

COUGAR MENTOR NEWS

The Cougar Mentor Program, where students help students succeed!

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My Cougar Mentor Path By Max Beaulieu

I first attended Coffee Talk, a Cougar Mentor sponsored event, on a whim. It was a cool Thursday, I was hungry and not looking forward to work later that day, when I saw a sign directing me into a room. I followed, sat and drank coffee with a few other timid looking college students. An hour later I was hooked, and I made it my business to go to each Coffee Talk.

Around the same time as the last Coffee Talk, I decided I wanted a second job. Nothing too demanding just something I could do on the side so I could save and spend a little more. A Cougar Mentor, and friend, Nandika, encouraged me to apply and I was happy when I got hired.



I joined the Cougar Mentors hoping to find a job; instead I found a cornucopia of people who were all enthusiastically dedicated to helping other people succeed. Their excitement was contagious and now I look forward to coming to work and helping people. The whole experience has been a great one, and I am glad that my path led me to become a Cougar Mentor.

Interdisciplinary Learning - What It Is and Why It Is Important By Robert Norton

Important Dates:

- Thanksgiving Holiday: Nov 27th — Nov 30th
- Last Day of Fall Semester: Dec 13th
- Campus Closed: Dec 20th — Jan 4th
- Winter Term Begins: Jan 5th
- Fall Grades Available: Jan 12th
- MLK Jr. Holiday: Jan 19th
- Last Day of Winter Term: Feb 7th
- Spring Semester Begins: Feb 9th

You may not have ever heard this term or you may have some idea what it means. Interdisciplinary is just a fancy way of saying education that incorporates many diverse disciplines. It goes deeper than that though. This approach means that disciplines are no longer classified in a traditional way. The student learns not one subject but many subjects in that one subject. The relationships between different categories of knowledge become apparent as this style of learning is reinforced. Some examples would be an English class where the student reads anthropology articles, or an art class that teaches some of the chemistry and physics behind light and how to make paint reflect what we see. What's important is that boundaries

are not an issue if different subjects are taught with an eye toward incorporating other subjects. One class can be taught interdisciplinarily, but if the entire curriculum is changed to make this approach normal, think how much more diverse we could be as students.

Interdisciplinary studying is key when considering what major one wants to pursue, or what subject(s) one wants to involve themselves in at COC. This concept is tied to a modern way of thinking about education. Diverse disciplines should not be isolated when in the world today so many different career fields require training in a multitude of subjects. Concentrating oneself in one area is limiting both to someone's personal fulfillment and for when it comes time to

land that dream job when the competition has a more diversified background. The precedent for this approach goes back to the Greeks, the most famous of which delved into learning about everything under the sun (Aristotle, Pythagoras), and of course the famous "Renaissance" man of 1500's Italy. All people to emulate, for what better fate is there than to be remembered as a great artist and/or a scientist? The barriers that exist to this style of thinking are mostly to do with people expanding their outlook on how people learn or what young people should be taught. This has to do with the broader issue of systems theory, which is a fascinating way to think about the world. In fact, studying interdisciplinarity itself can be a field of study.

Keep Healthy with Student Health

By Hyoshim Yang

Have you ever experienced constant fatigue and dizziness during the semester? Or do you lack motivation and don't know why? These are some of the signs of depression, which can be unnoticeable even to yourself. Many students go through depression when they are having a hard time getting used to college life and adult responsibilities.

The COC Student Health and Wellness Center is here to help you get through the semester healthy, both physically and mentally. Some of the free or low-cost services available include: blood pressure checks, blood glucose and cholesterol screenings, TB skin tests, vaccinations, pregnancy tests, confidential STD and HIV testing, referrals to specialists, and even prescription medication. In addition, nutrition counseling by a registered dietitian and



mental health counseling by a clinical psychologist are available to COC students. You can stop by the Student Health & Wellness Center in STCN-122 or call (661) 362-3259 to schedule an appointment.

Now do you feel more relieved and comfortable with any possible scenarios regarding your health during the school day? Don't struggle alone with any issues that hinder your college success. Counseling from the Student Health & Wellness Center will help you with a variety of issues such as stress/anxiety, shyness, relationship problems, eating disorders, depression, sexuality, low self-esteem, and other personal concerns. In addition, SNAC "Best Bite" meal program sponsored by the Student Health & Wellness Center is designed to help you choose healthy and balanced meals so that you can be at your best during the day. So, ask for a "Best Bite" meal each day at the Cougar Café and remember that you can get 1 free after 10 purchases with a "Best Bite" meal frequency card, which is a great way to save some money for college students!

The Most Adored

By Nandika Hettiarachchi

Many people say,
That this is the time to play
But, I don't think I may
Because, I'm scared to go astray.

'Sea's got lot of fish'
It was just a thought, but never a wish
Ten second glance is my daily wish
With desire to pay respect,
Will never compare her to a fish...

To define her the closest
Want to pick the words of the finest
Thinking is the hardest
Because her beauty makes me the maddest...

Dear, dearest the beloved one
I make my daily wish come true
From the corner seat that I sit on.
My heart beat for a tune of true
Which helped me drop some words,
On the paper that I was left alone.

The heart is deaf,
I am nervous for the sight that I'm on.
I don't think I could go on
Because I love you more,
Than you'll ever know.
I'm leaving now
Because the thought occurred about you,
Might just be a wish that would never come true.

My Story

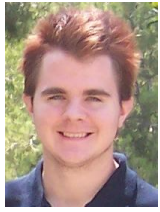
By Kristen Cheriegate

Walking over the bridge that joins Mentry Hall and the Library, I felt smaller than I ever had in my life. Coming straight from being homeschooled to taking my first steps on the COC Valencia campus, walking to the Assessment Center felt as though it was miles away. I was worried and excited at the same time. In reality, how else would you expect a fourteen year-old girl to react? Especially one who has never taken an academic class outside of her own living room! I was determined from that moment on that I would go through my classes here with flying colors! Now, having recently turned sixteen, I laugh at myself every time I visually go over that event in my mind. During my first semester at COC, I was fixed on the thought that I would do well at this college with very little guidance from anyone. For example, I wanted to be able to study on my own

and learn where all my classes were with very little help from anyone else. By passing both my classes easily that semester, I was positive that my choice to be independent was working perfectly! What I now regret is that it took getting quite a low grade to realize how wrong I was. Now, I am advising you that it is best to use the sources of guidance that are given to you free of charge. For example, taking advantage of the knowledge of the tutors at the TLC Lab will help your success rate "reach the sky". Getting involved by being in a study group is a great start! Don't be the slacker who barely passes college with a 2.0 GPA! Have confidence and keep in mind that everyone and anyone is guaranteed to have partial knowledge of something that you struggle with during your college experience.

▶▶▶ Meet the Cougar Mentors

The Cougar Mentors are here to help you the students! Make an appointment today!



Max Beaulieu I enjoy long walks on the beach and romantic dinners for two, oh wait wrong bio...Hi my name is Max Beaulieu. Being a Cougar Mentor at COC is one of the most fun and fulfilling jobs that I have ever had the pleasure of working at. I am 20 years old and in my fourth year at COC (if you count the year I was at AOC). I will be transferring next fall hopefully to CSUMB or SFSU. I am currently an English major and I want to move to foreign countries and write books about my experiences.



Jeff Best I am in my second year at College of the Canyons and have lived in the Santa Clarita Valley my entire life. I am a Mechanical Engineering major and working towards transferring to a UC in the future. Anyone close to me will tell you that I love to laugh, have a good time, and am fun to be around. I am also a great listener and enjoy assisting others with advice or a helping hand. I am a member of Hite and Honors, officer in MESA club, and a huge Nascar fan!



Kristen Cheriegate I am sixteen-years-old and living proof that if anyone gives college their all, how young you are has no relevance to your success. I have a unique taste in music, photography, and humor. My ambition in life, as for a career, is to be in the FBI. I enjoy meeting new people here at College of the Canyons. I am also motivated to give as much guidance as I can to new students, in order to make their stay here a successful and accomplishing one!



Ekaterina Doldjeva I am an international student and this is my second year at COC and in the USA as well. My native country is Bulgaria which is located in southeast Europe. It is a beautiful country with amazing nature! I am a Film Production major and I hope to someday be a professional editor and visual effects designer. I love music, traveling, hanging out with friends, photography and editing short films. I enjoy being a Cougar Mentor because I have a chance to help people out!



Nandika Hettiarachchi I am an international student from Sri Lanka. My 1 and a half years in the United States has been a stunning experience for me, living all by myself in a totally different culture. I am a business major and plan on studying International Business and Finance. I am a very friendly, out-going person, and I like to get along with people. I love to help friends and see them become successful. I have a moral in life, which is, "It's nice to be important, but it's important to be nice."



Robert Norton I'm 22 and I've lived in the Los Angeles area for almost two years now, after moving from Silver Spring, MD. I've taken a wide assortment of classes at COC so far, but I think I've settled on majoring in Environmental Studies. I've been a member of Students for Sustainability, Progressive Student Alliance, Model UN Club, COC Adventure Society, and one of a few student representatives on the Sustainable Development Committee.



Chelsea Nguyen My name is Chelsea Nguyen. I am from California but grew up in Illinois. I graduated from high school in Nevada. I am double-majoring in Political Science and International Relations. I enjoy helping students out with anything they need.



Hyoshim Yang I am a true believer that anything can be possible. I remember when I stepped off the plane in the US I didn't even know how to say "hello" in English. But 5 years later from that day, I finished a nursing program and plan to get a master's degree in nursing. Also, I am a mentor at College of the Canyons. I really want to help students find out their passions in education and make their dreams come true.

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*Where students help
students succeed!*

We're on the Web:

www.canyons.edu/cougarmentor



Cougar Mentors (left to right): Nandika Hettiarachchi, Max Beaulieu, Jeff Best, Ekaterina Doldjeva, Chelsea Nguyen, Kristen Cheriegate, Hyoshim Yang
Cougar Mentor not pictured: Robert Norton
Coordinators: Kelly Dapp and Kristianne Toledo

About Us ▲

The Cougar Mentor Program is a peer advisement program that provides support and guidance to new students during their first year of college. Students can meet with a Cougar Mentor to find out about campus resources, student success tips, and how to navigate their way through College of the Canyons.

We facilitate a full schedule of workshops and special events on both campuses. These programs are intended to inform, support, and inspire students. Look for our flyers and posters, or check out our website for a list of upcoming events.

If you are interested in meeting with a mentor, would like to reserve a seat for an upcoming workshop, or would just like more information, please give us a call or stop by our office. We look forward to seeing you!

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**Cougar Mentor
Mission Statement:**
*It is the mission of the
Cougar Mentor Program
to help each student
achieve his or her
scholastic and personal
goals, comfort level,
autonomy, and sense of
community at College of
the Canyons through
peer advisement,
referrals, and
interaction.*

▶▶▶ Tips for New Students

By Max Beaulieu

It is with a particular fondness I write this for the students who are new to COC this semester. I know first hand that it can be a particularly daunting to be a new student because there are many perils that can befall the first year. Yet fret not my new Cougars, I, having learned first hand some of these perils, have decided to share my experience of three years at College of the Canyons with you. I hope these tips will help you succeed at COC and I wish you the best.

Tip #1: Be bold, go first and make friends

Many new students to COC find themselves feeling alone, as if no one cares about them. However this couldn't be further from the truth. The students at COC are bright, friendly and sociable, while the faculty are helpful, resourceful and talented. In any one class the chances of someone being willing to make a new friend is highly likely. Most people are a bit drawn into their shells, however, with a kind smile and a hearty hello, they are more than willing to come out.

Tip #2: Ask questions!

In life people are often taught to avoid asking questions. However, this is one of those often-taught behaviors of society that should be thrown out with next morning's garbage. Questions and the quest for answers are at the heart of learning, and the main reason to be in college is to learn! Ask questions in class and know that there is no stupid question.

Tip #3: Meet with a counselor

From kindergarten to twelfth grade, students were given little choice into the classes they could take. However, as soon as those same students reach college they are thrown out into a harsh sea of deciding what classes to take and, moreover, they are not taught to swim. But a meeting with a counselor can help the student map out their journey through COC. I recommend getting an appointment as soon as possible.

Tip #4: RELAX!

College is a trying time, but freaking out and breaking down doesn't help. If a problem arises then do something about it. Action curtails fear. If a class is too challenging, try to get help ASAP or consider dropping it. Pick a meditation method or try an activity that relaxes you. College is scary but you are not alone.

Tip #5: Use the services on campus

Last but not least, use the services on campus. Students who go to COC have access to a plethora of services on campus, from the Student Health & Wellness Center to Financial Aid to the Tutoring Learning and Computing (TLC) lab. Each service on campus is meant to help students and the staff are always willing to help, so use these services!