I was just woke into the semester when Heath Rickenbach realized things weren’t going his way. Classes are harder this year. Friends aren’t showing up around the world as planned. He’s feeling himself falling behind. He’s feeling himself struggling with depression.

Students question future, decisions — reaching halfway point

Hannah Jeffrey

I was just woke into the semester when Heath Rickenbach realized things weren’t going his way. Classes are harder this year. Friends aren’t showing up around the world as planned. He’s feeling himself falling behind. He’s feeling himself struggling with depression.

The second-year physics student is halfway through his second year of college. He’s one semester away from being a Junior. He’s days away from winter break.

And he’s questioning everything.

UNDERGRADUATE CATASTROPHE

If you aren’t familiar with the mid-college crisis, you may not know but you are traversed through your first few years of college, sans-break. Urban Dictionary will tell you it’s “the state of being in which a 2nd year college student still feels completely lost and uncertain about the future, and that it’s becoming another useless member of society.”

This definition may be a tad dramatic. But Rickenbach will tell you he only took about a month for him to realize he isn’t as happy as he was last year. He doesn’t seem to care about him like they used to. Most of his friends aren’t here anymore. He’s even gained some weight this year, pounds that seem harder to shed than those first 15. But those are just the side effects.

Feelings of confusion and pressure may not be avoidable. Director of Student Engagement Jimmie Gilchrist says, they are universal.

“It’s part of the natural growth and development process in college to some degree, in that you come in with certain expectations of your college experience,” he says. “And then you begin to question what you meaning and purpose.”

But now, there’s a sense of permanence every time he looks around a classroom.

These are tough choices to make that could affect the rest of your life, he says, after admitting he isn’t sure even if he wants to major in physics now. “We’re all very daunted.”

Now more than ever, he’s found himself thinking about the future and planning his next move, whether it’s where he’ll work next summer or where he’ll be in 20 years. The decisions he’s making, he says, are for the rest of his life.

He competitive enough. It’s becoming the way you want to live your life for the rest of your life.

WHAT HELPS

Rickenbach plans.

He uses his phone to plan out his day and sets a timer when he gets to the dinner table. He’ll eat dinner while he’s eating dinner, the same as he did one time, and he sets out everything he needs for his morning run after the night before, so he doesn’t scramble for it the morning after. It’s finding a balance between being the carefree kid and the responsible adult.

It’s our last moment of freedom, it feels like for elementary adulthood has definitely worn off since his first months on campus.

“I don’t feel compared to others, but I think he’s a bit of a perfectionist at heart,” his girlfriend says.

Maybe Rickenbach’s had enough independence. It’s not that he wants to move back home and live off of his parents, but the first-year thrill of elementary adulthood has definitely worn off since his first months on campus.

“I feel like when I was a freshman, I could be a bit of a little brat if I wanted to,” he says. “But now, I’ve got to think of others, too.”

Sophomore year is a realt. The hard part is finding the light.

“I would argue that no one really knows when that light is or when you’re going to get there, and that’s scary thought, to be frank. You don’t know when you’re going to feel comfortable again.”

But Rickenbach thinks that’s okay. He’s feeling there eventually. Eventually, sophomore year ends.

“It’s just something everyone’s got to go through.”

University of South Carolina

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2014 VOL. 116, NO. 65 • SINCE 1908

THE DAILY GAMECOCK

@HANNAHJEFFREY34

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Police seeking help finding missing 14-year-old girl possibly in Sumter

The Richland County Sheriff’s Department has requested the public’s aid in locating 14-year-old Kaila Stukes, who went missing from her home Nov. 30, The State reported.

According to reports by Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott, Stukes lived near Sesquicentennial State Park. She went missing sometime between 3 a.m. and 7 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 30. Her family has not seen or been in contact with her since that time.

Stukes is a 5-foot-6-inch black female with black hair and brown eyes, who weighs around 115 pounds. Police believe that she could be in the Sumter area. Any information that may help police locate Stukes should be reported to Det. Crow of the Richland County Sheriff’s Department at 803-567-3862.

—Lois Carlisle, Asst. News Editor

AMBER Alert issued Tuesday cancelled after police locate child

The AMBER Alert posted Tuesday evening in regards to the abduction of a 3-year-old Mt. Pleasant boy, has been cancelled, according to WIS.

A domestic dispute, the child, Jude Ramirez, was taken by his father, Michael Angelo Ramirez, 31. Authorities reported that Michael Angelo Ramirez was drawing a.red 2014 Ford Focus with the South Carolina license tag KCJ220 immediately following the abduction. Alerts were issued within 30 miles of the incident.

Jude Ramirez and his father were found in North Carolina. Police said Jude Ramirez is safe and the suspect is now in custody.

—Kelly Villwock, Special Sections Director

South Carolina joins multi-state suit against executive immigration order

Nikki Haley announced Tuesday that South Carolina would join the 16-state lawsuit against the immigration order issued by the Obama administration, according to The State.

The proceedings began originally in Texas on Wednesday of last week following the president’s public, televised address. The proceedings began originally in Texas on Wednesday of last week following the president’s public, televised address.

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Any information that may help police locate Stukes should be reported to Dottie Cronise of the Richland County Sheriff’s Department at 803-567-3462.

—Lois Carlisle, Asst. News Editor

CORRECTIONS
If you find an error in today’s edition of The Daily Gamecock, let us know about it. Email editor@dailygamecock.com and we will print the correction in our next issue.

biscuits & basketball

Saturday, Dec. 6
12 p.m.
VS.
Oklahoma State
First 1,000 fans receive a free Bojangles’ biscuit of their choosing!
Live on ESPN U!

Duane Notice
@GamecockMBB
#Gamecocks
DECEMBER 5TH

CAROLINA AFTER DARK’s
END OF THE YEAR
STRESS FREE
EVENT

FEATURING
CRAIG KARGES
ILLUSIONIST
STARS AT
10 P.M.

experience the art of magic with the science of psychology

&

A RELAXATION STATION
with oxygen bar, massage chairs, spinal exercisers & foot massagers

ongoing from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m.

FOOD: BREAKFAST for DINNER

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Free to USC students, faculty, and staff with CarolinaCard.
For more information or assistance, visit www.cp.sc.edu or call (803) 777-3950. This event is subject to change. Paid for by Student Activity Fees.

Thursday, December 4th

Russell House Ballroom
JINGLE JAM
A Capella Show!

Thursday, December 4th
8 p.m.!

FEATURING
Street Corner Symphony

ALSO: The Cocktails, Cockapella, & Carolina Gents
**USC Photo Festival to feature student art**

The School of Visual Art and Design at USC is full of talented artists, and now the public can view their work. The USC Photo Festival is part two of a two-day event that displays their portfolios of upper level students in the Business of Fine Arts and Masters of Fine Art program in the School of Visual Art and Design. Now in its sixth year, the festival also includes photography-centered events available to the public.

The Photo Festival is part two of a thesis portfolio class — first comes the portfolio review, a more academic process. The portfolios on display at the Photo Festival reflect months of hard work. Though this holiday season is short on Christmas movies — we miss you, “The Santa Clause” — there are still plenty of movie events to entertain audiences over the break, and make them forget that they’re not watching “Four Christmases.” Here are five of this holiday season’s biggest films.

**Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb**

Dec. 23

Ben Stiller’s hijinx-prone museum security guard Larry saves the day one last time in “Secret of the Tomb.” The globetrotting movie has Larry trying to save the magic of the Tablet of Ahkmenrah, the object making the museum come to life, but what’s more important is Robin Williams’ role as the Tomb.” The globetrotting movie has Larry trying to save the magic of the Tablet of Ahkmenrah, the object making the museum come to life, but what’s more important is Robin Williams’ role as the Tomb.” The globetrotting movie has Larry trying to save the magic of the Tablet of Ahkmenrah, the object making the museum come to life, but what’s more important is Robin Williams’ role as the Tomb.”

**Inherent Vice**

Dec. 12

Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befiddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat. The movie stars Joaquin Phoenix in a befuddled detective role, and should be a something of a rare treat.

**The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies**

Dec. 17

The Hobbit trilogy concludes with “The Battle of the Five Armies,” which pans of the plot threads from the previous two Hobbit installments, make sure to before you see this very direct sequel.

**The Death of Paris**

Dec. 13

Clint Eastwood’s latest film stars Bradley Cooper as Chris Kyle, the sniper with the greatest number of kills in American history. This true story aims to delve into the psychology of Cooper’s character, which should give the actor plenty of opportunity to show off his chops.

**Ending with a bang**

Bring in the New Year with great music and friends at the Music Farm for their inaugural New Year’s Eve Party. Watch artists such at Weaving the Fate, Ben G and Death of Paris perform live on stage. The show starts at 8 p.m.
photographers who have an interest in Appalachia. This focus on Appalachia is new to the event. “In the past we’ve focused on Southern photography but now we wanted to focus on something new,” Robbins said.

After the Appalachia lecture, the public will get a chance to view students’ portfolios. Students will set up their portfolios and anyone that’s around will get a chance to look at the pieces and talk to the students.

Chuck Dye who’s in the MFA program has an exhibition called “Americanas” that features 30 images that focus on working-class America. Dye uses a collection of diptychs, or dual plates connected by a hinge, to show the lifestyle.

The newest edition to the photo festival is the Slideluck Potshow event that mixes it up by combining music, artwork and food to make for an entertaining program. The food is provided by local food vendors in Columbia. The event includes a photo slideshow of emerging and nonprofessional artists in the community. For Robbins, the Columbia community plays a large role in the festival. “This year one of the things that’s really special is that we wanted to expand the festival more to the community. We want to have that interaction between students, professionals and the general public,” Robbins said.

You’ll like it a latte.

Carolina Dining is excited to announce our IMPROVED Commuter Plans for Spring 2015!

New Minor Flex Plan
NOW with 15 guest meal passes for use at Bates Diner, Preston’s or Top of Carolina Friday BBQ lunch!

New Spur Meal Plan
NOW comes with $100 Bonus Bucks to be used at any location, anytime!

No Meal Plan? No Problem!
Sign up today by visiting my.sc.edu-student accounts or call CarolinaCard at 803.777.1708

You’ll like it a latte.
Making ghosts out of machines
Ben Crawford
Second-year
Russian and English student

Regular day-to-day objects, given time, can embody memories of past people, events

Do you know how your car works? You pop the hood, and use a flashlight to scan the intricate machinery of the thing. You can’t see exactly what piece interacts with what? What ever part does? Where all the parts together and how? You can’t see it all together. It’s a mystery. In fact, we have no idea what things are made. In many cases, we don’t even know what cars are made of.

An uncomfortable feeling: the necessary faith nonengineering people put in objects we can’t function without. We get in an airplane and we’re flying on nothing but the faith we have that it won’t fall apart. Many of us who aren’t interested in STEM fields live in a world catered to a consumer base. Things are designed to be disposable, to break down from time to time, to need to be replaced. A watch, handed down in a family from generation to generation, will hold the same value to the children of the new generation.

Some things are more predictable than others. People will continue to be paid by the blood of innocent victims. The end of the world as we know it will continue to be predicted. We’ve seen developments in mechanical systems, having a tendency to attribute reactions to conscious causes. A car that isn’t kept in shape will break down. The people making repairs to the hull. We have to trust us, so does sophomore year.

Break from the paralysis of uncertainty.

As for the rest of us, we just have to put faith in the engineers who designed the plane’s wings, who checked its turbines and the possibility of making repairs to the hull. We have to believe that those objects put work. Until, of course, they don’t.

So, when the car breaks down or the air conditioning unit explodes, we react like we’ve been wronged in some way or the other. The immediate reaction to a washing machine breaking, is, more often than not: “You ungrateful bastard!”

Because we don’t know how many items rely on work, we, consciously or unconsciously, attribute them with human emotions. (The technical term is mythologization.)

We do this all the time, without realizing it. Every second you include as much of your own experience into your habitual routine, a bond forms with it. What you’re thinking and how you feel, are, in a sense, captured in the object. That’s why old gun breaking feels like the end of the world.

This tendency to create ghosts in machines is a natural byproduct of living. It’s a function of memory. Human beings are pattern-seeking creatures, with a tendency to attribute reactions to conscious causes. A car that isn’t in shape isn’t just unseaworthy, it’s also painful in some way.

In the end, it doesn’t matter whether or not one understands how the objects we use daily work internally. A watch, handed down in a family from generation to generation, will hold the same weight of history whether one understands it or not. The shells of dead memories are buried between its gears.

After all, just because an engineer builds a fountain from the ground up doesn’t mean that he won’t throw a penny into a letter.
Aries
There’s more work coming in. Help your team score over the next six weeks, with Mars in Aquarius. Aim for long-range targets by considering what you’d most love to increase or protect. Money’s available. Seek out other career opportunities, anything’s possible.

Taurus
Others look to you for your common sense. Advance in your career for about six weeks, with Mars in Aquarius. More forward boldly. Pour your energy into your work. Others are feeling generous. A bonus is possible. Provide a connection. Eat well and give thanks.

Cancer

Leo
Push the creativity envelope. It could get you surprisingly fun. Work as a team and get further over the next six weeks with Mars in Aquarius. Support your self-esteem. Grow new skills and capitalize.

Virgo
Focus your energy on work over the next six weeks with Mars in Aquarius. There’s a new, profitable opportunity available. Consider a new option or begin pressing. Over the next six weeks with Mars in Aquarius. Allow yourself to know what’s possible. Over the next six weeks with Mars in Aquarius. View yourself in a new light.

Libra
Intense personal efforts. Give family your full attention. Your actions speak louder than words for about six weeks with Mars in Aquarius. Take ownership of your story, spurred to action. Let go of previous rejection. You’re very creative now. It’s easier to throw things away. Focus on the present.

Scorpio
Creative talents come to the fore. Over the next six weeks with Mars in Aquarius, improve your living conditions. Focus into home renovation, organization and beautification. Pamp up your family with seasonal colors and colors.

Sagittarius
Learn difficult material quickly for about six weeks with Mars in Aquarius. You’re intent on getting the whole story, spurred to action. Write, record and promote. Do drop to find the truth. There’s money available. Make a plan for what right without being obvious.

Aquarius
A positive attitude leads to increased satisfaction and effect. Go for a prize or new opportunity. Avoid worries. Over the next six weeks with Mars in Aquarius, avoid reckless spending. Add a turbo boost at work and bring home the bacon.

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Men's basketball to rematch OK State

When the South Carolina men's basketball team hosts Oklahoma State Saturday, the meeting will be a unique sort of unpredictability. The Gamecocks are barely 1-0, with a 4-1 record, but Monday's 77-59 dispatching of Marshall would have you believe South Carolina is capable of much more.

The Cowboys are undefeated at 6-0, but they've hardly been tested. Oklahoma State's fan base is built on wins over Southeastern Louisiana, Prairie View A&M, Milwaukee, Oregon State and Tulsa.

The two teams square off as part of the annual SEC/Big 12 Challenge, and it will serve as a benchmark for the state of both programs.

"We're starting to understand what it takes to win high-level games. We're still not there yet," head coach Frank Martin said. "I'm hoping Saturday we can play a little better and maybe figure one of these out."

Over the last two years, the Gamecocks have been in this position a number of times. The Big 12 isn't exactly a basketball powerhouse outside of Kansas, but South Carolina has scheduled two of its best in recent years.

Last season, the Gamecocks traveled to both Baylor and Oklahoma State before the start of the SEC season and they saw mixed results. South Carolina almost left Waco with a signature win over the Bears, but Oklahoma State was a road win, "whether it is, or whoever it is, it's always good to get a road win," sophomore forward Sindarius Thornwell said.

"I thought we were getting left out, and then I got an 11-hour phone call," Martin said. "How do you not get excited about playing a school like Oklahoma State and being a part of the Big 12 and challenging your team to an NCAA-level opponent?"

The Cowboys should make a strong push at the NCAA tournament this season. They're on the periphery of the top 25, but they're certainly favored over an inconsistent South Carolina team.

However, there's one thing that gives the Gamecocks hope going into Saturday's game. It's that most recent effort they put forth at Marshall.

The team fired on all cylinders, and players stepped into uncharacteristic roles in order to secure the convincing win.

Sophomore guard Sindarius Thornwell leads the Gamecocks with 13 points per game. Sophomore guard Duane Notice has scheduled two of its best in recent years. Outside of Kansas, but South Carolina is the home team in both rematches this season. And after another single-digit loss to Baylor last month, Saturday against OSU could be the Gamecocks' last shot at the Big 12 for the foreseeable future.

Gamecocks to take on Cal State Thursday, No. 9 Duke Sunday

Talita Abel (@TALITAABEL_20)

The South Carolina women's basketball team will look to continue its undefeated campaign Thursday night when it hosts California (3-5) at 8 p.m.

Although a road test against No. 9 Duke on Sunday looms, head coach Dawn Staley maintained her team is taking everything one game at a time.

"Whether it's me being in the starting lineup or not, I have the same role and the same job, which is to lead this team and that's what I'm going to continue to do," Sessions said.

The team has followed the lead of Sessions thus far, as evidenced by the team's nation-leading 2-1 assist-turnover ratio. This team-wide statistic is particularly notable in the early portion of the season because it shows discipline while teams across the country try and work out the kinks.

Staley continues to tinker rotations with an 11 to 1 assist-turnover ratio in the nonconference portion of its schedule, which Staley said has been the goal all along.

"I think young players really underestimate all the details that are needed to continue to have success," Staley said. "And it's hard to sustain that because their attention spans are shorter. Each practice and each film session is a little bit harder to swallow.

In the midst of different combinations, Staley has managed to keep her team fresh and balanced. With an 11 to 1 assist-turnover ratio and senior forward Aleighsa Welch average more than 20 minutes played per game. Eight players are averaging at least five points per game.

One thing Staley has kept quiet is how she plans to use freshmen forward Ali Wilson in the future. Wilson is second on the team with 12.2 points per game and is tied for the team lead with 7.2 rebounds per game.

Wilson hasn't started a game thus far, but the Gamecocks overcame a four-point halftime deficit behind Wilson's 12 second-half points in a game she logged a career-high 26 minutes. Wilson said she was experiencing fatigue towards the end of the game, her teammates pushed her to her limits.

"This exchange of knowledge from the experienced to the inexperienced player should serve the Gamecocks come tournament time in March, which Staley said has been the goal all along.

"I do think we're improving. We're just constantly trying to get better for us," Staley said. "There were lessons in every game that we played, so hopefully when we take the court [Thursday] we'll continue to work towards that progress."