

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY

OPINION | America: Our Country,

Our Flag

Alexa Henderson

ahender@uwsuper.edu

Editor's Note: If you have not seen the corrected version of the Promethean's Nov. 19 issue, please see our website at www.uws-promethean.com.

We have all seen the American flag. Generally, when writing, I am not supposed to 'assume' anything but I can guarantee that everyone with vision has seen the 50 stars, the 13 stripes and the red, white, and blue at least once in their life. We see it on stickers, we see it flown on government properties and huge ones rippling over car dealerships. We see it on clothing and cars and we salute and give honor before sports games and official

ceremonies. It is a symbol of American grit, unity and freedom.

But what is the common etiquette when handling the Star-Spangled Banner?

Some of you may have noticed in our issue on November 19 that the flag was displayed in a way that insinuates that we are under duress. Obviously, we aren't, and it was an honest (and in my personal opinion, humorous) mistake.

Here are the rules to flag etiquette according to the official Department of Defense website.

"The flag should not be on display outdoors dur-

ing bad weather.

The flag should not be used for advertising purposes, or embroidered on cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins or boxes.

The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding or drapery.

It should never be displayed upside down unless trying to convey a sign of distress or great danger.

The flag should never touch anything beneath it; this includes water, merchandise and even the floor.

When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

Flags are hung in the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery.

Clean and damage-free flags should always be used. Dirty, ripped,

wrinkled or frayed flags should not be used. Also, when flags are damaged, they should be destroyed in a dignified manner.

The U.S. flag should flow freely in the wind or in a lobby with a passing breeze as people walk past. Stretching a flag is a lot like walking around with your arms held out straight. It is not to be held captive by metal arm spreaders as if to say, "Look at me!"

Clamping a U.S. flag to a vehicle's antenna is acceptable, or the flag-staff clamped to the right fender, as long as the flag displays in the proper direction.

Service flags are displayed in order of service precedence, not the host service where they are displayed. The order of precedence is Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard.

When displaying the U.S. flag with other flags, the U.S. flag comes first and is centered in the middle of a flag display. In addition, the U.S. flag must be placed higher than the other flags, unless other national flags are present. In that case the U.S. flag would be the same height.

Buntings are a good way to display the national



Airmen rendering proper procedures for the American flag

2016 File Photo by Alexa Henderson

colors and decorate for Independence Day without discrediting the U.S. flag."

While I was in the military, I remember that when I was stationed at Fort Meade, Md., I was put on flag duty every three weeks or so. We had to put on our finest blues, and be as crisp and clean as possible. We would wake up at 4:00 a.m. and gather together to staff the courtyard in front of the headquarters building, right where the base commander could see (and judge) us. The process of unfolding the flag properly, rendering proper respects and rais-

ing the flag to the top at the EXACT minute it was supposed to, then coming back to undo the process as respectfully as we did in the morning for sunset was not only a huge stress, but an extreme honor. It could take anywhere from 10 minutes to what seemed like an eternity, but it is one of the most vivid memories that lives on in my head after my separation.

For me, the American flag will always incite feelings of camaraderie and freedom. I know that this is not the case for everyone, but I hope that this piece gave you something new to learn today.

A Semester of Distance Learning: A Retrospective

Liam Strong

lstrong1@uwsuper.edu

Often when looking for strong online college or university programs, students are confronted with online learning, or even more particular, distance learning. The difference, though, is in accessibility. Distance learning programs are specifically designed from the acknowledgement that geography and other conditions separate the student from the classroom, while utilizing the Internet medium to its full advantage.

This is my first semester as distance learning student. As someone who spent a few years as a dual-enrolled high school student taking college courses, and then not knowing what I wanted to do with my associate's degree, I had piled up over 90 credits before I began my undergraduate semester at UWS. I've taken quite a few online courses along the way, and many hybrids, but

never anything as immersive and in-depth as what the online writing program through UWS has to offer.

Admittedly, taking online courses—especially full-time—is an acquired taste. I have my own set of reasons for attending a university out of state (I live in Michigan), particularly affordability, but also, I just don't want to move right now. Finishing a writing degree online almost seems counter-intuitive, because it's a very personable field, but after finishing (the end is finally in sight!) my first semester, I can easily say it's prepared me already for eventually pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing.

Another distance learning student (and fellow Michigan resident), Sarah Olsen, is in her third semester through UWS as a full-fledged online student, but she has a long history with distance

learning. "I think my first distance class was in 1993, when I was an independent study student sending paper assignments back and forth to the University of Minnesota," Olsen says. "My first online class would have been through the local community college a decade or so later; it was very rudimentary: we read our assignments at home, and used Blackboard only to take quizzes and exams. I've also taken a few MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) along the way."

As a non-traditional student, Olsen finds the experience of achieving her Interdisciplinary Studies Degree both exciting and challenging.

Olsen also has her own reasons for why a distance learning education is so appealing. Accessibility, something that UWS has had a long time to craft with their distance

learning program, is what matters most. This accessibility can take many forms, from connectedness between teacher and student, to easy communication, and technology that matches the content of the course.

Along with being a parent, Olsen describes why online classes work for her: "In addition to my geographic disadvantage, my health issues make regularly physically appearing in class a challenge. Even on my best days, my diminished (not truly compromised) immunity means that I risk that very functionality by sitting in a classroom setting. My health is what interfered with my original foray into formal education: I ended up withdrawing from more than one class in which I'd been earning an A simply because I couldn't meet the attendance requirement."

As someone who genuinely loves academia and being a student, it makes me happy that I can simultaneously work at a college full-time while also taking classes through another.

My writing courses are varied, versatile, and bring different methods of instruction to the (virtual) table. My writing workshops are thorough, and it feels like I would be having the same forum discussions in person as we are online. It feels real, but without any illusion of the experience being forced. I can comment as myself, work at my own pace that fits my schedule, and most importantly, acquire the education I want for my future.

It's been pretty great so far, to say the least.