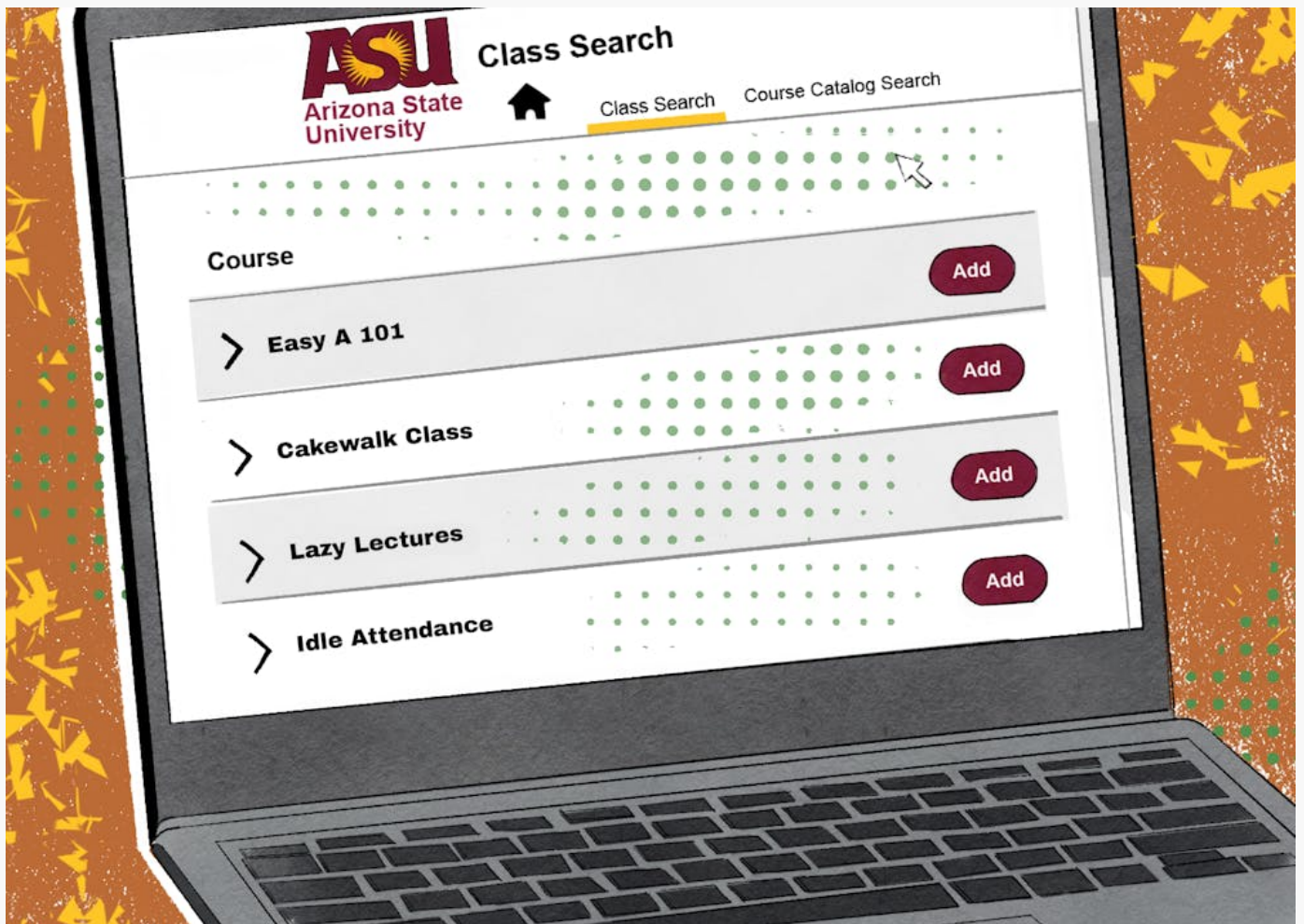




OPINION, COMMUNITY

OPINION: STOP MAKING FUN OF OTHER MAJORS

Can jokes and stereotypes about programs and majors be taken too far?



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students put in more effort and can
academic difficulty equates to more

By Pippa Fung | March 19, 2025 | 6

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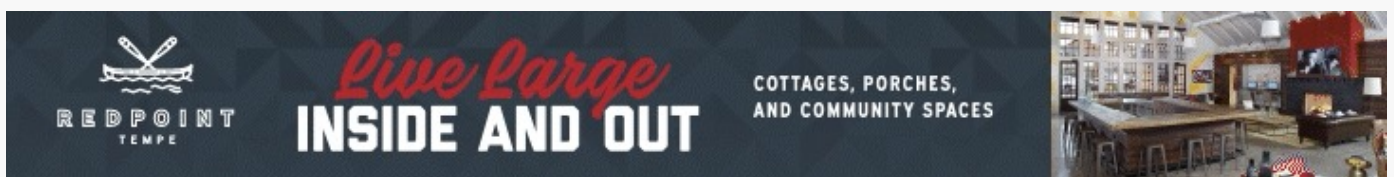
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Math majors have no social life. All business students do is party. If you're studying communication, you've probably never had a day of real homework this semester.

Students play on stereotypes and often make jokes at the expense of other majors. While mostly harmless, they can still perpetuate the idea that students with different majors should not associate with each other, or that some areas of study are more important than others.

Ruth Wu, a freshman studying music therapy, said she has seen this in her own college experience. Although she chose her major because she wanted to use her interests to help others, she has found people who think music students are simply less academically inclined or want an easier major.

"I have a clear goal of wanting to help people," Wu said. "It's like any other therapy, but using music, and just by nature of it being music versus some sort of science doesn't make it any less important."



At the same time, Wu said there are some stereotypes and jokes that she has held against other majors. For example, she has heard that communication students are less smart or business majors are lazy.

Lynden Sanchez, a sophomore studying civil engineering, said she has heard different generalizations about engineering students — specifically, that they have chosen one of the hardest majors.

Both Sanchez and Wu also pointed out that stereotypes often come from students within their fields of study.

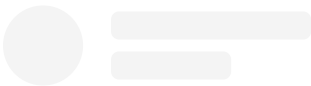
Wu plays the **viola**, an instrument that other musicians joke is just for students who are not good enough to play the violin.

Though people tend to believe that Sanchez is in a difficult program, engineering students consider civil engineering to be the easiest route in their major.

"Don't get me wrong, it is a hard major," Sanchez said. "But every major is hard and has its own challenges."

On the other hand, Aditya Singh, a freshman studying business, said he has often heard people say business majors have a very easy workload.

Singh said this stereotype is partially true. However, it also depends on the amount of credits a student is taking or how much work they are putting into their own college experience.



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Often, stereotypes about other majors stem from the assumption that some students put in more effort and care to their studies than others and that academic difficulty equates to more value.

Sanchez said that, in contrast, there are positive and negative aspects to every major. While she said Calculus III might kill her, she still said she could not imagine studying communications.

"I have a strong appreciation (for) journalism and anything that has ... any sort of writing class," she said. "It just doesn't work in my brain."

Luckily for Sanchez, many journalism students would also rather write articles all day than be caught dead in a class involving any kind of numbers.

But despite the unique, even necessary skillsets that different majors offer, students find ways to make jokes about others anyway.

"Perpetuating stereotypes and putting down other majors is just a messed up way of trying to make yourself feel better," Wu said.

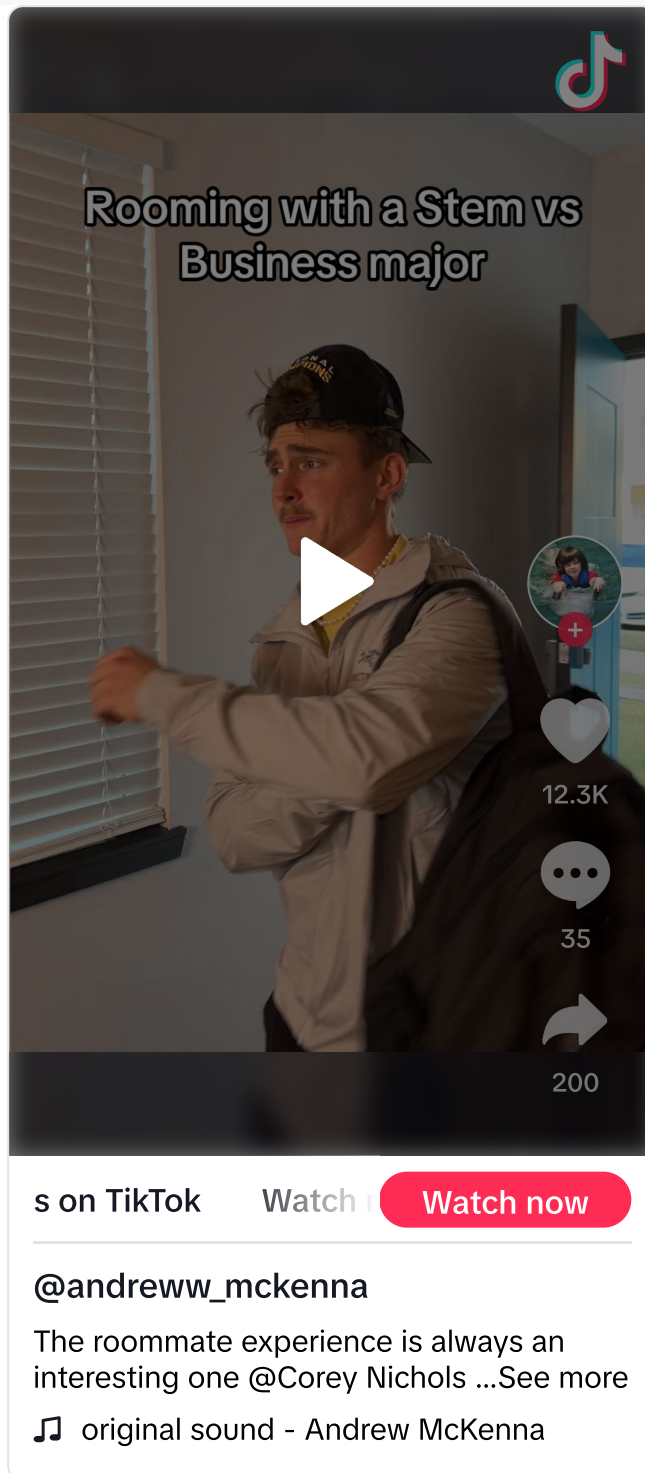
While people may not actually believe that other students' majors are worse than theirs, some students talk down to others to deal with the challenges they are facing in their own classes.

"It's like a coping mechanism almost, or maybe even trying to build camaraderie among your peers," Sanchez said.

In this way, making jokes at other students' expense reflects more on the student making the joke than the ones being stereotyped.

"They are uncomfortable with the reality that everybody's major, everybody's career, can all be valuable and important without it making your own career less important," Wu said.

Sanchez said that these jokes are often just for fun, and she has even embraced stereotypes about civil engineering.



Still, Sanchez believes that students should be able to read the right time and place for this.

Singh pointed out that generalizations become a problem when students think they know what a person is like based solely on their major.

"We should stop these stereotypes and jokes as they can affect someone's point of view about their own life path and make them think twice before choosing the passion they look forward to," Singh wrote in an email.

Stereotypes about certain majors often come from baseless assumptions that students make about others without actually knowing them.

"One of the reasons why I know that certain stereotypes of music majors aren't true is because I'm a music major and I know a lot of music majors," Wu pointed out. "I naturally perpetuate, or am more prone to perpetuate, stereotypes about people or groups of people that I don't know as well."

Wu said that bringing more awareness to other majors can help students to generalize others less.

"Integrating people of different majors — not separating them so much — can help people understand each other and then not have as many stereotypes," she said.

While engineering, business, music and communication students may not have many classes in common, they still play an important role in our lives. Find better jokes and new friends, stop complaining about the major you chose for yourself, and don't worry about students who are (if nothing else) at least taking the jobs that you don't want.

Besides, some of us have actual, important homework to get to — like trying to **trace letters of the alphabet** or finding good Instagram Reels for our opinion articles.

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