

# THE LEDGER

## Grad School and Abroad & Next Steps Forward



PHOTO BY BENJAMIN FREDELL

### This Edition:

- Fund for Education Abroad Scholarship
- The Korean DMZ
- Grad School Application Experience
- Scott Pilgrim Takes Off
- Starting an RSO



# UWT explores Fund for Education Abroad scholarship in informative session

Associate Director Courtney Kroll shares valuable perspectives on scholarships, shedding light on the transformative impact of programs like FDA and offering guidance for aspiring students.



UW Tacoma scholars delve into the rich cultural tapestry of South Korea during their study abroad program.



PHOTOS BY OFFICE OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS WEBSITE (LEFT) AND BENJAMIN FREDELL (RIGHT)

**BY RAGHVI BALONI**  
NEWS REPORTER

In a recent information session led by Courtney Kroll, the Associate Director of Study Abroad, students eager to explore international education were enlightened about the Fund for Education Abroad (FDA) scholarship. The session, held to address queries and guide potential applicants, also shed light on various scholarship opportunities for those venturing into the realm of studying abroad.

The FDA scholarship, known for its focus on marginalized students in terms of finances and underrepresented populations, particularly racial and ethnic minority students, promises a transformative journey for those willing to take on the challenges of studying abroad. Kroll navigated attendees through the intricacies of the FDA changes, application process, and emphasized the signifi-

cance of the scholarship's mission to support diverse academic pursuits.

Insights into the FDA Scholarship:

Kroll detailed the scholarship's eligibility criteria, highlighting recent changes that now welcome applications from DACA recipients and no longer require a letter of recommendation. The application demands attention to detail, including academic transcripts, a financial aid form and an essay.

A significant portion of the session was dedicated to tackling the essay requirements. Kroll stressed the importance of addressing each element of the essay questions comprehensively. With a 750-word limit for each essay, applicants must articulate their choice of intended study program, its alignment with their academic and personal goals, and how it builds on past experiences.

The second essay prompts applicants to reflect on personal challeng-

es, demonstrating qualities like open-mindedness and perseverance. Kroll encouraged students to delve into genuine experiences that evoke emotions and showcase personal growth.

As the session unfolded, Kroll emphasized the need for early preparation, advising students to start the application well in advance of the February 7th deadline. Recognizing the anxiety associated with scholarship applications, Kroll reassured students that the process itself serves as valuable self-reflection, enhancing their preparedness for the challenges of studying abroad.

While the FDA scholarship took center stage, Kroll also touched upon other scholarship options available for students aspiring to study abroad. Acknowledging the financial burden associated with international education, she urged students to explore various avenues, including the Gilman

scholarship and [additional opportunities](#) with different application timelines.

The information session proved instrumental in demystifying the FDA scholarship application process and equipping students with insights into crafting compelling essays. As aspiring scholars gear up for the February deadline, the session's impact extends beyond funding, fostering a community of resilient and globally-minded individuals ready to embrace the challenges and rewards of studying abroad.

On the topic of overcoming challenges abroad, Kroll shared inspirational stories of the students successfully studying abroad with the help of scholarship.

"Study abroad isn't without its challenges, but these hurdles, be they personal or academic, contribute to resilience and a more enriching experience," Kroll said.

Addressing scholarship recommendations, Kroll

highlighted the simplicity of the UW Tacoma [Office of Global Affairs Scholarship application](#).

She said, "By expressing interest during the application for UW Tacoma study abroad programs, students can effortlessly access this valuable resource."

Throughout the session, Kroll's commitment to facilitating access to international education opportunities was evident. Her comprehensive insights not only demystified the application process but also instilled a sense of purpose and preparedness among aspiring scholars.

Currently the FDA scholarship is open for applications with a deadline for February 7th. It can be found on their [official website](#).

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Office: MAT 151  
Phone: 253-692-4428  
Email: ledger@uw.edu

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# The Korean DMZ: A symbol of war turned tourist destination

The DMZ in Korea is a symbol for a decades long struggle that the United States has always been involved in.

By **BENJAMIN FREDELL**  
OPINION COLUMNIST

I invite you, the reader, to sit with some discomfort with me and think about the grey area between what we might have once believed to be black and white. I will not pretend to know or understand the pain and hurt that the people of Korea have endured during the last seven decades of this ghost war. Nothing I could say or elucidate will help such a complicated matter, but my hope is to inspire some compassion and empathy within my country that has grown so complacent.

Our country played a significant role in the creation of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in Korea. The Korean DMZ is a physical border along the Korean peninsula across the 38th parallel, which separates and splits the country in two. It was signed into an Armistice agreement by United States Army Lieutenant General William Harrison Jr., and North Korean Leader Kim II Sung on July 27, 1953. An Armistice is essentially an agreement of cease fire. A war on hold.

A year after the Armistice was signed, during the 1954 Geneva Conference, a peace treaty was suggested to be implemented but US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, did not adhere to such an attempt for a treaty. 70 years to the date, and counting, the DMZ remains. What was meant to be a temporary buffer zone has become an intensely guarded frontier. As the years go by, so does what little hope is left for reunification. It has become increasingly clear, however, that unification under North Korea's communist rule would not be Korean unity.

I went to the DMZ with my study abroad class two weeks ago to the Dora Observatory. Our tour guide, Moon, was doubtful there would ever be a solution to the conflict within her lifetime. The youngest generation that left seventy years ago (often by force), South Korea to North Korea, have all grown up now. The new generation has grown up in a world where this reality is the norm.

In the US we usually consider North and South Korea as two separate entities. It is the same shared history, the same culture, families stripped and torn apart

by a line drawn in the sand, never to be seen again besides the view from a high tower.

The DMZ has become a tourist destination. I did not want to go despite a sinking morbid curiosity. It was eerie taking the bus across the Civilian Control Line, driving along a deserted highway, past an estimated 2 million landmines. When we got to the observation deck, a line of people filled the telescopes, all trying to get a peek at North Korea. White smiling faces took selfies with the North Korean flag waving in the distance. My heart sank.

I was uncomfortable because I did not feel like most visitors were acting in this setting in a serious manner. The tone of the DMZ and the smiling soldier mascots in the gift shop gave me whiplash. This, I felt, was not the place for jokes and laughter. I wanted to know what Moon thought about what the DMZ has become. The telescopes are new, put in place post-covid.

I asked her if she felt like this place has become a human zoo and her response reminded me that I am still viewing this entire experience from a White American perspective.

"It's a little uncomfortable, a little weird, I know," said Moon. "But again, this is the only way for North Korean defectors, or those that still have family there, to see their home."

I watched for a while, the weird energy emanating from the tourists on display. I sat quietly on the short bus ride back to Seoul, which was only about 30 miles away. Back at our hotel it was as if you could pretend the DMZ didn't even exist. The hustle and bustle of Myongdong night market took my mind back to excitement and ease.

It's safe here, back in the US, for now, just as it might seem if you closed your eyes anywhere. I will never know the cultural trauma that persists through a nation divided. But I can look. I can watch through the safe glass telescope. At the top of an observation deck. Miles and miles away, through my phone screen, through my American news channels, or all else otherwise. We are the ones that look. Through telescopes and camera lenses. And I might have never known if I hadn't gone that we never really saw the same way.



PHOTOS BY BENJAMIN FREDELL  
Tourists take photos of North Korea from the observation deck (TOP) and the Han River separates North and South Korea, a flag from each can be seen on either side (BELOW).



## Additional Reading

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/26/world/asia/korea-dmz-north-south-border.html>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-is-the-dmz-demilitarized-zone-north-south-korea-border/>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/9-answers-to-the-9-most-commonly-asked-questions-about-the-dmz-in-korea/jAUBLi-g0ucKlrQ?hl=en-US>

<https://libertyinnorthkorea.org/blog/the-dmz-and-north-korea>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean\\_Armistice\\_Agreement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_Armistice_Agreement)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dora\\_Observatory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dora_Observatory)

## The grad school application experience

The truth about the process of applying to grad school and my advice for you.



ILLUSTRATION BY COLE MARTIN

The grad school application experience can often feel like the start of a daunting journey.

**By CELIA WILLIAMS**  
OPINION EDITOR

As a senior here at UWT, not only have I spent the fall quarter stressing about my classes and responsibilities, but I also went through the grad school application process. Applying and going to grad school is a serious decision and takes a lot of thought and consideration. Many, including myself, spend two months working on their material presentation and even longer on research.

A grad school application is different from an undergrad application. In undergrad applications, you are simply sharing your interests and ac-

ademic status. Grad school applications are more in-depth: since you now have a few years of college under your belt, admission boards are looking at the research and work you have done and what you plan to do with that in their program. There are quite a few things that I wish I had known before I went through the process.

First, be prepared to spend a ridiculous amount on application fees. This is important because most students will apply to multiple programs for a better chance at admission. There is often a fee attached to each application that is around \$100. Budgeting and planning for this expense is one way to

avoid that situation. Another would be to apply for scholarships and see if you apply for a fee waiver. Most students that receive funding from FAFSA are eligible for a fee waiver.

Second, investigate each program's staff and faculty. Find someone in the program you might like to work with and try to get to know them a bit more. This is important to make sure the program you are applying to is the right fit. For example, as an American Indian Studies minor that plans to further that aspect of my education, I would want to investigate programs with strong Indigenous representation and involvement.

Third, give yourself time to get through the application. You don't want to miss something vital that could cost you your spot in a program. Applications for PhD programs generally open in September and are due in December or early January. For a master's program though it is usually due in January or February.

Lastly, find someone to mentor you through the process, preferably a professor with whom you have worked a considerable amount during your time as an undergraduate, who will write you a letter of recommendation. This will not only boost your application, but it will take care

of one of the three letters of recommendation you are required to submit.

The process is overwhelming and going into it as the first graduate school student in my family doesn't make it any easier, to say the least. It is vastly different from the undergraduate process and takes a lot more time and consideration. A positive aspect of the process is that it offers a chance for you to reflect on your undergraduate work, which is something that can help establish your passions and where you want to go from undergrad.

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# The highs and lows of starting a Registered Student Organization

In conversation with Music Club President Jadin Hawkins, here's the rundown of what students can expect if they want to start an RSO.

By RACHEL MEATTE  
A&E EDITOR

For students interested in starting a registered Student Organization (RSO), you may be unsure of where to start. Currently there are over 60 RSOs at UWT ranging from Music Club, Volleyball Club to Black Student Union. Students considering joining an RSO can view the registered organizations through the Student Center of Involvement (CSI) website, the [new DUBNET platform](#), or view any of the club posters located on poster boards at UWT. For students who major in studies like Music or Film, taking classes in these areas may not be enough.

Jadin Hawkins is a senior and currently the president of the Music Club at UWT. He first started the club when he was working at the Student Activities Board (SAB) more than one year ago.

"I really enjoyed working there and the people who work to come up with student activities," said Hawkins. "It was a fun job that taught me a lot and helped develop my communication skills."

Hawkins worked as a music and events coordinator there where he developed events and music performances for. Several times a year the SAB would host a music event at local community venue ALMA. Hawkins would DJ here and host open mic nights during their events. Shortly after the last event they hosted, the ALMA arts center shut down after lack of funding. Although Hawkins can't host events there anymore, he says that he is happy to have gotten the opportunity to DJ and help others meet each other through music.

"For me, all I want is to do is create music and build a strong community of people who are passionate about the same thing," said Hawkins. "If someone says that they needed resources or someone who can help them get into music I will always do it. That's just the kind of person I am."

After working some time at the SAB, he wanted to try something different. He decided to focus on his major

more and build a community of music enthusiasts.

"I love the work I did at SAB but always wanted to do more with connection building through music," said Hawkins. "This is something I always felt was missing at UWT. There isn't a music program or place where music artists can connect. At other universities, they will have some people play instruments on campus during lunch hour or even hold musical events at the school."

Hawkins created the Music Club and encouraged other music enthusiasts to join.

"It was difficult because there is not straight forward path to starting an RSO," said Hawkins.

For students who want to start an RSO, they must have at least four other students who are interested in becoming officers of the club, according to the CSI webpage. These officers would be responsible for creating a constitution that promotes positive values and aligns with UWT policies. Any rules that break or divert from this policy might be rejected.

In addition to creating a constitution, at least two officers must attend an RSO orientation meeting where they will be asked to learn the policies and rules set forth by the CSI. These orientations ask you to follow UWT policies and work with members of your group to attend any required RSO events in the future.

"It takes a lot of work to run and start a club," said Hawkins. "Not many people think about all of the other things that go into creating an organization because they're just focused on the fun part of it. When we first started, we had a solid group of people who came to each meeting. We've been able to put on a few events on campus that people showed to. What's hard is keeping that same enthusiasm for other aspects of the club like event planning and club coordinating."

For RSOs, you are allotted a certain amount of funds per school year for your entire club. According to the CSI, RSOs receive \$250 for club funding and an extra \$200 in case that money runs out. However, putting on events such as Winter Trivia Night,

which the Music Club was a part of, surpassed the \$250 they had.

"The funding isn't nearly enough for all the activities that the CSI expect RSOs to do," said Hawkins. "It costs a lot of money to put on these events and pay the food caterers, prizes, beverages and decorations. Even if we had twice the amount, I don't think it would be able to cover half the cost of an event like ours was."

To cut costs and split funding, the music club collaborated with the UWT Film Club, Soccer Club and ASUWT. They were able to supply pizza and beverages and several prize items for students.

"It was a successful event and proved that working together really benefits everyone including your club," said Hawkins. "If I were to give any advice to people looking to start an RSO or put on an event on campus, I would say collaborate with others as much as you can. This helped us tremendously and worked to expose our club to other students who might want to join our club."

Hawkins will graduate next quarter and is hoping that another club member of his will step up and take his place as President. Many RSOs end up dying because one or several members graduate or decide that they don't want to be involved anymore. To keep this from happening, the CSI encourages any senior RSO officers to communicate thoroughly with the entire club, to decide whether they want to pass the club down onto someone else after they graduate or want to step down.

While Hawkins is unsure of what the officers will do after he graduates, he is happy to have had the opportunity to connect with them in the first place.

"For students, I think that we often focus way too much on our GPA or assignments that we have to complete," said Hawkins. "We all want to graduate and do well, but I think people forget that doing homework and class assignments are just one part of it. You can't learn everything through writing papers."

"A part of growing as a person and learning is mak-

ing connections with people you meet. If I hadn't of made that club, I would never know what it's like to start an RSO and put on cool events like Trivia Night."

Hawkins continues to attend music events where he can host as a DJ. He creates music in his own time and still works to put on events and club meetings with the Music Club.

If you are interested in starting an RSO, you can go to the CSI resource page at <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/involvement/resources>.

Here you can view all the required things needed to start an RSO.



PHOTO BY JADIN HAWKINS (ABOVE) AND RACHEL MEATTE (BELOW)  
Jadin Hawkins speaking with a club member of an RSO (ABOVE) and hosting a Trivia Night Event (BELOW).





## SERIES REVIEW: 'Scott Pilgrim Takes Off' is a refreshing twist on the classic comic series

Netflix's newest comic book-inspired adaptation series teaches us important lessons on self-reflection, emotional growth, and companionship, all while still sharing the same charm with its original source material.



SCREENSHOT BY NETFLIX

Screenshot of Scott Pilgrim Takes Off opening sequence featuring Scott, Ramona and friends.

**BY HEIDI ORTIZ CANDELARIA**  
A&E COLUMNIST

**Note:** This article contains spoilers for "Scott Pilgrim Takes Off."

A new piece of media has made such an impression on me that I thought I'd change the format of my reviews so I can share it with you all. This week, I will be talking about the Netflix animated adaptation series of Bryan Lee O'Malley's "Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World."

As a long-time fan of the franchise (nine years to be exact), it was no surprise that I'd jump on the opportunity to cover this series right after watching it. It dropped seemingly out of nowhere and caught us fans completely off-guard. No one could have expected such a niche comic book series to have its own series nearly 20 years later after its original release. Yet, here we are.

Other than the comics, which were first serialized in 2004, there was also a movie adaptation done for Scott Pilgrim in 2010. Going by the same name, the movie followed the plotline of the comics in a much more summarized version. It was considered a fun, campy movie with a killer soundtrack. It only grew in popularity as

the years went by, drawing in a larger audience to the original comics.

Most fans assumed "Scott Pilgrim Takes Off" would be a near-exact adaptation of both the comics and the movie, perhaps a bit more in-depth than the movie considering the series would have eight episodes ranging from 30 to 40 minutes each. Beginning with the opening sequence, it was evident that the creators of this show took much inspiration from modern anime.

The theme song, performed by the Japanese rock-band Necrie Talkie, is up-beat, catchy and colorful. This opening also shows us the talent exhibited by the animators of this series. The animation is dynamic and unique as the characters' designs closely match their comic counterparts. A solid beginning, I was immediately hooked and knew the quality of the soundtrack would rival its movie counterpart.

Plot-wise, there were many changes made. It was clear that the writers of this series took more freedom in writing this story for long-time fans, while also drawing in a new fanbase. The comics and movie focused solely on how Scott had to defeat The League of Evil Exes to get to his dream girl, Ramona Flowers.

The plot was written and illustrated to resemble ones that you'd see in video games, including fight sequences, using superpowers, having multiple lives and defeated foes dropping coins after their supposed deaths. Defeat the bad guys, get the girl. Very Super Mario Bros. meets Street Fighter, and fairly straightforward.

There was occasional backstory whenever characters were introduced. Some, like Envy Addams, had their stories unraveled in later volumes for the sake of making it a big reveal. But most of the Evil Exes had very brief introductions and defeats, usually lasting for a volume or two and then disappearing.

This series did an excellent job in making these Evil Exes into more fleshed-out characters. They gave them equal importance in the plot and kept them in the entirety of the series. We have characters like Roxy and Todd, who explore their queerness openly. Each Evil Ex has their own redemption arc, as well as closure with Ramona.

Continued on Next Page



Official Netflix poster for Scott Pilgrim Takes Off that is now streaming. POSTER BY NETFLIX





SCREENSHOT BY NETFLIX

Ramona and Scott at Julie's party during episode 1.

This also ties into our second prominent factor that the series and comic do not share: Scott does not fight the Evil Exes in this story. He actually isn't around for most of the series at all, which might sound like a negative point, since this series is named after him and he is supposed to be the main character. But truthfully, this worked in the series favor.

Scott is not a good guy. He's actually quite flawed and makes quite a few mistakes, the most obvious being that he was dating Knives Chau, a 17-year-old high schooler. So as early as the first episode, Scott is presumed dead after what was supposed to be his first fight and win against Evil Ex number 7, Matthew Patel.

Ramona – though – is convinced that Scott wasn't killed, but was instead kidnapped. For the rest of the

series, Ramona is our main character. She goes on to track down each of her Evil Exes and uncover clues to Scott's disappearance. But rather than just defeating them all like Scott would have, she faces her past and her own mistakes. Each ex represents a phase of her life and reminds her of how she always seemed to run away when things got too real.

She finds that none of her exes are behind Scott's disappearance, and that Scott himself had been the perpetrator she had been after. Old Scott – as the series calls him – time traveled and sequestered his past self right in the moment where he would have won. It was all done in order to deviate from his eventual future together with Ramona.

Yes, Scott was supposed to get the girl. More than that, he was supposed to marry

her. But after it's revealed that their relationship is a short-lived one, Future Scott spends his days lamenting ever having gone through all that trouble with Ramona. Rather than growing and maturing, he becomes more jaded and miserable, even going as far as having a time-machine built so he could undo the future he would have to endure after his and Ramona's breakup.

What made this series so much more enjoyable was how unexpected this was. Scott was the so-called bad guy all along, and the final boss fight is against an "Even Older Scott" that spent years training to be able to travel to the past and destroy the entire world. It's also a clever play on the original title of the comics, as the last episode is called "The World Vs.

Scott Pilgrim."

The entire League of (no longer evil) Exes, Scott's friends, Ramona and present Scott face off against this freakishly swole Even Older Scott. It's an extremely entertaining battle that ends with both present and future Ramona morphing together to create "Super Ramona," who ends up choosing herself over either Scott.

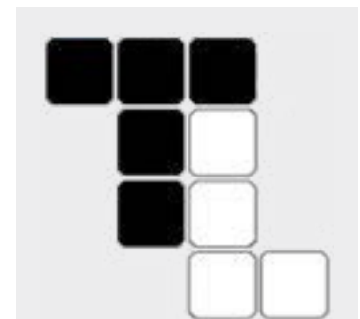
I think the fact that the series focused so much on the characters and their relationships really elevated this story for me. It might be a bit controversial to say this, but I enjoyed the plot in this series much more than the comic book or movie version. I felt like the series grew with its fanbase and addressed many problematic character traits that were never resolved or dealt with. The comic pointed them out plain as day,

but there was never much growth. The series – though – let each character shine, even Scott, who was in a whole other timeline.

Overall, this series was such a joy to experience. Everything about it was just so impeccably curated, from the soundtrack produced by Anamanaguchi and Joseph Trapanese to the animation. Often times when an adaptation deviates extremely from the original source material, it tends to be horrible. But I can safely say this was not the case for "Scott Pilgrim Takes Off." I highly recommend everyone watch this series. It's highly bingeable, and it will probably be in my rotation for a while. So, if you'd like to check it out, "Scott Pilgrim Takes Off" is currently out on Netflix. The full original soundtrack is also out on Spotify and YouTube.

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