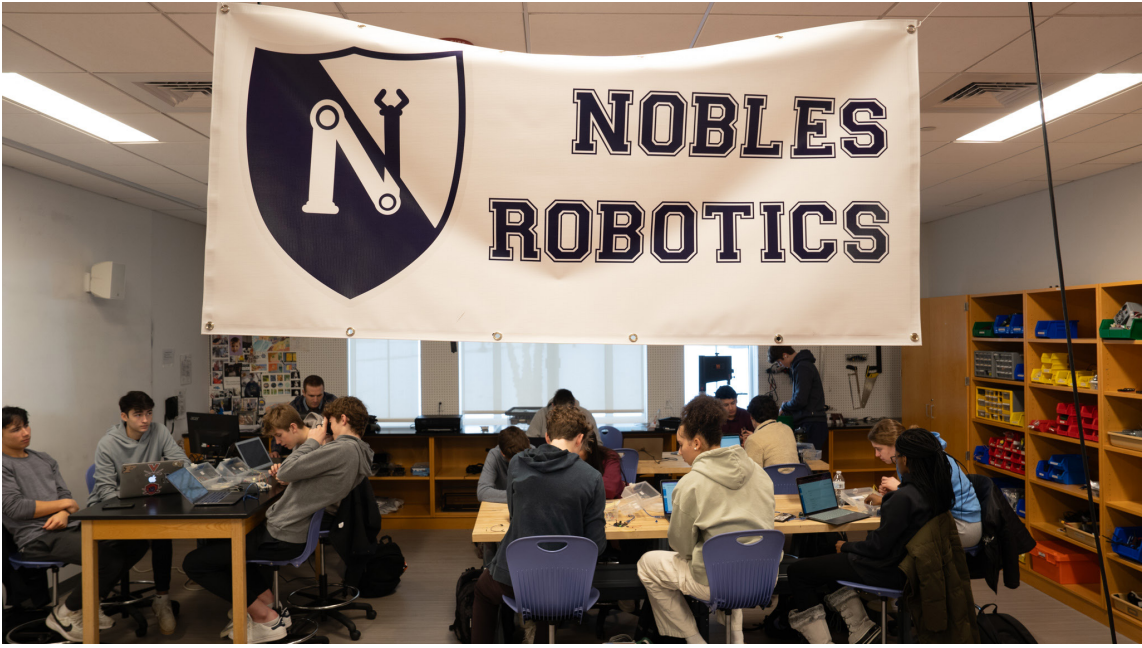
photography room. An anonymous freshman said, “Sometimes I feel like I can’t be myself...every time I speak, I feel like I’m being judged by the seniors silently watching me from the corner.” Another freshman recalled a time when they were presenting one of their photos to class. They said, “While I was presenting, I heard a snicker in the room...I looked and saw the seniors smiling at

me...I haven’t talked in class since.” Clearly, the seniors and freshmen are destined never to intermix, as for some inexplicable

reason, the freshmen are afraid of the seniors’ countless good-hearted actions towards them. As the seniors continue their efforts to unite their Photo I section, it brings up the question: do seniors do work in this class? Gates believes so. She said, “[In Photo I], I do just as much work as the freshmen.” Other freshmen dispute this fact, however. One student said, “I saw a senior playing Brawlstars on their phone the other day.” This statement was verified by two other students present in the class. In another class, a freshman also mentioned how the seniors seemingly played a game where they attempted to hide the freshmen’s cameras. They said, “I spent the whole class looking for my camera, only to find it in the hands of the seniors at the end of class...I ended up crying in the bathroom after the period ended.” From these conflicting reports between Gates and the freshman, it is unclear what “work” the seniors have been actually doing. Most likely these “reports” shared by the freshman are propaganda, done to paint our benevolent seniors in a negative light.

Apocryphal quotes from freshmen aside, the seniors in Photo I are clearly hard at work. Although some might claim otherwise, the seniors are changing the photo industry as the world knows it. To see their revolutionary pieces, make sure to visit the photo room in the Middle School!

## Wired for Success: Nobles’ New Robotics Program



Nathan Nozea  
Staff Writer

(Photo Credit: Avery Winder)



Intro to Programming. Tech Ethics. App and Web Development. Artificial Intelligence. These courses listed are just a small minority of the vast amount of classes Nobles has added to its computer science curriculum. Even now, as the computer science and programming field evolves, Nobles continues to look at the courses it offers, hoping to find new ways to address technological advances in the classroom. This year proves no exception, as for the first time in Nobles’ history, a robotics course will be offered as one of the many options available in the school’s afternoon program. But why now? Computer Science Facul-

ty and Robotics Afternoon Program Faculty Advisor Max Montgomery says the initiation of the program is due to the hard work and efforts of the current seniors, specifically Danny Gallagher, Ben Guenther, Justice Hickman-Maynard, Simon Junknelis, and Clemi Scherzer. “All the credit for bringing robotics to Nobles really goes to our current seniors...[they] advocated for funding, started participating in competitions, ...and set the foundation for the robotics afternoon program,” he said. Their active role in establishing this program comes as no surprise, considering that these seniors spearheaded the development of the Robotics Club at Nobles. In fact, many

students will find that the activities of the robotics afternoon program are quite similar to the ones in the Robotics Club. Clemi Scherzer (Class I) expanded on this idea, saying, “[The program] is an extension of Robotics Club and what we do and have been doing for the last three years.”

What does that mean? Like the club, the main focus of this afternoon activity is building a robot to compete in a worldwide robotics competition known as First Tech Challenge (FTC). With over 20,000 teams participating, each team’s robot will undergo a series of challenges to prove both the team’s coding and designing skills. These challenges—varying from year to year—are usually split into two periods: one where the robot is controlled by a player and another where the robot is autonomous. This year’s competition

will primarily involve the use of hexagons: the team’s robot will be required to pick up different colored hexagons and put them on a board, with more points awarded for the different patterns the robot makes with the hexagon. The robots must also throw a paper airplane a specific distance and physically hang off the ground.

Though the Robotics Team’s prime focus is the FTC event, they also offer chances for novices to expand their knowledge and skills in the robotics field. Through the creation of a development robot, less experienced students are able to involve themselves in a low-stakes environment where they can primarily focus on building their robotic skills. Scherzer said, “[The development robot] is a great way to get started and lower the barriers [of robot design].”

As the robotics season begins to pick up, and the team draws closer to the competition date, it leaves the seniors with extensive dreams for the future of the team. Simon Junknelis (Class I) said, “We definitely want to do more stuff in terms of community service [for our program]...For our final season, we [plan] to run more types of educational robot programs.” Previously, the Robotics Club has brought some of their robots to local libraries and taught kids how to code by using the robot as the model. Clearly, more projects such as these are set to come in the near future. Justice Hickman-Maynard (Class I) also introduced the idea of the robotics afternoon program be-

coming a legacy. He said, “Ideally, we create something that has longevity...[and] has a broad history like Model UN and Debate Club does. We want to create an infrastructure that allows people to build off of [the program].”

In addition to these goals, the leadership core of the Robotics Team also simply wants to advocate to Nobles the wonders of robotics. Junknelis said, “Robotics is the only true collaborative, competitive team at Nobles. In Model UN and Mock Trial, you are somewhat of a team, as you go to conferences, but ultimately, you win or lose individually. But, in robotics, everyone works together...and everyone shares in the reward together.” Scherzer also points out how the program gives students a chance to utilize their computer science skills in the real world. He said, “Robotics is a way for kids to practically apply [their skills], which is something that is lost in traditional education...the robot doesn’t get made unless you put the parts on the printer or spend the hours in CAD.”

Although the robotics afternoon program has just gotten its start, it’s clear that from the vision of the leadership core, it will leave a long-lasting imprint on the Nobles community. The establishment of the robotics afternoon program serves as an inspiration to many in the student body. No matter the skill, if students show true passion in something they love, they can use that dedication to rapidly change the Nobles community as we know it.



# Student Life

## Foster Gallery: Practice Makes Progress



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

**Eva Yu**  
Staff Writer



If you’ve visited the Henderson Arts Center recently, you’ve no doubt noticed the newest display in Foster Gallery. Complete with an interactive graffiti board at the entrance, Practice Makes Progress is Foster’s newest faculty show. Biennially, the visual arts faculty puts on a show for the community. Visual Arts Faculty Betsy VanOot said, “For those of us in the visual arts, we ask kids to take huge risks in our classes.

I think it’s really really important we model that we too are doing that, and we’re wrestling with the exact same things they are.” VanOot, who teaches painting and drawing in the upper school, devoted her corner of Foster to six beautiful oil paintings. These paintings utilize geometrical shapes and colors to create portraits of old buildings. “It took me a while to realize I was actually channeling that portrait when I started the painting of Gloucester doorway, asking you to peer deeply into an abandoned construction site and look for an autobiography of a piece whose

story has been long lost to all of us,” VanOot writes in her artist’s statement. For these paintings, she wanted to embrace her love for abandoned buildings. She took on an extra challenge by working with square canvases, which she has always believed are one of the hardest constraints. “I thought these were going to be geometric, but they turned into psychological portraits. Places that you don’t have access to, and you can sort of get to the door but you can’t quite get in it,” VanOot said. Right next to VanOot’s corner, Director of Foster Gallery and Visual Arts Faculty John Dorsey mounts a wall of functional architectural ceramic pieces that come in pairs. “These vessels represent exploration and exasperation. And iteration. Or the lack thereof,” Dorsey wrote in his artist’s statement. Aligning with the theme of the gallery, Practice makes Progress, Dorsey explores making the same pots over and over again. He has eight or ten of some of the pieces that are on the wall, and though the process is

repeated, they all turn out a little differently from each other. Dorsey said, “This is Noah’s Ark, it’s two by two by two. I hope it’s going to encourage people to compare and contrast between the pairs. Some are based on ovals, so there’s a left, right, front, [and] back, versus the pieces that are round. I’ll play with the orientation when they go up on the wall.” On the far back wall of Foster, Visual Arts Faculty David Roane has two huge pieces displayed that span the entire width of the gallery. A piece made with four canvases featuring a hyper-realistic self-portrait of Roane hangs on the wall, and slightly in front, a more elongated canvas dangles from the ceiling. Roane said, “My work is narrative-based. The inspiration is my own life experiences and the story of that life experience. I want my art to behave like a language.” Roane’s hanging piece, Tenuous Fibers, explores his childhood experiences. Upon closer examination, the painting features Roane and his twin brother, prints of African cloths, as well as an abundance of insects. Roane said, “[The insects] represent an invasion of the home. They figure prominently as a threat to the innocence of our childhood. But at the same time, bees serve as pollinators and as creators and sustainers of life.”

Across from Roane’s display, Visual Arts Faculty John Hirsch shows beautiful pictures depicting sea glass. “I’ve been sea kayaking a fair amount the last couple of years. It’s an equal mix of peaceful and exciting. One of the things I started noticing is that there’s a lot of garbage. So I started picking stuff up. This work is very much in progress, I’m not exactly sure what I’m doing or where I’m going yet,” Hirsch said. He usually works with documentary photos, focusing more on a place or a group of people, but he was visually intrigued by the sea glass he picked up on his kayaking trips. Although it’s different, Hirsch wanted to embody the idea that practice makes progress by just putting his art on the wall and living with it. The gallery also depicts work from Visual Arts Faculty Molly Pascal, Curtis Mann, Nora Bourdeau, and Hannah Latham. Each piece was curated uniquely by the individual, but Dorsey said, “In the end, it’s all going to function as a gallery. So part of it is thinking about how each display would look next to each other.” If anyone hasn’t had the chance to visit the gallery yet, I encourage you to take the opportunity to see the Visual Arts Department’s hard work over the last few months.

## Club Competitions: What Are These Clubs Up to?



**Morgan Gibson**  
Staff Writer

(Photo Credit: Ben Heider)

Although Nobles is well known for its fantastic winter athletics, some of the clubs and organizations on campus are also gearing up for a very busy winter of high-level competition. Three clubs in particular, have been busy preparing students for competitions that require months of preparation ahead of time. Model UN:

To begin, the Nobles Model United Nations club will be sending a delegation to compete in two conferences this winter: Harvard Model UN (HMUN) and Boston University Model UN (BOSMUN). Both of these conferences are multi-day, overnight conferences, taking place at the Sheraton Hotel in Boston and the Marriott Copley Hotel,

respectively. At both HMUN and BOSMUN, Delegates spend the majority of their days in committees with various topics, including refugee crises, women’s rights, climate change, and the Roman Empire. The months of preparation for the conference are overseen by the captains of the club, Morgan Gibson (Class II) and Arthi Vithiananthan (Class II), and club presidents Angie Feng (Class I) and Colin Levine (Class I). Faculty Advisor Amadou Seck said, “HMUN and BOSMUN are very different conferences. HMUN is arguably the most prestigious Model UN conference in the world in terms of the number of delegates, but also the number of foreign countries represented.” On average, HMUN hosts around 4,000 delegates with schools

bringing their most highly skilled negotiators to compete for one of four potential awards: Best Delegate, Outstanding Delegate, Honorable Mention, and Diplomatic Commendation. Nobles began sending a delegation to the conference after an unexpected blizzard prevented the team from traveling to Georgetown Model UN in DC about 10 years ago, so they instead attended HMUN. In the past Nobles has had success at HMUN with delegation receiving the honor of Best Delegation in 2021.

Mock Trial:

Mock Trial Club hosts intra-team trials in both the spring and fall to train newer club members and ease them into the activity. In the winter, however, many members apply to be on the roster of one of the competitive teams

that participate in trials against other schools in a competition hosted by the Massachusetts Bar Association Competition (Mass-Bar). Club President Colin Levine said, “The Bar [Association] holds a mock trial tournament with around 100 schools from Massachusetts, and the numbers have always grown.” All participants in the competition receive one shared case packet that will be used by all teams that year. Schools will have attorneys prepare questioning for both the prosecution and defense, and students will embody the characters of people involved in the case as witnesses. Preparation for the trials begins in November when MassBar releases the case packet, and the Nobles team is selected. Over winter break, attorneys formulate their questioning, and witnesses practice memorization in preparation for the preliminary trials in late January and early February. Levine said, “The club has grown exponentially over my 4 years, which meant that this year we got to have much more selection when choosing our competitive team at MassBar. Our team is comprised of really the best attorneys at Nobles and because of that, I’m really excited, and I think it’s going to be our most successful season yet.”

Ethics Bowl:

In early February, the Ethics Club will travel to Tufts for a day to compete in the Tufts Ethics Bowl. Throughout the year, members of the club have par-

ticipated in intrateam bowls; however, the Tufts Bowl is one of the club’s more competitive events. Every year, the National High School Ethics Bowl releases 16 cases that students must analyze. Ethics Club leader Maya Rottenburg (Class II) said, “For each case, we go through and say ‘okay, these are the important values, and these are the important stakeholders, which are the people who are affected by the case such as organizations and companies, then you go through and you make your stance on the case.’” Competing teams will discuss two of the 16 cases during the bowl, taking turns presenting and defending their positions. Students use philosophical and human values to defend their conclusions, arguing their stance on the case. Rottenburg said, “Usually we will go through and focus on the more human values like autonomy, respect, responsibility, and then discuss philosophical values, for example, we’ll talk about social contract while we are arguing our case.” Many students who were chosen to participate in these events have spent all year working toward these competitions and preparing to compete at the highest level possible. Despite the competitiveness of these events, students have expressed that not only are they incredibly fun and rewarding, but the connections that they have made through these organizations within Nobles and beyond are some that will last a lifetime.



# Student Life

## Unraveling the Middle School Madness



Nathan Nozea  
Staff Writer

Read at your own risk, and remember: they are always watching.

The Middle School. To those in the Upper School, it is a distant dream, a haven free from the unfathomable pain and horrors of high school. A place where students bounce with every step, their bright smiles illuminating the trails of darkness enveloping the hallways of Shattuck and beyond. Yet, as the second semester begins to unfold, a dark cloud of misery and despair has begun to descend upon the Pratt Building. Hallways that used to be full of wandering students chattering away with their friends are now completely silent. Middle schoolers shiver as they walk down the eerie halls, fearful of something unexplainable, something...otherworldly. Other students let out deep sighs as they seemingly stare into a void, unable to respond or react to those around them. The Nobleman, noticing these sudden changes, has deemed it the first priority to examine what's going on in the Middle School. The details of this investigation are written down in the report.

Read at your own risk, and remember: they are always watching.

January 3, 2024. I've entered the Middle School. I don't know what but something...feels off. There seems to be a weight pressing down on the very depths of my soul, telling me to...stop resisting. To waste my life away, swarmed by pages and pages of Pre-Algebra worksheets and Civics essays. Is this what it feels like to the rest of the students? Need more information. Will report back later. January 5, 2024. It's been two days since the beginning of the investigation. I've tried to engage in casual conversations with the middle schoolers, to no avail. Everyone seems...afraid. Whenever I mention recreation-



(Graphic Credit: Wudiana Fevrier)

al activities such as playing video games or going outside, students let out a visual shudder. I pressed

some students on this, but to my annoyance, no one responded. However, I did hear some middle schooler muttering, "Must do work and get straight As...if I don't, colleges will find out and I'll be rejected." What are these students talking about? I feel like I'm so close to the answer The Nobleman is searching for ... January 10, 2024. I've made an astounding breakthrough! After a tense Science V class, a student tapped me on the shoulder. The next thing I knew, I was blindfolded and pushed into a small classroom. As I attempted to cry out, a hand covered my mouth, and I felt a whisper in my ear. "Stop resisting." I stilled, and my captor released my blindfold. Directly in front of me stood six students, their faces obscured by their hoods.

"We know what you're here for." I opened my mouth, prepared to vehemently deny their accusations. They raised their index finger in unison. "However, fortunately for you, we're on your side." They removed their hoods and began to tell me their story... January 10, 2024. 3:00 pm. I know everything now. Why the middle schoolers are acting this way... Why they shudder at every word... why in their eyes, there is an eternal darkness. It's because of-- wait. Did I just see something? I look around frantically. Is that a teacher? No, No, NO! The student body must know this information! They must know that---- Unfortunately, this concludes the report written by Nathan Nozea. If you know anything about his last whereabouts, please inform The Nobleman staff. Until then, stay vigilant, and know that anything is possible at the Noble & Greenough School.

## Mr. Berdugo: Immigrant, Musician, and Teacher



Eva Yu  
Staff Writer

(Photo Credit: Nobles Photo Archive)



At the center of the Nobles Symphony Orchestra, a well-dressed man waves his baton. With every swipe, notes and rhythms combine together to form yet another beautiful performance. From the orchestra to the pit band to the small chamber ensembles, Director of Instrumental Music Antonio Berdugo has conducted many successful performances since he came to Nobles seven years ago. Even though many have heard his music, students who are not involved in the arts might not know Berdugo himself. Born in Bogota, Colombia, Berdugo moved north to Santa Marta, Colombia at a young age. He said, "They're two very different cities. It's like moving from New York to San Diego." At merely five years old, Berdugo took up learning the piano and started playing at the church that his parents at-

tended. He had the unique opportunity of learning with an orchestra program that visited Santa Marta to teach symphonic instruments to kids. When he was 11, Berdugo started learning to play the violin. "The Youth Orchestra was my social life at the time," Berdugo said. "After rehearsal, we'd play soccer and sometimes video games. Some of my closest friends are still from this program." After graduating from high school, Berdugo took an opportunity to study music education at The Colombia Adventist University on a scholarship. "Even at 16 or 17, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. I would put being a music

educator right next to my identity as a musician, and below that you have conductor, composer, violinist, pianist, and everything else," Berdugo said. After graduating from college in 2001, Berdugo continued to simultaneously pursue his career as a teacher and a musician. While teaching at a national music program and a private school, he was also conducting the string program at a local university and playing gigs of his own as well. He also started his own youth orchestra in Santa Marta, named the Cajamag Youth Symphony Orchestra. "I'm proud of this orchestra because me and a few friends started this program from scratch, and to this day it's still alive. Every time I go back to Santa Marta, I get the chance

to conduct them," Berdugo said. In 2004, Berdugo decided to move to the United States. He was accepted into a graduate program in violin performance at La Sierra University in California. "I ran into a major problem once I arrived in the U.S. I thought my English was good enough, but it turns out it wasn't," Berdugo said. "I couldn't understand what people were saying, but I was always curious and always questioned." He recalls that an administrator in the music department at his school gave him a job answering phone calls in the office that year. It was through this experience that Berdugo believes his English truly improved. In 2007, Berdugo graduated from La Sierra and got a job as a conductor for a youth orchestra in Pasadena. However, a year later, the 2008 market crash prevented the orchestra from hiring him for another year. So, in the spring of 2009, Berdugo decided to move to Boston and go back to school. He was accepted into a graduate program in composition with an emphasis in orchestra conducting at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge. At the same time, he was also working in Medford and performing. He gradually began to get more opportunities to conduct at schools such as Milton High School and Josiah Quincy School. "I've always liked conducting," Berdugo said. "I first conducted a chorus at my parents' church, and after gradu-

ating Longy in 2012, I started taking conducting more seriously." In 2015, Berdugo decided to move back to Colombia. He got the opportunity to conduct the Cajamag Orchestra that he created over ten years ago. When he moved back in 2016, Berdugo applied to work at Nobles, and he has been with us ever since. "I hope my story shows how you can thrive in a land where you have no idea about the culture, the language, and even the system. But if you want to thrive there, you take chances by meeting new people, you take chances by learning new languages, and you take chances that you don't know if they're going to work out or not," Berdugo said. "I don't want my students to become musicians, that's not my goal. I want my students to find joy in making music. If they can play the right notes and the right rhythm, sure amazing, but just having fun making music is most important to me," Berdugo said. Berdugo has brought joy and music to countless members of the Nobles community, contributing not only his prowess as a musician and a conductor but also his positivity and skill as a teacher. From orchestra to the musical to everything else in between, Berdugo's impact on the community is immeasurable. With his back facing the audience and his baton pointed at an orchestra of musicians, Berdugo fills the room not only with music, but also with joy.

*"I want my students to find joy in making music...having fun making music is most important to me."*

*"I'm proud of this orchestra because me and a few friends started this program from scratch and to this day it's still alive."*



Satire

Embracing the Absurdity of Frosty Fashion

Kate McLaughlin  
Staff Writer



As January brings the promise of change in the new year for so many hopeful individuals, students across the nation face one question: what can I wear to survive? A matter of life and death, their insufficient wardrobes leave too much in the hands of New England winter, too many innocent souls at the mercy of ruthless weather patterns and failed prospective snow days. Indeed, Dr. Hall’s “Happy almost-snow day!” remains an eerie remark in these mournful and dark times. This threat to the future of our kind has only one solution: a new wardrobe. What better way to fight Dedham’s frozen roads and biting winds than new clothes? Ravaging stores nationwide, gifting everything but fashionable winter clothes last holiday season, oblivious mothers leave shelves

stocked with mittens and hats for the taking. The time is now. Perhaps the most imminent threat to our community this winter is the annual return of ashen paleness to the once-bronze bodies of so many. Delusion is dangerous, fake tanner has never looked real, and orange streaks are appealing to nobody. For the sake of the student body, save your Cheeto-era for prom. It is no secret that we are all ashy and in desperate need of exfoliation and moisturization. My solution? This winter, fight the epidemic of flaking elbows with SKIMS. Invest in long-sleeved shirts and full-length pants in your skin tone. These clothes will hide the true nature of the paleness plaguing your cold skin. Bodysuits? Even better. It’s equally important to accessorize after disguising your sickly appearance. The more interesting the outfit, the warmer you will be. Allow your inner expression to

overcome any threat the outdoors may pose. From the nostalgia of summer camp, worn by many counselors and many more campers, embody the warmth of summer with the timeless mankini. Perhaps nothing is more appealing than this fashion-forward accessory on a single-digit January day. Not too revealing with just the right show of skin, this outfit will turn heads and show off the benefits of your winter skincare routine! Jaws will drop and eyebrows will raise. Yes, detentions might be issued and parents might be called, but nothing great was ever achieved without risk. There’s no room for such silly stressors in these interminable months. And what about shoes? What will save us from the mortal embarrassment of slipping by the library windows? What will shield us from the shame and isolation of eating dirt by the senior section? Nothing beats Birkenstocks in New England winters.



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

Now, I’m not talking about those close-toed clogs from colonial times, made for walking through rows of corn in Plymouth village. Fur-lined in an almost implausibly wide variety of colors, the classic Birkenstock sandals are your best bet against ashen ankles. With undeniable arch

support, stun the cold in lime green or pink fuchsia this winter. As students nationwide lie anxiously in bed, afraid to leave the warmth of their sheets, plan accordingly with your new winter wardrobe. Save your life and your dignity, by staying warm during these strenuous months.

The Nobleman’s Guide To Surviving The Cold

Jonathan Tillen  
Layout Staff



As the New England winter fully settles over the Nobles campus, the

season brings in the bitter temperatures that New England is so famous for. During these times, many buildings on campus seem way too cold for comfort. To combat these frigid conditions,

here are some of the best strategies to stay warm this winter.

Option 1: Bundle up! This almost goes without saying. Throw on the extra, dress code-allowed, sweatshirt, or even consider wearing snow pants instead of jeans. While sporting a full snowsuit, be sure to make as much noise as possible while passing through the Shattuck hallways to advertise this strategy to the wider community. To take this step a bit further, be sure to pack snow goggles and skis in case snow piles up throughout the day.

Option 2: Hand warmers. Disposable or rechargeable, these amazing items can warm up your fingers, allowing you to type your essays and reports with

as much efficiency as possible.

Option 3: Sneaking a personal heater into your backpack. Less clunky than extra layers, while also maintaining the relaxing feeling of hot air skimming across your body. While it may be challenging to find a place to plug in your heater, if you think ahead and sit next to an outlet at the beginning of the year, you will be all set. This solution does come with two notable downsides. First is that the heater takes up quite a bit of space. Second, reaching into your backpack to take out a math textbook and accidentally punching a hot heater is also quite unpleasant.

Option 4: Assembling a fireplace in your classroom. What else could be more aesthetic than bringing your own wooden logs, coal, and firestarters into your second period? While your kindling may turn

some heads, it’ll all be worth it once your entire English II class bundles around the fire for a cozy read-aloud of Hamlet. Be careful not to set off any smoke alarms, or worse, burn anything down.

Option 5: Installing a jacuzzi in Mr. Kovacs’ AP Biology classroom. Who wouldn’t want to relax in a jacuzzi during a lecture? While this one is not so budget-friendly, it is undoubtedly more beneficial to the community than the previous options. And what would better accompany the fish tanks in the windows than a giant hot tub in the middle of the classroom?

Feel free to try out these newfound strategies as temperatures drop throughout the next month. And now the Nobleman sincerely wishes you the warmest of winters.



(Photoshop Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

Ins & Outs of 2024

Ins	Outs
Men Shakespearean insults Thank you notes Frolicking Riding with your dawgs Standing on business Playing it by ear Catharsis/weeping	Boys Misogyny Going to college with a significant other Monarchy/hereditary succession Taking photos of yourself crying Passive aggression Anxiety Crying a little



# Backpage

## FEATURED PLAYLIST OF THE MONTH

### Quotables

“That’s on me, Ms. Puckett., confesses Corban Shih (Class I) after the completion sound from the *New York Times* Crossword blares during an AP European History quiet reading time.

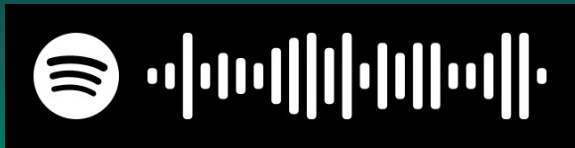
“We are not cooking. I was going to rename us the underground kitchen but now I have to rethink,” said Mr. Berdugo to the pit band after a haphazard rehearsal.

“Ms. Genecco’s a chronic dress code sniper,” complained an indignant Sean Watts (Class II).

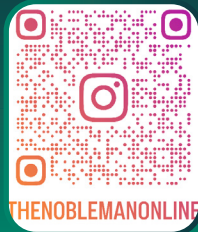
“Mr. Kovacs, after we’ve finished the AP, can we make dangerous bacteria?” Inquired a budding bioengineering Gavin Lin (Class II).

Hear Something Funny? Send it as a Quotable for our next edition! [nobleman@nobles.edu](mailto:nobleman@nobles.edu)

Fantastic February Mix, curated by the Editors:



Check out our Instagram Page:



Betting odds for the interval February 9th to March 9th

Ice-related injuries on campus: 1.0	Over	Under
Assembly standing ovations: 3.0	Over	Under
Snow Days: 1.0	Over	Under
Winter ISL Championships: 3.0	Over	Under
Campus car crashes: 0.5	Over	Under
Nobles jackets on the rack in the library on March 8: 10.5	Over	Under
Assembly talks regarding rodents or clogged toilets: 2.5	Over	Under



Me hearing a dress code lecture in assembly knowing full well I'm out of dress code

