

PXSB STUDENT SCOOP

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PART 1

Student Scoop
February 2016



Vae ridentem feras inter gravissima

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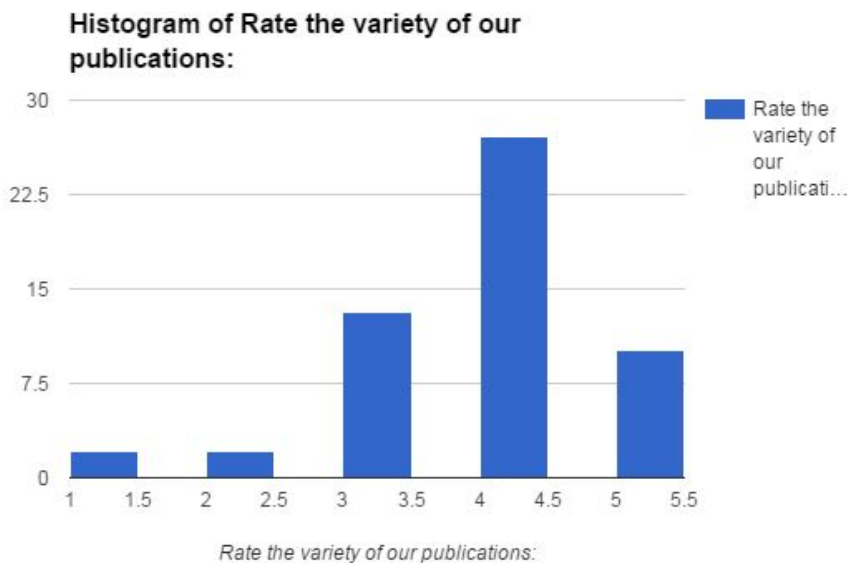
Susan Cavalcanti

02/29/2016

Student Scoop Survey Analysis

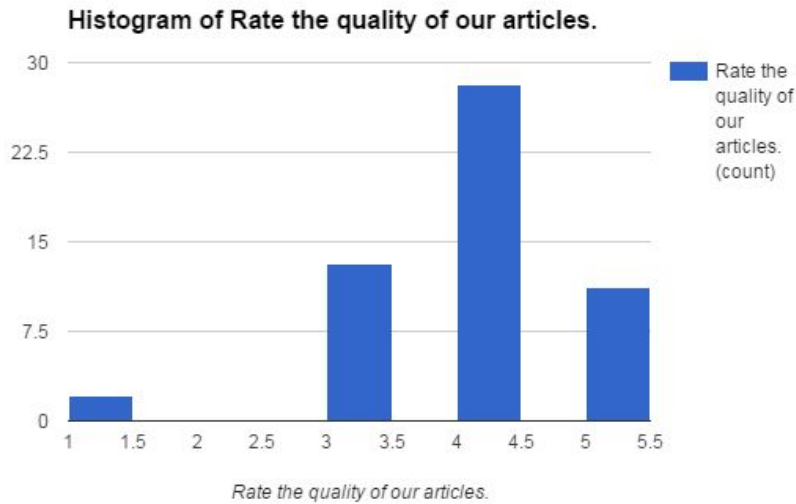
The middle and high school students were recently asked to respond to a survey about Student Scoop during Global Leadership. We express great gratitude towards those who took the time to answer with honesty and seriousness. The survey is helping the *Scoop* staff gain awareness about our current reach, as well as how to greater appeal to our community.

Although middle school students are welcome to read *Student Scoop*, the *Scoop* staff is composed of only high school students, making these upper grades our target audience. Because of this, the responses featured in this article are only from our soon to be or current High School students and teachers.



It was a pleasant surprise to find out that over 50% of students had read Student Scoop before answering this survey, with over 95% rating the quality and variety of our articles

at least ⅓. Student Scoop is divided into four categories to ensure the diversity of our publications: arts, news, interviews, and student life. We also have a staff of editors and a supervisor who are continuously revising articles, making sure that they meet certain standards before being published.



In order to understand how to improve the quality of our publications, the *Scoop* asked students which articles were their most and least favorite. The student body gave varied responses, and many articles that were disliked by some were listed as others' favorite. Our student body is composed of individuals with unique tastes, so this lack of congruence is expected; yet, all of our recurring sections (Music Review, Sensational Cebola, Interviews, News, Surveys...) were favored by a quantifiable amount of the student body. Notably, the Sensational Cebola and the interview with Lucca Domingos were the most popular, indicating that our student population favors comedic articles and those addressing student life; however, it must be noted that the interview was one of the first articles on the blog, and it might have been favored by some individuals who only briefly consulted Student Scoop before answering the survey.



The survey also asked for further article suggestions, which also pointed to the aforementioned preferences by the student body. Over 40% suggested that the Scoop Staff write about either sports, student life, or comedy. Themes that were present in either Sensational Cebola articles or the interview with Lucca. These include a section about funny situations that happened at PASB during the month, and an article about some students' experiences with standardized testing. Other interesting recommendations which we hope to soon include in Student Scoop are BuzzFeed style quizzes, articles in cartoon form, and information about foreign universities.

Politically engaged articles were quite popular among the readers, but students showed disapproval of excessively verbose writing styles, asking for more concise articles which immediately "get to the point". It can be difficult to write about complicated issue in a palatable manner, and, although the *Scoop* is already working at this, we will double our efforts; nevertheless, the student body asked for more articles about the US election, terrorism, as well as the pros and cons of hot topics. Some students also mentioned that the magazine would look more attractive with more images and pictures, which seems like a feasible way to make it more visually appealing.

Student Scoop would like to once again thank all of those who gave their input on how to make PASB's high school magazine even better. We are proud to announce that next edition will feature some of your recommendations! Make sure to check it out and

either comment on the website or email our team about what you enjoyed/disliked at studentscoop@pasb.com.br.

Ryan Strong

The Crisis: Brazil Has Squandered Its Promise

Just a few short years ago, Brazil seemed unstoppable. In 2010, it clocked a growth rate of 7.5%, snapping at the heels of India and China (Lopez, 2011). It seemed as if rapid, sustained growth was inevitable. Contrast that picture with the current one, and it is easy to see why Brazil feels gloomy. The IMF predicts that growth will not return to Brazil until 2018, with a 3.5% contraction in economic output for 2016, followed by 0% growth in 2017. This comes on the heels of a 3.7% contraction in 2015 (Trevisani, 2016).

The question that begs to be asked is: Why is Brazil's economy in freefall? To start, commodity prices have tumbled. As commodity prices are an essential export of Brazil, this has hurt economic growth (Biller, 2015). Adding to Brazil's problems, US interest rates are rising, China's economic growth is slowing, and Brazil has a ridiculously large budget deficit. (Financial Times, 2015). The massive scandal at Petrobras and Dilma Rouseff's political weakness isn't helping matters at all. Finally, of course, there is the loss of Brazil's investment grade rating that is also hurting the economy, as investors have lost confidence in Brazil (Soto and Ayres, 2015).



So, what does Brazil need to do to get back on track? As Brazil can't control China, US interest rates, and commodity prices, gargantuan deficit is the area that Brazil needs to focus on. This will mean spending cuts and tax raises. One area of interest is pensions. Brazil spends more of its GDP on pensions than Japan, with a startling sticker price of 12% of GDP. Take a closer look and it is obvious why. The retirement age for women is 50, while the retirement age for men is 55. This is far below the OECD average for retirement ages (The Economist, 2016.)

In the long term, Brazil needs to fix its huge structural problems. The tax code is a shocking mess, with the average manufacturing firm spending 2,600 hours trying to comply. Labor laws are also ridiculously restrictive for businesses (The Economist, 2016). ...shoddy infrastructure and an ill trained workforce (The Economist, 2015), Brazil needs large amounts of reform.

Of course, none of this will come easily: 90% of public spending is protected by the 1988 constitution that was adopted after the fall of the military junta. Furthermore, Brazil has a shocking 28 political parties represented in the lower house of Congress, adding to legislative gridlock (The Economist, 2016). The best hope for Brazil is that the country muddles through until the 2018 elections, when the PSDB will, hopefully, receive a whopping mandate for change (The Economist, 2016). In the meantime, Brazilians will have to hang on for what will be a very long and painful three years.

Renata Prata

From paralysis to reform?

The absurdities in the following lines appear to be elements of a satire, yet they are events of Brazilian politics. The audacities of Mr. Eduardo Cunha (PMDB-RJ), president of the Câmara dos Deputados, or House of Representatives, have already been described in [previous Scoop editions](#). More recently, the politician had the process of annulment of his mandate, which has been contemplated since October at the Council of Ethics, frozen. Cunha has been accused of a breach of parliamentary decorum for having lied in the Petrobras Parliamentary Inquiry Commission (CPI), stating that he did not own any international bank accounts, when, in fact, he has three Swiss accounts under his name. In judicial terms, this case, along with the Supreme Court's investigation of his alleged participation in the Petrobras corruption scheme, has been Cunha's Achilles Heel, a.k.a. weak point, yet critics have also constantly touched upon his leadership in a group of representatives who insistently endanger the State's secular quality, or Laïcité.

This setback in the process was the final step in a sequence of maneuvers orchestrated by Cunha's team. These include actions ranging from occupying

session time by picking verbal and physical fights to attempting to begin a process against an opposing party. Regarding the obstruction of the annulment process, it is the product of a conflict of interests between the House and the Council of Ethics.

Vice-president of the House, Waldir Maranhão (PP-MA), has accepted Carlos Marun's (PMDB-MS) claim that the process of annulment of his mandate must be delayed since the president of the Council of Ethics, José Carlos Araújo (PSD-BA), rejected his appeal to the Council reading a quasi-identical report on Cunha after the switch in rapporteur. The continuity was approved with a majority of 11 votes versus 9. This change in rapporteur, which happened in December, was, again, product of a legal maneuver. The previous rapporteur was Fausto Pinato (PRB-SP) and the current is Marcos Rogério (PDT-RO). The first was dismissed by Maranhão because his party was part of the coalition, which elected Cunha as president of the House in the beginning of 2015.

All in all, observing the incessant series of maneuvers, remarkably as interferences of the House in the Council of Ethics, it is hard to keep one's hopes intact. The third politician in the line of succession is Cunha, meaning that if both Vice-President Michel Temer (PMDB) and President of the Senate Renan Calheiros (PMDB-AL) flop in a case of presidential impeachment, Cunha is the Brazilian President. "It is past time for the Congress to deal with the legislation rather than with politics itself" resonates powerfully. However, the idea that reform only comes with the discomfort of political paralysis seems just as convincing.

For more information visit the following sites:

<http://atarde.uol.com.br/mobile/politica/noticias/1744299>

<http://www.redebrasilatual.com.br/politica/2016/02/conselho-de-etica-questiona-decisao-que-zerou-processo-de-cassacao-de-cunha-9047.html>

<http://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2015/12/presidente-do-conselho-de-etica-troca-relator-de-processo-sobre-cunha.html>

Marina

02/18/2016

Studying in the US: Interviews with Brent Strong and Mr. Martyn

During the second semester, college and admissions become a huge topic of discussion for the entire high school. For this edition, *Scoop* interviewed Brent Strong, a PASB senior and Mr. Martyn, the high school counselor, to get a deeper sense of what preparing for college and getting into college looks like. Hopefully, their words of advice

will inspire students and help them make a decision about whether or not study outside of Brazil.

Brent, PASB 2015/16 senior.

Scoop: Why did you decide to study in the US?

Brent: Probably the most compelling reason is because I don't speak Portuguese, and it is much easier for me to do that instead of attempting the Vestibular or the Enem. My family also studied there, so it just makes more sense for me to go to college in the US.

Scoop: How was the application process?

Brent: The application process was stressful, and this is mostly because it is poorly timed. Applications are happening in the middle of preparation for IB exams, internal assessments, and so many essays! Figuring out where you want to go and what you want to do is also a challenge because there is such a wide range of options.

Scoop: How is the feeling of waiting for college responses?

Brent: It is nice when you receive an acceptance because, well, you're going to college. Waiting for the responses is tiring because it is a three month wait, usually from January 1st to April 1st, without knowing what your future is going to be like.

Scoop: What advice would you give to students that want to study outside of Brazil?

Brent: Definitely do the IB program - colleges look for that. It is one of their major considerations, and it shows you really took advantage of your school's opportunities, and that you challenged yourself. It is also important to participate in extracurricular activities, as colleges want to see you are willing to be committed to what you are doing, and that you are showing leadership in your community. My last piece of advice is to be lucky. Currently, there is a high demand for studying in American colleges, making it extremely difficult to get in, so, sometimes it comes down to whether the application reader likes you or not.

Mr. Martyn, high school counselor.

Scoop: What are the benefits of going to study abroad?

Mr. Martyn: I think in today's globalized workplace and society it is often advantageous for students to obtain international academic qualifications and professional work experiences. The USA is the most popular international destination for PASB students and for international students worldwide. This is no doubt, due to the USA having some of the most well known and respected universities and a vast number of possible majors. Another appealing factor about US universities is their flexibility in terms of often being able to change majors after you have started. There are also lots of great universities in Canada, which are often less expensive, and Canada also offers an easier path to get a work-visa afterwards if you decide you would like to get some work experience after graduation.

Scoop: How do students prepare to study outside of Brazil?

Mr. Martyn: In terms of researching the available university opportunities, it is important to start your research early: learn about your interests, use the internet to explore possible majors and careers, learn about different kinds of universities, and meet with me.

In terms of gaining acceptance at a university outside of Brazil, the most important factors are your grades and GPA, beginning in 9th grade.

Specifically, the most important factors at US universities are:

- 1) High School Grades
- 2) Strength of Curriculum (are you taking the most challenging courses available?)
- 3) Standardized Test Scores (not required at all colleges)
- 4) Essay / Personal Statement
- 5) Demonstrated Interest
- 6) Recommendation Letters
- 7) Extra-curricular Activities

Scoop: What is your role as a counselor in the process of getting students to study outside?

Mr. Martyn: My role is to help students learn about university and career options and to help them pursue these opportunities. In particular, I meet with 11th grade students to help prepare college lists and with 12th grade students to help guide them through the application process. This year I would like to do more work with 9th and 10th grade students in the 2nd semester to help prepare them for this process and to help them learn about colleges and careers that would be a good match for their skills, interests,

and career goals. All high school students are always welcome to come and see me with any questions or concerns.

Scoop: What advice would you give to students that want to study outside?

Mr. Martyn:

1. Take your studies seriously, from the beginning of High School!
2. Do your best to raise your grades / GPA.
3. Take challenging IB courses if you and your teacher think you are able for them.
4. Build relationships with teachers; you will need to ask them for recommendation letters.
5. Explore different extracurricular activities, find a couple that you enjoy, and then deepen your practice of these activities.
6. Make the most of your summers. You don't have to attend an expensive summer program at an Ivy League College, though this can of be wonderful if you have the opportunity. Summer programs can be an opportunity to learn about a specific college or major you are considering. You could also seek out an internship or volunteer opportunity in Brazil. All of these experiences can be great material to reflect upon in your College Essays.

Reflection

Getting into the college of your dreams outside of Brazil may not be as easy as you'd hope. Thankfully, PASB is currently building support and establishing programs that will increase your chances of being able to attend upper education where you most see fit. Consider Mr. Martyn's words of advice and take the opportunities to challenge yourself so you will be well on your way to acceptance letters!

Acceptances for Class of 2016!!! (Next page)



Rubén López
02/12/2016

Interview with Susan Cavalcanti

In the past few years, PASB has experienced the development of its very own drama club. Through fun performances, this group has gained prominence within the school community, especially with middle and high school students. *Student Scoop* had the opportunity to speak to Susan Cavalcanti, distinguished member of the club and theater enthusiast, to discuss how theater and the arts can shape communities and make life fun.

Scoop: So, let's get right to why we're here. How much do you like theater?

Susan: A lot! I love it.

Scoop: How did you get to loving it?

Susan: In my preschool back in Feira de Santana, we used to have incredible end-of-the-year performances where each class would perform a musical number or a short skit. I think it was then that I started loving theater. Also, when I was about six, and my family moved to Salvador, my older sister began writing short plays that we would perform to our friends and family. I actually came across some of them recently, and I can tell you they were really good! Since then, I have always loved theater and can't picture doing anything else with my life.

Scoop: I can feel your passion for it. Did this type of activity influence your personality or emotions?

Susan: Well, I have always been a quirky person, and I suffered intense bullying at my last school because of it. Theater helped me find a place where I belong and feel free to be who I am. It has also given me purpose and creative fulfillment because I realize I have to do certain things, like practice dancing and singing as much as possible, in order to pursue a career in the field. At the same time, I feel whole whenever I do these things. I now have the confidence to be a leader in all areas, not only theater, with the knowledge gained from performing.

Scoop: Great. How has your extensive experience with theatrical arts shaped your plans for the future?

Susan: I am interested in many areas of knowledge, but I can't think of any other giving me as much lifelong personal fulfillment as working with the arts. I wish to study musical theater in college, but I'm not only focused on being a performer and would be as satisfied being a manager, director, playwright... I believe the arts, more than anything else in the world, has the power to shape human beings and society. Most individuals don't live for their profession, but for their free time, which they spend immersed in artistic entertainment. Theater helps individuals exit their comfort zone and appreciate what others have to offer, and the absence of these skills is the root of prejudice. I want to be a part of this crucial and underappreciated aspect of society, which is why I am going to pursue theater in a professional level.

Scoop: And I am sure you will do a great job for society. Yet, there are very few young people who think like you. Why do you think many of them do not consider performing arts as a career option?

Susan: I believe there are two main reasons, the first being that negative stigmas have been attached to the arts. In Brazil, it is a reality that the grand majority of people who work in entertainment have no professional training in the area; therefore, on a national level, most people believe that the work that goes into becoming a performer is less than that which goes into pursuing other careers. Contacts are important, but they are only a part of "making it", and intense work goes into a career in this field. In fact, New York University students say that majors from two school require the greatest time commitment, which are Stern (the business school) and Tisch (the arts school). The second negative idea that has been perpetuated about the arts is that working with performing arts is a risky career, which is in most part true. When an individual says they intend to pursue acting professionally, the image that immediately pops into people's heads is that of a blonde bimbo in Los Angeles who has to sleep with directors in order to get a job. Unlike common belief, most actors are not like Marilyn Monroe. Top theater schools have demonstrations with important agents at the end of the undergraduate course, and almost all students leave school signed up with a good agent. Of course, this does not offer a guarantee of being employed, but there are groups, such as Actors' Equity, which provide unemployment funds as well as retirement. There are also countless jobs other than acting in performing arts, such as set design, stage

managing, prop managing, wardrobe technicians, stagehands, working with design/tech teams...

Scoop: Yeah, there is always something to do when it comes to art. On another topic, I remember you and the drama club performed a short piece for the secondary school back in December. I've heard you will be doing the real things soon. Can you tell us a bit about it and what we can expect?

Susan: We are performing the play within a play from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare and a comedy version of Shakespeare's Hamlet by the Reduced Shakespeare Company. I've written an article for *Student Scoop* that talks more about it. You can find it at:

<https://pasbstudentscoop.wordpress.com/2015/12/23/theater-section-your-favorite-source-for-news-about-pasbs-drama-department-2/>

Scoop: So, to end our conversation, do you have any advice for our school's future young actors?

Susan: The advice I would have for young artists is to take it seriously and to remain humble. I had a terrible year when I started singing, but, with enough practice, I have been able to improve tremendously. A pleasant voice can only take you so far, but real training can help you reach heights you never thought existed. The more you know, the more you realize that there is so much more to learn. I also started taking dance lessons relatively late, but, with a lot of effort, I have been able to get one of the highest grades of my class in my last ballet exam. I also say you need to be humble because, otherwise, you won't try as hard to learn all there is to know, and you won't grow as quickly. Never underestimate what you can do, but realize that it won't magically happen.

Scoop: Well, that was quite insightful. Thank you for your words. We are looking forward to the play you will all present.

Susan: Thank you; we hope everyone gets to see it!. It will be at the Multi-Purpose Room at school on March 10th, starting at 6pm sharp.

Reflection

Passion is a concept that serves as the driving force of human happiness. Along with other factors, being passionate about something allows us to have a plentiful life that we get to enjoy and cherish. It is great to see people who have found that which they know will make their lives whole. Be it theater, science, the humanities, or any other field, finding passion is something we all must strive for; it is the only way to find ultimate satisfaction.

Continue Reading Part 2!