

THE Frequency

FALL 2024 EDITION



Homie we have to
lock in

no <3

SPECIAL FEATURE:
INTERVIEWS WITH VARSITY ATHLETES!

MCMASTER
ENGINEERING SOCIETY



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The McMaster Engineering Society (MES) recognizes that McMaster University occupies the traditional territory shared between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and Anishinaabe nations, which is acknowledged in the Dish with One Spoon wampum belt.

This wampum uses the dish to represent the territory, and one spoon to represent that people are to share the resources of the land by only taking what they need.

FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Fireball Family,

We welcome you to another edition of The Frequency, which we carefully drafted, designed, and put together with the goal of capturing the unique essence of being a student engineer. This edition is packed with stories, insights, and celebrations that showcase the creativity, resilience, and camaraderie of our McMaster Engineering Society.

We understand the struggle that goes into late-night grind sessions, last-minute projects, and the occasional all-nighter, and we feel that these experiences inspired our writers in the articles that they wrote: some about the impressive achievements of fellow students, others providing valuable information for our newer cohorts, and even a touch of light-hearted humour. As we navigate the ever-evolving engineering landscape, this latest issue serves as a reminder of our collective potential when we come together to share ideas, innovate, and support one another.

Whether you're here for inspiration, a laugh, or a deeper connection with your peers, we hope this issue resonates with you. We hope you enjoy the articles that our team thoughtfully put together with your tastes in mind, even if it's just another excuse to procrastinate. So thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm — it's what keeps the fire burning!

Happy reading!

The Editors,

Elyssa, Afsheen, and Brenan

PUBLICATIONS EDITOR



Brenan

Hey McMaster Engineering! I'm Brennan and I'm the Publications Editor for this year. I'm currently in my third year of Integrated Biomedical Engineering and Health Sciences (iBiomed) in the HESE Stream. In my free time, I enjoy playing sports, watching movies and spending time with friends. My unpopular opinion is that dark chocolate is better than milk chocolate 🍫

FREQUENCY EDITORS



Elyssa



Afsheen

Elyssa

Hi everyone! I'm one of the Frequency Editors, and I'm in my 4th year of Mechanical and Biomedical Engineering. In my free time, I love to write, listen to music, and watch movies, but you'll probably catch me lifting weights in the gym. The hill I'll die on: Bananas are meant to be eaten green (brown speckles are distasteful).

Afsheen

Hi, my name is Afsheen and I'm one of the Editors of the Frequency this year. I enjoy going on long bike rides whenever I can. My unpopular opinion is that mustard belongs on almost everything.

WRITERS

Agrata

Hi! My name is Agrata Pathak and I'm currently in my second year of Electrical Engineering! I enjoy reading, watching movies/shows, and occasionally journal and sketch in my free time! An unpopular opinion of mine would be one of the classic controversies, pineapple on pizza. I love it, perfect touch of sweet and salty!



Arish

Hi, I'm Arish Shahab, a first-year iBioMed student passionate about merging engineering and healthcare to create innovative solutions. In my free time, I enjoy going to the gym, playing basketball, working on personal projects, and exploring the latest developments in medical technology. An unpopular opinion of mine: Cereal tastes better with water than with milk!



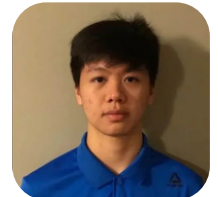
Mia

Hello! My name is Mia, and I am in my third year of Civil Engineering & Society. I like to play soccer and guitar in my free time. My unpopular opinion is that Apple Music is better than Spotify.



Derek

Hi my name is Derek! I am currently in my third year in iBio HESE. In my free time I enjoy playing video games and an unpopular opinion of mine is that pineapple on pizza is completely unacceptable.



GRAPHIC DESIGNERS



Jerusha

Heyyyy, my name is Jerusha and I am one of the Frequency Designers this year! I am in my 3rd year of B.Tech Automotive Engineering. I love to read, listen to music and watch F1 (it's my whole personality). My unpopular opinion is that Lewis Hamilton should've won the 2021 Drivers Championship #sorrynotsorry.



Simone

Hi! I'm Simone, I am in my 3rd year of Elec Eng & Society and I am the other Graphic Designer for the Frequency this year! I like to nap with my dog on the couch and my unpopular opinion is that Transformers 3 sucks.

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Pink In Tech hosting their first event in collaboration with SES.

Photo Credits: Pink In Tech LinkedIn



Leadership in Action

A Q&A WITH STUDENT LEADERS

BY AGRATA PATHAK

As a second-year Electrical Engineering student, I vividly remember stepping into Club Fest during my first year and being captivated by the diverse range of clubs McMaster has to offer. There are so many clubs that it takes two full days to showcase them all! Even within the engineering community, there is something for everyone. From societies like McMaster Engineering Society (MES) to Women in Engineering (WIE), there are various roles available: executive positions, general member opportunities, and volunteer roles.

You can also participate in exciting events, whether to de-stress, learn a new skill, or meet new people. The foundation of these clubs fascinates me. They must have started as an idea or vision that grew into something impactful through student collaboration. But how do students make their visions a reality and positively impact so many lives?

To find out, I spoke with the founders of two emerging clubs at McMaster: Pink Innovation and Technology Club (PinkInTech) and MicroBuild Engineering Society (MBES). I asked them about their experiences and the journey of building a club from the ground up.

1. Could you introduce yourself and give a brief overview of your club? (i.e., mission, vision, or main goal)

PinkInTech:

Hi there! My name is Navya Ahuja, and I'm in my second year of Software Engineering and Management (Co-op). I'm also the Founder and President of Pink Innovation and Technology Club (PinkInTech), a student-led initiative aimed at helping women and underrepresented minorities develop technical skills and navigate the fast-paced tech world.



Navya Ahuja
Pink in Tech Founder and President



Masa Solous
Microbuild Co-Founder



Karolina Kabashi
Microbuild Co-Founder

MicroBuild:

We are Masa Salous (Chemical Engineering) and Karolina Kabashi (Civil Engineering), co-founders of the MicroBuild Engineering Society. Our club focuses on the intersection of engineering, architecture, and 3D modeling. We offer hands-on experiences where students can design, create, and showcase miniature architectural models and urban prototypes. Our mission is to foster creativity, collaboration, and practical design skills through these projects.

2. What motivated you to bring this club to life on campus?

Navya (PinkInTech):

The idea for PinkInTech came to me during my summer break after first year. Many friends were securing internships, but I felt unprepared because I lacked hands-on experience. There were many resources available, but the sheer volume of information was overwhelming, and I didn't know where to start.

I also didn't have a community to discuss tech topics or a space where I could comfortably learn and grow. It struck me that others—especially women and minorities in tech—might be facing the same challenges. That's when PinkInTech was born.

My vision was to create a supportive space to learn technical skills through workshops, real-world projects, and open discussions about trends in tech. Together, we could grow confidently.



Pink In Tech & SES Intro to Github 101 event

Photo Credit: Pink In Tech LinkedIn

Masa & Karolina (MBES):

MicroBuild came from our shared passion for engineering and a desire to create something tangible from our studies. While many campus clubs exist, none focused specifically on micro-structures and 3D modeling.

We wanted to give students hands-on opportunities to bring their designs to life. Recognizing the demand for practical experience, we created a space for creative exploration and learning through miniature architectural models and urban prototypes.

3. What is it like establishing a foundation for your club at university? Could you walk us through the process?

Navya (PinkInTech):

Starting a club in university is far more involved than in high school. At McMaster, ratification takes at least a year, and only then can a club receive university funding and resources.

The challenge was building a strong foundation before applying for ratification. I pitched the idea to a group of engineering students in July, and by September, we had a dedicated executive team, a logo, an Instagram page, and a curriculum for the 2024–2025 school year. Balancing classes and club responsibilities was tough, but we spread the word through social media and hosted events to gain momentum.

Masa & Karolina (MBES):

Starting a university club is complex. We're currently working through the ratification and affiliation process with MES, which involves presenting our mission, vision, and year plan to gain support.

Beyond that, we focused on branding and awareness by creating an Instagram account and connecting with the student body. Establishing room bookings, arranging funding, and planning events were other key steps.

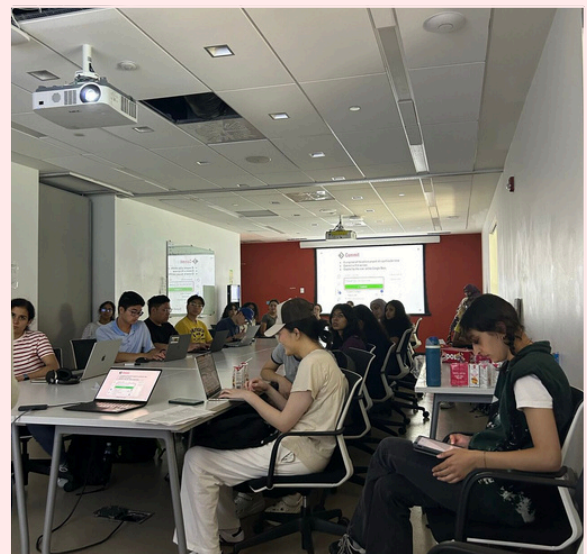
4. Did you gain any help along the way? How did you recruit your executive team?

Navya (PinkInTech):

Initially, it was just me, and I used tools like ChatGPT to plan things since I had no prior experience. For recruitment, I outlined roles (e.g., VP, Logistics Director, Marketing Director), created an application, and evaluated candidates based on their skills.

Masa & Karolina (MBES):

We received support from upper-year students, who shared their expertise. For recruitment, we advertised executive roles via Instagram and Engineering Faculty group chats, selecting candidates who aligned with our vision.



Pink In Tech & SES Intro to Github 101 event

Photo Credit: Pink In Tech LinkedIn



5. Any advice for students wanting to start their own clubs?

Navya (PinkInTech):

Just do it! Don't wait for the perfect time. Starting a club develops leadership skills and teaches you to be bold and confident. Your idea isn't stupid—your passion makes it unique. You don't need to be extroverted; you just need guts to start and perseverance to follow through.

Masa & Karolina (MBES):

Don't be afraid to take the first step. Surround yourself with like-minded people and stay flexible. Challenges are part of the journey, but passion will drive you through.

Final Thoughts

It's inspiring to see how Navya, Masa, and Karolina turned their visions into impactful clubs despite challenges. If you have an idea, don't hesitate—start planning and make it happen. As they've shown, all you need is passion and dedication to create something amazing.

Follow their clubs on Instagram for updates:

PinkInTech: [@macpinkintech](https://www.instagram.com/macpinkintech)

MicroBuild: [@microbuildmcmaster](https://www.instagram.com/microbuildmcmaster)





INTERVIEWING
VARSITY
ATHLETES
IN MAC
ENG

At McMaster, there are a number of incredible student-athletes in engineering whose dedication and hard work often go unnoticed.

These students perform a balancing act of managing the already demanding schedule of an engineering student, while also dedicating hours of training every week to represent McMaster at a varsity level.

We decided to spotlight some of these athletes and learn more about what it's like behind the scenes of a Marauder in Eng!

An article by Mia Rodgers

JANA FEBBRARO

Jana is a 3rd year Mechanical Engineering student and a goalkeeper for the women's soccer team.

Jana's busiest day as a varsity soccer player and engineering student consists of lectures back-to-back for almost five hours, combined with gym sessions, film study, and training. On lighter days, Jana takes time to recover and relax. "I stretch or foam roll to help my body recover from the intensity of training and games," she says about her rest days. She also spends time with friends or sets aside time to herself

Regarding soccer games, Jana notes that "game days are exciting, but can be stressful" when compounded with studying and assignments. To "switch into game mode," she tries her best to ensure that her work is completed before game day. When it comes to midterms and exams, she says test prep can be quite stressful with soccer:

"For most weeks during [the] season, soccer takes up to almost 20 hours of my week."



Jana manages these time constraints by ensuring she is prepared for her weeks ahead and sets aside enough time to study. Her most useful tools are **Google Sheets, calendars, and to-do lists**. "Every day, I write down what I need to accomplish, and that keeps me on track." She often breaks large tasks into smaller, more manageable ones to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

Jana emphasizes that time management is the most crucial skill for student-athletes and highlights the importance of asking for help from coaches, professors, teammates and classmates, when needed:

"There are so many resources for you to do well!"

For Jana, her favorite part of being a student-athlete is the lifelong friendships she has made with her teammates, pushing each other to be better on and off the field. Jana feels a sense of pride in representing McMaster:

"Every time I put on the jersey, it feels like I'm playing for more than just myself."

SAMANTHA SCHAUS

Sam is a 3rd year Electrical Engineering & iBioMed student and a cheerleader for the cheer team.

Sam's busiest day as a student-athlete happens every Wednesday, starting at 8:30 a.m. with lectures and ending at 11 p.m. with cheer practice. She notes, "It can be draining balancing a full academic day with late-night practice." Conversely, Sam's lightest day is Friday, which she uses to catch up on schoolwork, freeing her weekends for relaxation and spending time with friends.

On game days, Sam mitigates stress by focusing on the fun of the event and not letting upcoming deadlines take away from the moment. Additionally, Sam participates in three cheer competitions a year, which often consume an entire weekend. She makes a point to complete her schoolwork in advance to fully enjoy these events. Despite midterms, Sam appreciates the break cheer provides as,

"Training around my midterms is a great way to reduce stress levels."

To manage her schedule, Sam recommends planning ahead. She plans her week in advance, dedicating specific time slots to tasks, which helps her stay on track while leaving time for relaxation.

"The structure helps me stay on top of everything and leaves me time to relax."

Sam's favorite part of being a student-athlete is

"Being a part of a team and having an athletic and social outlet from school."

Even after a long day, she looks forward to practice with her teammates and friends.





EMMA ELLIOT

Emma is a 3rd year Civil Engineering & Management student and a runner for the XC-Track team.

Emma's busiest day starts at 7:15 a.m. with pre-run activation, followed by a run, lunch, strength and conditioning, lectures, and studying—all with little time between tasks, ending her day at 11:45 p.m. On easy days, she completes a relaxed run (8–13 km) and focuses on recovery with ice baths, sauna sessions, pool running, and more.

During the season, Emma typically has races every few weeks. To ensure success, she avoids scheduling conflicting labs or assessments on race days. She highlights the importance of proactive preparation:

“Getting enough sleep and being proactive with studying in the week leading up to the race is important.”

Emma finds running improves her focus and productivity, allowing her to balance studying with training effectively. Her main organizational tool is her iPad schedule, where she tracks tasks and due dates. She advises separating athletic and academic responsibilities to prevent one from negatively affecting the other:

“It's very hard, but try and keep sports and school separate.”

Emma's most meaningful aspect of being a student-athlete is the support and friendship she shares with her teammates.

DANIAL NOORI ZADEH

Danial is a 5th year Electrical Engineering student and a player for the rugby team.



Currently on a co-op term, Danial's busiest days are his training days. He starts work at 7 a.m., heads straight to training (which lasts over three hours), and occasionally skips practice for urgent work deadlines. On lighter days, he focuses on nutrition, unwinds with his roommates, or goes on walks or bike rides.

While Danial's work schedule doesn't interfere with games, he anticipates balancing rugby with midterms/exams will be a challenge in future terms. He uses time-blocking and limits social media to maximize productivity. Danial encourages students to commit fully to their sport and goals, even on challenging days:

“There will be days that you just don't want to practice... but these are the days that set a student-athlete apart.”

Danial's favorite part of rugby is the discipline it has instilled and the camaraderie with teammates who share mutual respect and friendship.

LUKAS VAN OIRSCHOT

Lukas is a 3rd year Civil Engineering student and a player for the lacrosse team.

Lukas' busiest day includes 8 hours of class and 2 hours of training, with breaks for nutrition and homework. On recovery days, he prioritizes rest through ice baths and relaxation, often watching football.

Game days, while not significantly different, can be affected by academic stress. Lukas mentions that the time commitment of being a varsity athlete can sometimes detract from studying. His main advice is to stay organized and avoid procrastination:

“Once you get behind, it starts to snowball.”

Lukas also emphasizes the importance of listening to your body and allowing time for rest. His favorite part of being a student-athlete is the community it fosters:

“I've made new connections and strengthened old ones through my experience as a varsity athlete.”

ENG VS NON-ENG: THE ULTIMATE CAMPUS DEBATE

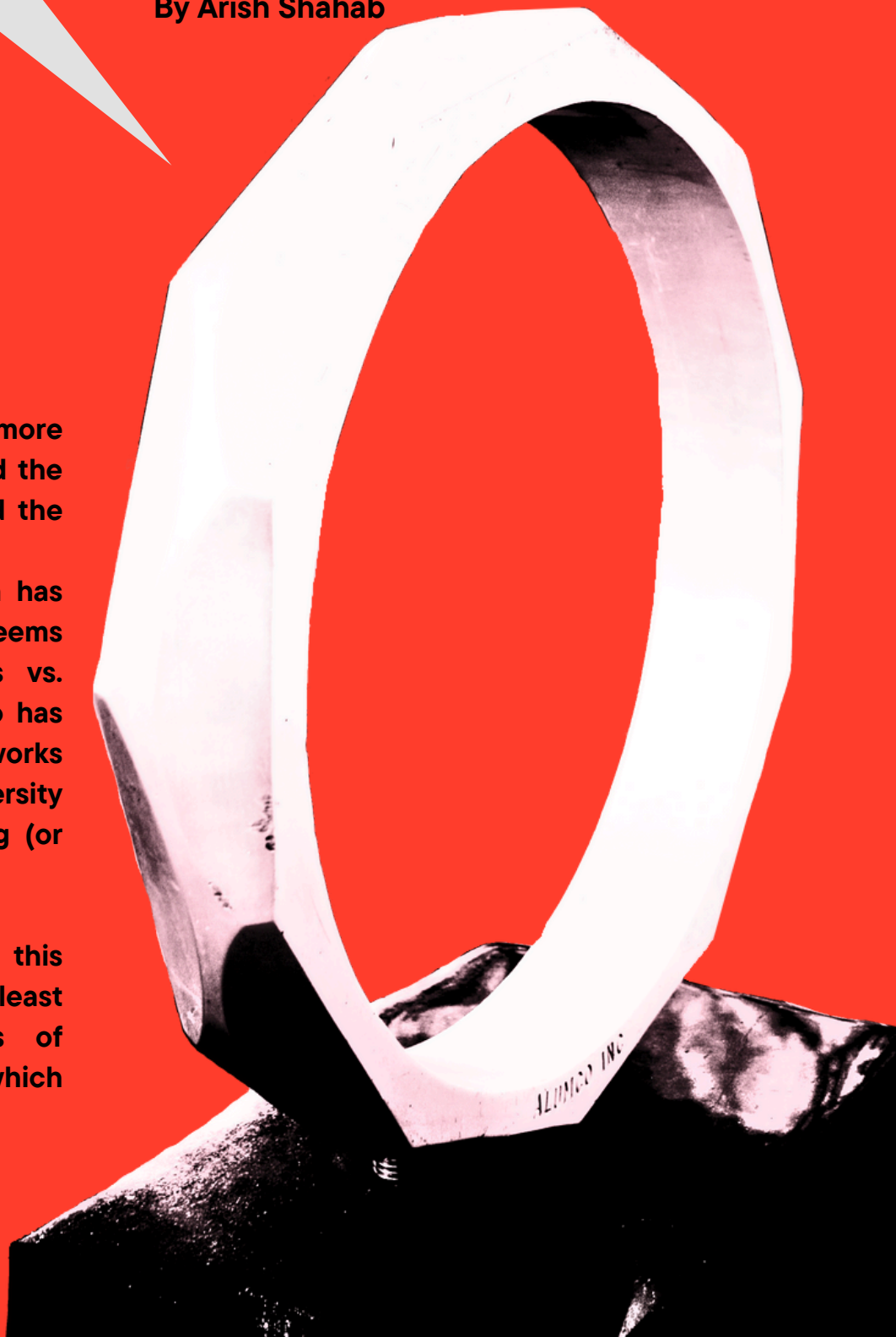
By Arish Shahab

The age-old question: who is more important, the businessman and the manufacturer, or the writer and the artist?

In today's words, this question has become a debate that never seems to end: engineering students vs. non-engineering students. Who has it tougher? Which group works harder? And whose university experience is more challenging (or fun)?

While we might never settle this once and for all, we can at least break down the key areas of difference and let you decide which side of the fence you're on.

Let's dive in.



WORKLOAD: THE REAL BATTLE BEGINS

Engineering Students

For engineering students, the workload is often described as a relentless march. Between lab reports, group projects, problem sets, and the occasional midterm that feels like it could last a lifetime, free time is something engineers can only dream about. In any given week, there are multiple deadlines looming, a three-hour lab filled with troubleshooting, and at least one late-night cram session fueled by questionable amounts of caffeine.

But despite the complaints, engineering students wear their workload like a badge of honor. There's a certain pride in pulling off an all-nighter in the library or spending an entire weekend debugging code. The satisfaction of solving a complex problem or finally finishing a lab report (after several drafts) is unlike anything else.

Non-Engineering Students

While engineering students face equations, circuit boards, and fluid dynamics, non-engineering students deal with their own brand of stress. Sure, their workload may not always involve crunching numbers, but don't underestimate the difficulty of writing a 15-page research paper, analyzing historical texts, or preparing for an intense debate in political science.

Humanities and social sciences students spend hours reading dense material, writing essays, and preparing presentations. These tasks require a different kind of focus and discipline. Creative disciplines like visual arts or music demand hours of brainstorming and execution. While it might appear they have more free time, those late nights spent writing essays or preparing presentations can be just as grueling.

THE MYTH OF "FREE TIME"

Engineering Students

What is free time, anyway? For engineering students, the concept of a fully free day is as rare as a bug-free code. When not attending classes or labs, they're cramming for quizzes or working on group projects. Even weekends are consumed by studying.

However, engineers are pros at squeezing in micro-breaks—15 minutes between classes or late-night snack runs that double as mental recharges. Occasionally, there are glimmers of freedom: a pub night after a major exam, an evening at a club event, or the rare weekend when all deadlines align in their favor. These moments are celebrated with the enthusiasm of the chronically overworked.

Non-Engineering Students

Non-engineering students tend to have more control over their schedules. Without labs or mandatory group projects, they often get to decide when and where to study. However, this doesn't mean they're lounging around. Writing papers, studying for exams, and attending discussion groups still take significant time.

A non-engineering student's free time might include attending club meetings, catching up on reading for fun, or exploring creative pursuits. While their workload might ebb and flow, it's rarely the relentless grind engineers face daily. When it's not exam season, they often explore interests outside of academics—something engineers tend to envy.

CAMPUS STEREOTYPES: BREAKING THE MOLD

Engineering Students

Engineering students are stereotyped as math-and-physics-loving, problem-solving introverts, always stuck in labs and over-caffeinated. But this couldn't be further from the truth. Engineers are among the most innovative and creative minds on campus, constantly developing solutions to real-world problems.

Despite their demanding workload, they know how to have fun. Whether it's through society events, the annual gala, or even concrete toboggan races, engineers balance work with play. Sure, they're sleep-deprived, but when it's time to let loose, they rise to the challenge.

Non-Engineering Students

Non-engineering students are often seen as more laid-back, with majors perceived as less rigorous. However, a student writing a 20-page paper or defending a thesis will quickly dispel that myth.

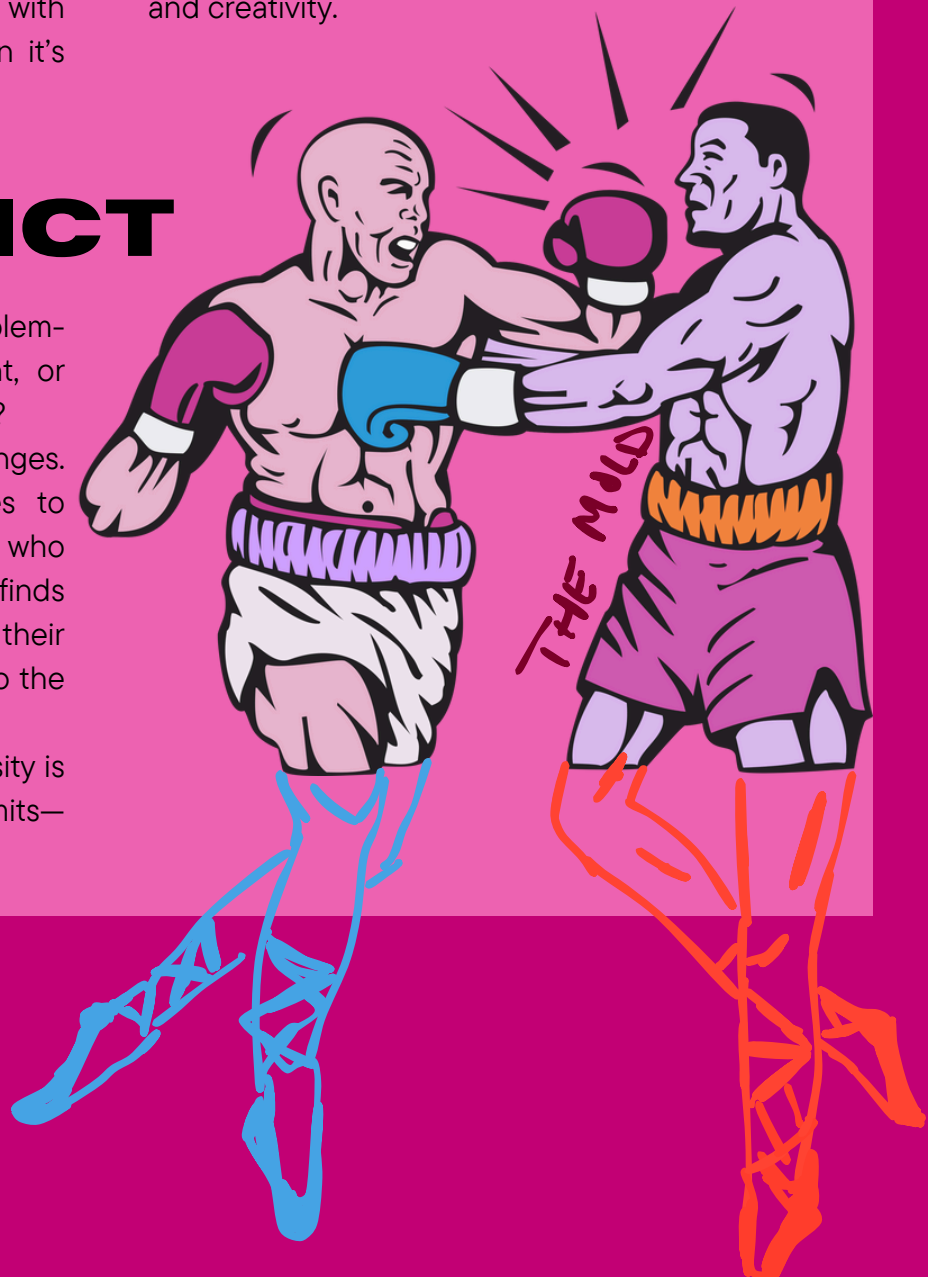
While their programs might not involve equations or labs, non-engineering students engage in intellectual debates, analyze complex theories, and contribute to academia through unique avenues. They aren't just "talking about feelings"; they're shaping the world through critical thought and creativity.

THE VERDICT

Who wins the campus debate? Is it the problem-solving, time-crunched engineering student, or the analytical, research-driven non-engineer?

The truth is, both groups face unique challenges. Comparing them is like comparing apples to oranges. The real winner is the student who embraces the challenges of their program, finds balance between work and life, takes pride in their accomplishments, and applies their talents to the world.

Whether you're in engineering or not, university is about growing, learning, and pushing limits—something both sides can agree on



⚠️ Time to BeReal. ⚠️



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MAC ENG STUDENT

By Arish Shahab



It's 7:00 a.m., and your alarm blares, signaling the start of another day as a McMaster engineering student. You roll over, hit snooze, and mentally prepare for the long day ahead. From lectures and labs to group projects and study sessions, no two days are the same. Let's walk through a typical one.

8:00 a.m - Morning Hustle

Your second alarm goes off, and this time, you can't afford to snooze. After a quick shower, breakfast, and coffee, you head to a 9:30 a.m. thermodynamics class, equations swirling in your head.

9:30 a.m - Lecture Time

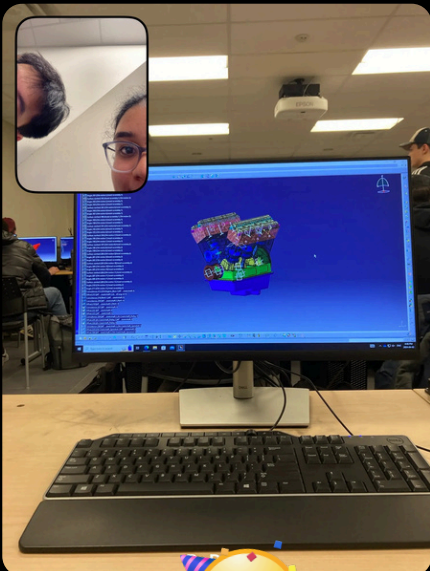
The professor explains heat transfer, and you scramble to keep up. Your notes fill with formulas, and while challenging, the satisfaction of understanding the material makes the early morning worth it.

11:00 a.m - Quick Break

Instead of relaxing, you hit the library to review material for a group project. Impromptu group study sessions are common here, maximizing every spare moment.

12:00 p.m - Group Project Meeting

Next is a design project meeting. Each member contributes, and while progress feels slow, it's satisfying to see ideas take shape.



⚠️ Time to BeReal. ⚠️



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MAC ENG STUDENT



1:30 p.m - Lunch Break

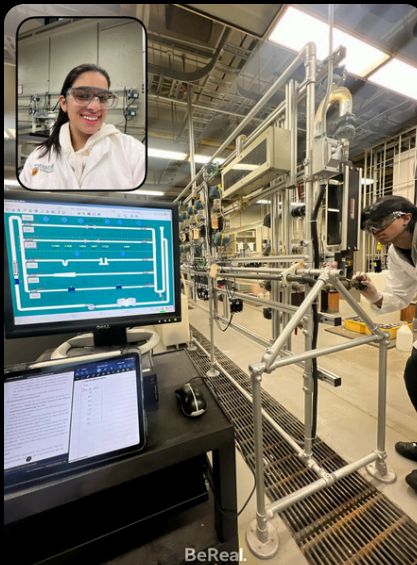
Finally, a break! Over lunch with friends, you complain about workloads but recharge for the rest of the day.

2:30 p.m - Lab Time

This afternoon's lab brings theory to life with hands-on experiments. While exhausting, there's a unique thrill in tackling real-world problems.

5:00 p.m - Study Session

At the library again, you dive into problem sets. Collaborative sessions make even the toughest challenges manageable.



7:30 p.m - Dinner and Decompress

Dinner is a chance to relax with friends. Afterward, you might watch Netflix or play basketball before the final study push.

9:00 p.m - The Final Push

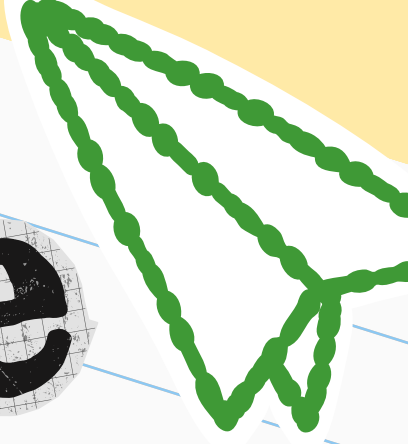
Back at your desk, you tweak designs or prepare for tomorrow's quiz. It's quiet but productive, the perfect end to a long day.

11:30 p.m - Sleep (Maybe)

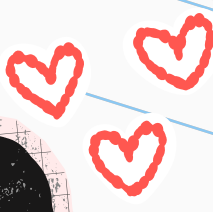
You aim for 11:30 p.m. but end up asleep closer to 2:30 a.m. Early bedtimes? Only in dreams.



Why We





~~Love~~



hate




Exams



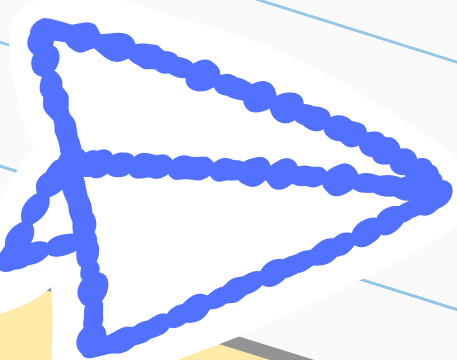
An Engineer's Guide to Finals

By Derek Wu

Ah, finals week—the grand finale of the academic semester. For engineers, exams are like intricate puzzles, each problem a piece that, when correctly placed, reveals the bigger picture.



But let's be honest: sometimes, these puzzles feel more like abstract art designed to test our sanity. So, why do we engineers both adore and detest exams? Let's break it down with a blend of technical insight and a touch of humor.



Love +oto

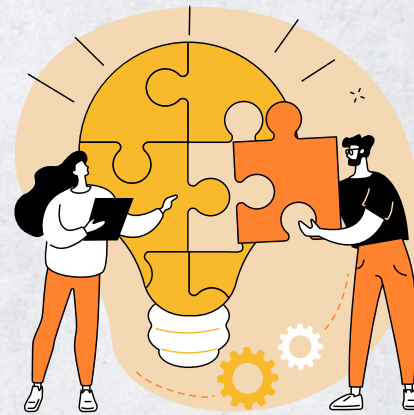
EMBRACING THE CHALLENGE

Exams can be both exhilarating and intimidating, much like the engineering profession itself. They push us to tap into the skills we've cultivated over the semester and bring them to bear in a high-stakes setting. Here's why exams can bring out the best in us:

1. Problem-Solving Paradise

At the core of engineering is problem-solving. Every engineer, whether working on electronics, structures, or software, is trained to break down complex problems into manageable components. Exams provide a concentrated dose of this challenge, allowing us to flex our analytical muscles.

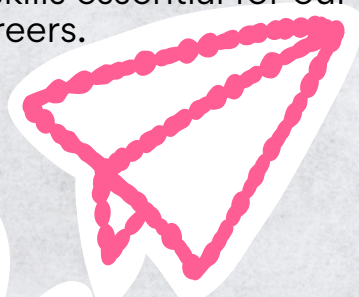
Each problem validates our hard work and knowledge. We don't just memorize formulas; we learn to interpret and apply them, transforming abstract concepts into practical tools. For example, a thermodynamics problem isn't just about plugging numbers into equations—it's about understanding energy transfer in real-world scenarios. This process reinforces our critical thinking and adaptability—skills essential for our future careers.

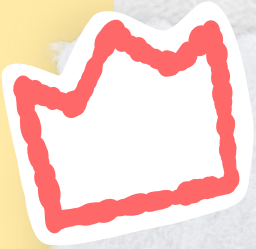


2. Structured Thinking

Engineers thrive on structure and logic, and exams force us to organize our thoughts and present solutions methodically. We're not just solving problems; we're communicating complex ideas clearly and concisely, a skill essential in any engineering field.

An exam often requires us to map out multi-step solutions in a logical flow, ensuring that each step supports the final answer. This methodical approach not only reinforces our understanding but also prepares us for real-world engineering tasks, such as debugging systems or troubleshooting issues.

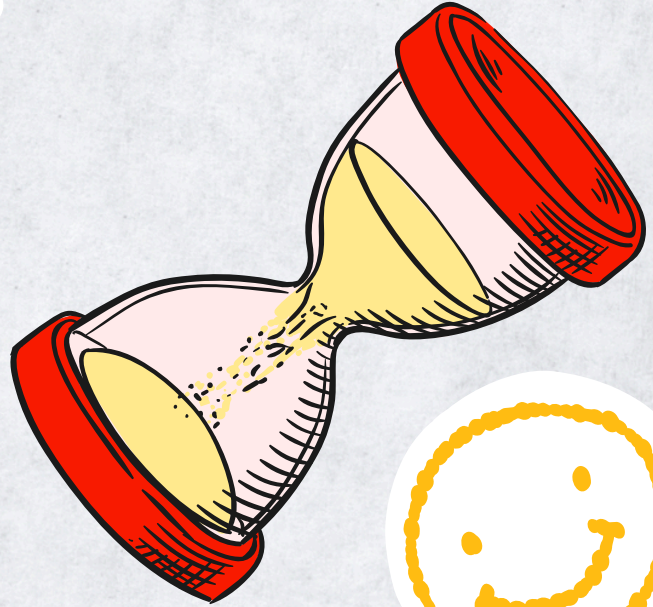




3. Benchmarking Knowledge

Exams gauge our understanding and mastery of the subject matter, highlighting both strengths to build upon and weaknesses to address. It's like running a system diagnostic to see which areas need "debugging."

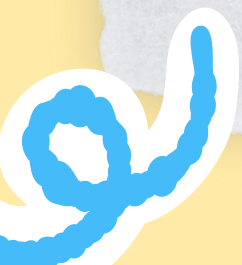
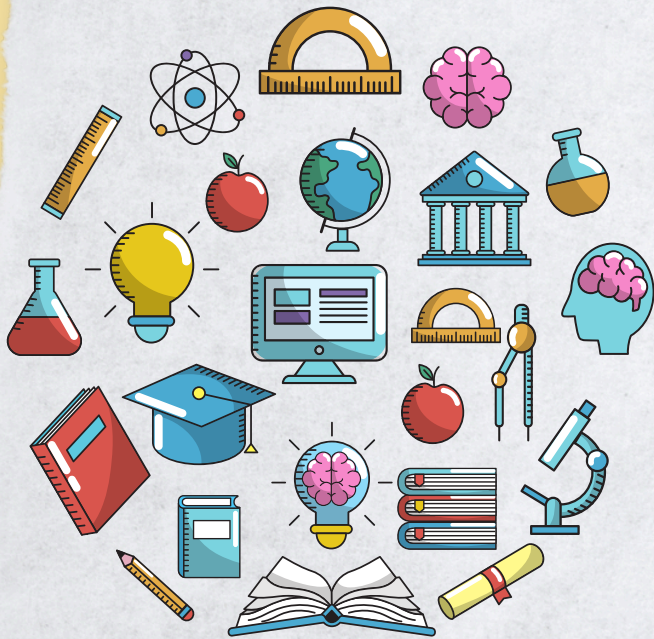
High performance in exams can boost our confidence, reaffirming our commitment to engineering despite the challenges. Conversely, lower-than-expected scores can serve as a wake-up call, prompting us to seek help, adjust our study habits, or delve deeper into particularly troublesome topics.

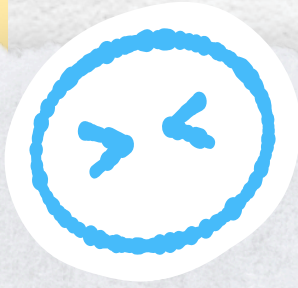


4. The Thrill of the Countdown

Deadlines are familiar territory for engineers, whether it's project submissions, presentations, or product launches. Finals week emulates this high-pressure environment, training us to perform under stress and manage our time effectively—skills that are invaluable in the real world.

The adrenaline rush that comes with exams is akin to real-world engineering challenges, where time-sensitive projects and tight deadlines are common. By learning to handle this pressure early on, we're better equipped to navigate future professional environments.





hate



WHEN EXAMS PUSH OUR LIMITS

While exams can be a thrilling challenge, they can also push us to our limits in less desirable ways. The same pressure that motivates us can also lead to stress and burnout.



1. Stress Overload

Let's face it: finals can be nerve-racking. The pressure to perform well can lead to sleepless nights and elevated stress levels. While a bit of stress can be motivating, excessive anxiety can hinder performance and even impact our health.

Stress overload during exams can have lasting effects, transforming what could be an intellectual challenge into an emotional burden.

3. Ambiguous Questions

Sometimes, exam questions feel like they were crafted to confuse rather than assess understanding. Vague wording or overly complex scenarios can make it difficult to discern what's being asked, leading to frustration and wasted precious time.

Ambiguous questions can leave us feeling disoriented, especially when we've invested so much time into understanding the material.

2. The All-Nighter Conundrum

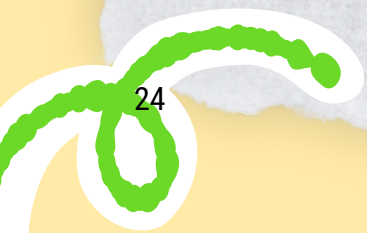
Engineers are no strangers to pulling all-nighters, especially as exams approach. Unfortunately, this habit can lead to superficial learning, where cramming helps us pass but doesn't foster a deep understanding of the material.

Tired minds are less capable of creative thought, so the very skill we value is compromised. Moreover, sleep-deprived cramming doesn't support long-term retention, limiting our growth as future engineers.

4. Limited Scope for Creativity

While exams test our problem-solving skills, they often do so within rigid parameters. This stifles creativity, as we're forced to follow specific methods rather than exploring innovative approaches that might be more effective in real-world applications.

This limitation can be frustrating, especially for those who view engineering as an art form as well as a science.

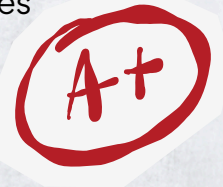




STRIKING THE Balance

MAKING THE MOST OF FINALS

Despite the ups and downs, exams offer valuable opportunities for growth. Here's how we can navigate finals in a way that balances the pressures with personal and academic development:



1. Effective Study Strategies

- Develop a consistent study schedule.
- Use active learning techniques like practice problems, flashcards, and group discussions.
- Consider the Pomodoro Technique—study intensely for 25 minutes and then take a 5-minute break.

2. Stress Management

- Incorporate relaxation techniques like deep breathing, meditation, or quick workouts.
- Prioritize mental well-being with sufficient sleep and a balanced schedule.

3. Clarify Doubts Early

- Engage with instructors and classmates to clarify uncertainties.
- Review past exams and examiner feedback for insights into expectations.



4. Embrace the Challenge

- Reframe exams as opportunities to showcase your skills.
- Celebrate small victories and maintain a sense of humor to stay positive.



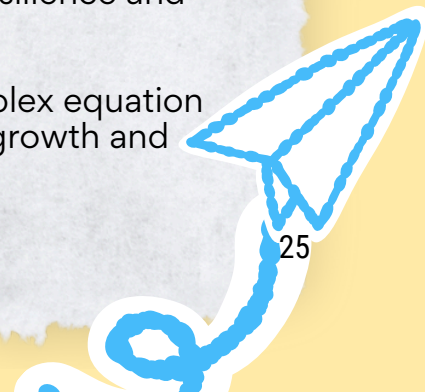
CONCLUSION



The Dual Nature of Exams

Exams are a double-edged sword in the life of an engineer, offering both satisfaction and challenge. By understanding why we love and sometimes hate exams, we can better navigate finals with resilience and a positive attitude.

So, gear up, embrace the chaos, and remember: every complex equation solved and every problem unraveled is a testament to your growth and expertise. Finals may be tough, but so are you!



FINDING The BEST STUDY SPOTS 4 U

By Afsheen Mohamed Abdul Kadir

As the semester comes to an end and midterms are finally wrapping up, you might be feeling drained from all those back-to-back midterms, assignments, and deadlines. But take a moment to give yourself a pat on the back, you've made it this far! With most of the semester out of the way, there's just one more mountain to climb before you can finally relax, exam season.

Whether you're getting ready for your very first exam season or you're a warrior having gone through countless exam seasons already, finding the best study space makes all the right difference. Who knows, even if you've already found your perfect spot, you might be introduced to study spots you've been hesitant to try out.

Take a look at these editor-approved study spots to see which of them fit your style:



**IF YOU LIKE A MIXED
ATMOSPHERE:**

THODE FIRST FLOOR

Thode is known for its welcoming environment to engineering students. Here you can find long tables spread across the large floor. This is where you can grind out last minute assignment questions with your classmates, work on group projects, and even do a couple sets of practice problems.

What makes Thode stand out is its balanced atmosphere. It's not completely silent, but it's also not overwhelmingly loud. This creates an environment for productive group study sessions, you don't need to feel like you're interrupting anyone's silence when talking with your friends. It's a space that encourages collaboration and productivity while still allowing for individual focus when needed. Pro tip, if you need a sweet treat, the café is not far, and the lines are never too long!



**IF YOU WORK BEST IN A SILENT
UNDERGROUND CUBICLE:**

THODE BASEMENT

At peak times during the semester, the upper floors of Thode Library can become quite loud. If you're someone who finds it challenging to focus in louder environments or if you have a task that requires a lot of concentration, the basement of Thode is a strikingly different environment compared to the hustle and bustle of the upper floors. The basement level of the library provides a much quieter, distraction-free environment.

The basement has many quiet study cubicles, providing a range of options so you can find the perfect spot for you. Whether you prefer a desk tucked away in a corner or one in a slightly more open area, the floor layout of the basement allows you the flexibility to find a study space that suits your needs.

This space is great for students completing assignments or quizzes that require focus, even writing essays, or reviewing course material without interruptions. The environment ensures that you can work in peace, free from the distractions often found on the busier upper floors.

IF YOU WORK BEST IN A ROOM WITH
YOUR FRIENDS:

BOOK A STUDY ROOM

If you prefer a more secluded setting to grind out content with your peers, study rooms offer you your own space. If you're someone who thrives in a more private setting, booking a study room might be the perfect solution for you. These rooms offer a quiet space where you can focus with peers without distractions from a typical library setting. They're also great for small group sessions, allowing you to

collaborate with classmates in a more personal environment compared to the open tables on the main floors of the library. At McMaster, you'll find study rooms available for booking at Mills, Thode, and Hatch. Booking a study room is quick and easy. You can reserve a room online through the McMaster Library website. However, you should beware that these study rooms get booked quickly.

IF YOU LIKE A RUSTIC
ATMOSPHERE WITH DIVERSE
OPTIONS:

MILLS LIBRARY

This could potentially be an area you're less familiar with as a student of the engineering department, but it's definitely worth checking out. Similar to Thode Library, you'll find tables scattered across the first floor.

However, the atmosphere in Mills is what sets it apart from Thode library. While Thode's first floor is usually busy and noise levels increase at peak times in the day, Mills can be quieter. On the second floor, you can find a space for collaboration similar to the first floor of Thode. If you're someone who prefers minimal distractions or uninterrupted study sessions, the quiet environment allows for that. It's a great spot for individual studying, reading papers, or preparing for exams.

It is important to note that the higher you go up in floors of Mills library, the quieter it becomes. If you need complete silence, the sixth floor may be the place for you, or even the hidden study booths on the fourth floor. If you've been sticking to Thode out of habit, this space could be a refreshing change of space. Give it a try and who knows, it might even become your new favorite study spot!

IF YOU LIKE A MODERN ATMOSPHERE:

HEALTH SCI LIBRARY

Similar to Thode and Mills library, this library has round tables for you and classmates to sit at. One of the notable features of this library is the large windows on the downstairs floor, because of this, the environment is bright, calming, and refreshing.

The round tables are often used for group work, but the quiet study tables are located on the first floor allowing for individual quiet study. Whether you're working through practice questions, or simply sharing notes and ideas, the round tables, and the big windows are a great pairing for productive studying.



IF YOU LIKE TO STUDY
OVER A CUP OF COFFEE:

THE GRIND CAFÉ

There's something about a freshly brewed cup of coffee at a cafe table that might just get your gears turning. The Grind Cafe, located in the basement of MUSC near La Piazza, is a lesser-known study spot designed for cafe-lovers.

The Grind offers a chill, relaxed atmosphere that is perfect for finishing up that last assignment or whipping together that presentation. You can go alone, or enjoy a warm (or cold!) cup of coffee and some pastries with some friends.



IF YOU DON'T LIKE TO BE TOO FAR FROM THE ACTION:

MUSC 2ND FLOOR

If you're hoping to grab some lunch later but it's raining, or you'd like to be as close to the bus stops as possible, check out MUSC 2nd floor. This less commonly used study spot is right in the heart of McMaster while being isolated from the noise of students coming and going.

Make your way to the little room near the outside desks and find a well-lit study area in perfect silence, a big change from MUSC's usual vibe. Here, you'll find that you'll be able to concentrate on your assignment without trekking all the way to Thode to find silence.

Finding the right study space is important because you'll be more productive in a space you feel the most comfortable in. Whether you prefer the chatter of other students as background noise on Thode's first floor, the quietness of the basement, or the bright and calming environment of the Health Sciences Library, there's a space that can meet your needs. So, take a moment to relax, find a spot that works for you, and you'll be ready to take on exam season.

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