

THE

IRON WARRIOR

S2026 Issue 2



MEET THE TEAM

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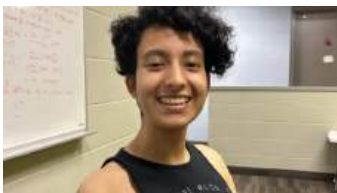
EngDay Photo Contest

BC

Crossword

THE IRON INQUISITION

"What is your midterm wind down routine?"



"On the day of the last midterm I go out with my friends to sweet Lou's and hangout and on the weekend I sleep for most of the time"

SAASHI, TRON 2B



"Treating myself to a good meal and then reading a book for two hours"

IAN, TRON 2B



"I watch YouTube for five hours straight"

YASMIN, TRON 2B

Letter from the Editor: Individualism is Killing You

Yasmin Abu-Narr, 2B Mechatronics

That'll be \$10.99, cash or card?

Our society teaches us that the survival of oneself is dependent solely on their own actions, and that real strength lies in suffering in silence. Major corporations fuel people's feelings of loneliness to force them to find comfort in material gain, rather than social interaction. So much emphasis has been placed on hyper-independence, to commodify everything. When was the last time you picked a flower to give to a loved one, rather than purchasing a bouquet in the store? How often do you home-cook meals with loved ones as a form of connection and curiosity? When did you sit and have an honest discussion that did not involve purchasing food or coffee? Convenience is not a luxury anymore; it is a necessity. And that necessity needs money. Driving a car rather than taking public transportation; getting take-out rather than cooking at home; watching TV/movies on streaming services rather than borrowing movies at the library. Convenience is a commodity sold to the general population. But what people do not understand is that emotions have become things we can sell, too. In a world dictated by money and the ticking finger of a clock, finding time to converse with others has become inconvenient. Building a community has become a luxury, since people do not "need" others to survive anymore, they just need their money and a click of a button. Busyness is celebrated, and work has become a distraction from the obvious truth: we are lonely. Now, more than ever, people have difficulty finding meaning and a sense of purpose. Everyone cares about building their professional identities, but what about their true identities? Their hobbies and interests? When did we lose our abilities to form relationships with the people around us? Why has the importance of community been downplayed? Why do you feel a sharp pain in your heart when you watch a wholesome movie, knowing you cannot have what is portrayed? When did true community and love become a dream harder to achieve than any form of wealth?

Cabin Fever

Human beings are social creatures. During COVID, everyone felt the effects of isolation, and not being able to interact with others led to feelings of depression and anxiety in many people. People began spiraling and cabin fever began to set in. But then, things opened up again, and the sun finally lay its warm rays on your face, and all was good. But was it really? Waves that form deep in the center of the ocean must crash upon the shore eventually. Teenagers and young adults found it

difficult to socialize again. Nobody bothered to train their social skills since they didn't have a need for them anymore. In isolation, there weren't many people to interact with. The internet and social media were nothing new at that point, but our world fundamentally changed in how it used them. Online classes became more common, apps were popping up for at-home delivery. Everything was automated and convenient, more than ever. The convenience of living, minimizing your struggle to maximize your enjoyment. But in any of your conversations recently, has anyone admitted to feeling like they're living life to the fullest? Has anyone uttered the words, "I am content; I get to cultivate myself and my relationships. I get to love my friends and my family and I feel a sense of purpose." Maybe not those exact words, but you get what I mean. The heart-shaped hole in your chest cannot be filled with a rectangular bill, and the words you fail to speak echo in the crevices of your mind. The thought-provoking conversations you ignore, and instead, the small-talk you engage in; it will never be enough to forge a connection, a true rope tying you to others around you. It's just easier to go home and scroll on the couch, isn't it? Getting a window into other people's lives allows you to live vicariously, and the feelings of loneliness and disconnect may be subdued temporarily. People idolize celebrities and social media "influencers," finding comfort in forming parasocial relationships that motivate you to purchase more merchandise. You may not realize this yet, but every system in this society has been developed to force you to buy more. But you will have to face it eventually. When you go home at night, it's just you in the mirror; not the celebrities you idolize, not the money in your pocket and not the profession you work in; it's just you. And it's scary to think that after decades of living, some people may not really know who they are. They never challenged themselves to find out. They never bothered to converse with others around them to find out what they stand for. They never bothered trying new activities and cultivating their personality through the shared experiences they have with others. The real world is out there, daunting yet kinder than you may think.

It's easy, right?

This is the fact that people struggle to understand: we are all connected to each other in every aspect of our lives much more than we may admit, and much more than we can know. The coffee you buy was sourced in a country on the other side of the planet, and the clothes you wear were made by a person with thoughts, feelings and dreams, just like you. I interact with many different people on a daily basis, as many of us do. And I noticed a striking trend. People will do what they like, what benefits them, forgetting the hands that helped them on their

way. I noticed we live in a selfish world where it is easy to turn a blind eye rather than help a neighbour. I noticed that even the people that walk around flaunting their kindness, and checking up on others only wore a mask of affection to remove the guilt of indifference from their conscience. I learned that people care more about achieving their goals of wealth, rather than setting goals to find family and belonging. And it's easy to ridicule them and sit on our morally high horses, rather than understand that they are a product of their environments. We are a product of our environments. And if we don't stop to understand this fact, we cannot understand our environment and how we can change it. How every step we take means something, not just to us but to the world around us. We live on a sphere in the vacuum of space, and while we can dismiss others and think "this is not my problem," whether you like it or not, you are a part of this community just as much as everyone is. If your door remains closed, no one will come knocking anymore. In the reflection of that mirror, it's just you, but you are a mosaic of everyone you have interacted with. And once you realize that, you may know who you truly are.

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SUDOKU

#2026-12



The Ridges, The Rites, and The Rust: University of Waterloo Traditions!

Tamika Brown, 1A Mechatronics

There are many traditions that have held up our engineering community for a long time. Some are absurd and abstract, while others honour the engineers of our past. These traditions connect us with our alumni and keep us bound as a community. Here is a compendium of just a couple traditions; some newer, and some from the past that have been taken out or modified to fit the modern time.

The Mascot & Guardian Traditions

The Tool

Forged by the Ridge Tool Company in Elyria, Ohio, The Tool is a 60-inch, triple chrome-plated adjustable pipe wrench weighing over thirty pounds. Officially adopted in 1968 under the visionary leadership of Engineering Society (EngSoc) President Jim Pike, it was chosen over a competing proposal for a medieval broadsword.

This decision proved historically fitting when students triumphantly debuted the wrench by throwing it directly onto the University's Board of Governors boardroom table. The heavy chrome left behind several permanent dents in the polished wood, and an indelible mark on campus culture.

Since that chaotic introduction, The Tool has operated under a strict, unyielding "Golden Rule": the wrench serves as a unifying symbol of institutional pride and can only be physically touched by those who wear an Iron Ring. To protect it from lower-year hands and rival universities, a highly secretive, elite group of students dressed in black-and-gold uniforms known as The Tool Bearers serve as its silent, stoic guardians.

Junior (The Mini-Tool)

Because undergraduate logistics require a mascot for routine student conferences, parades, and external events, a precisely scaled-down travel replica named "Junior" was later introduced. Unlike its monolithic older sibling, anyone, including first-years, is permitted to hold Junior. This tactical concession is designed to build student morale before they earn the right to touch the original.



Material Gear & Pride Culture Coveralls ("Covvies")

Purchased during the Society's designated "Coverall Period" each term, these heavy-duty canvas suits act as a living, wearable scrapbook of a student's undergraduate career. They are defined by three core pillars:

- **Customizations & Color Codes:** Covvies are colored by engineering discipline or orientation roles. While classic UW engineering students most commonly wear blue-gray, Orientation Week Media and Bigs wear custom colors for their respective teams. They are meticulously sewn with patches from anything you can think of.
- **The Chop & Swap:** A beloved community ritual where students trade chopped-off sleeves, legs, or pockets from their O-Week covvies or from other engineering schools' suits to create a multi-colored patchwork.
- **The Washing Taboo:** An unwritten, absolute rule dictates that coveralls must never be machine-washed once customization begins. The compounding buildup of shop grease, structural dust, and spilled beverages is viewed as an authentic, hard-earned badge of labor.

Patch Culture Community: For students dedicated to custom patches and design, the community connects via the discord:

<https://discord.gg/xVs8tdzv8g>



Leather Jackets

The custom-fitted black leather faculty jackets worn around campus feature the graduation year on the right sleeve, the department on the left sleeve, and "WATERLOO ENGINEERING" boldly emblazoned across the back.

They originated in the early 1960s as purple corduroy jackets with gold lettering. The distinct design was intentionally styled to signal to local drivers that a hitchhiking engineering student was stranded and could be trusted for a safe ride.



The Crest

Designed in 1968 by Veikko Kuronen, the geometric Waterloo Engineering emblem features six distinct geometric symbols representing the original six disciplines:

- The Gear: Mechanical Engineering, Mechatronics Engineering
- The Lightning Bolt: Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Software Engineering, Mechatronics Engineering, Nanotechnology Engineering, Management Engineering
- The Test Tube: Chemical Engineering, Nanotechnology Engineering, Environmental Engineering
- The Transit: Civil Engineering, Environmental Engineering
- The Grey Background: Geological Engineering
- The Unifying Circle: Systems Design Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, Management Engineering



The Purple Monster

Every 16 months following an intense EngSoc executive election, the newly elected President undergoes a trial by ordeal. They are "kidnapped" by the society, dyed entirely purple from head-to-toe using gentian violet, and left chained to a solid concrete block in the Carl Pollock Hall (CPH) foyer. Passing undergraduate students use this window of confinement to cross-examine the new leader regarding future platforms, funding allocations, and faculty politics.



The Non-Existent Action Committee (NEAC)

A mythical, shadowy student group used to explain anonymous, massive architectural campus pranks. Operating under the ironclad motto, "does nuthin', saw nuthin', heard nuthin'", NEAC shields individuals from administrative liability. Historic operations credited to their guerrilla engineering include painting the giant orange Douglas Wright Engineering (DWE) sculpture to look exactly like Tony the Tiger and wrapping the entirety of the POETS student lounge in tinfoil.

The Charity Bus Push

An annual community outreach event running continuously since 1977. Originally, dozens of students teamed up to physically haul a 40-foot-long Grand River Transit (GRT) city bus via thick ropes for roughly 6.5 kilometers through the streets of Waterloo to collect donations. Modern iterations have adapted the route to a loop around Ring Road, utilizing a school bus where community members can donate to ride along.



Governance Micro-Rituals

- **The "Point of Order" Slam:** Council representatives rhythmically and violently slam their fists against folding tables whenever a bureaucratic violation of parliamentary bylaws is successfully called out.
- **The Executive Roast:** An unregulated, raw cross-examination during the final meeting of the term (Council 5, which famously doubles as a potluck). General members are given free rein to grill the executive team on failed campaign promises, administrative missteps, and personal eccentricities.



EngPlay & TalEng

The society preserves its performing arts legacy through digital and stage archives. EngPlay is a student-run, hilariously satirical, engineering-themed theatrical production written, directed, and performed by engineering students every single term. Legendary runs (such as The Legend of SpartaLoo or POETS: More Than a Lounge) are preserved on the EngSoc YouTube channel as cultural time capsules.

Dates this term for *Lay All Your Eng on Me*: July 17th and July 18th.

Time: 7:30PM, doors open at 7:00PM.

Location: ML Theatre of the Arts.

Tickets can be purchased online (<https://bit.ly/S26Engplay>), in E7 or CPH nearly every day, or in ML before the show. Tickets bought in person cost \$12.81 each!

For those looking to showcase musical, comedic, or bizarre non-theatrical skills, TalEng serves as the official termly talent night, a crucial community booster offering a rare glimpse of artistic life piercing through brutal technical workloads.



Endangered, Sanitized, or Defunct Eras

As campus culture evolved, several historic traditions were retired or altered to meet modern safety, ethical, and legal standards.

Era / Tradition	Original Format	Modern Status / Outcome
The GradComm "Slave Auction"	Lower-year students volunteered to be auctioned off to graduating fourth-years as "IRS Slaves" to cook breakfast and run errands.	Defunct: Completely banned for ethical reasons; replaced by standardized, structured peer volunteering.
The "Wel" Orientation Week	Featured massive, licensed outdoor beer tents on campus, culminating in a giant Saturday night Toga Party.	Defunct: Ended by a 1978 LLBO crackdown and the 2003 elimination of Grade 13 (which lowered the freshman age to 18). Alcohol was permanently banned from O-Week by 2004.
Uncensored Chanting & Lady Godiva Hymns	Highly offensive, faculty-exclusionary chants and the rowdy lyrics of the historic anthem Lady Godiva were common.	Sanitized: Following toxicity surveys in 1994/1995 and mandatory training in 1998, lyrics were replaced with family-friendly versions.
Purpling	An aggressive, mandatory, hazing-adjacent rite of passage using gentian violet to honor historical maritime engineers.	Sanitized: Shifted to a 100% voluntary, celebrating engineering pride.
Class Crashing & Pranks	Held "One Day 'Til IRS," fourth-years dressed in costumes, built literal brick walls in hallways, and crashed lower-year lectures.	Restricted: Costumes and harmless decorations survive, but lecture crashing is heavily restricted to safeguard active academic time.

The Fringe, The Feasts, and The Feuds

ScavEng (The Engineering Scavenger Hunt)

An intense, multi-day, term-long gauntlet that pushes students to the brink of logical sanity. ScavEng pits student teams against an aggressively complex matrix of clues, riddles, and physical tasks scattered across the Waterloo region. Challenges range from coding archaic, long-dead microcontrollers to performing highly public, perfectly synchronized flash mobs in non-engineering campus buildings. It acts as an intentional pressure valve, forcing sleep-deprived students to deploy structural problem-solving for absolutely zero academic credit, all in the name of winning THE PURPLE HARD HAT.



BOATs (Beer On A Table), BOT, and EOT

The ultimate, high-velocity optimization challenge of a Waterloo Engineering term does not take place in a lab, but rather along the long, green-felt tables of the faculty's landmark celebrations. BOATs is a legendary, fiercely competitive team beer-chugging relay race that acts as the mechanical baseline for student life. This structural drinking ritual is divided into two distinct seasonal markers:

- **BOT (Beginning of Term):** The initial welcoming bash that kicks off the academic cycle. It serves as the preliminary staging ground where newly returned co-op cohorts and class groups assemble their fastest squads to run baseline qualifiers.
- **EOT (End of Term):** The grand finale of termly survival. As archived on Youtube like *EOT Fall 2006*, the final event is a wall of cheering and spray. Two opposing teams line up along opposite sides of a long, green-clothed table with precisely filled glasses. Upon a starting blast, the first engineers down their beers, aggressively slamming the empty glass flat onto the table to visually trigger the next teammate in line. The team that evacuates their combined liquid volume with the highest flow rate claims undisputed institutional bragging rights.



The Waterloo Lettuce Club

Rooted in absolute, chaotic simplicity, the Lettuce Club is a specialized, rapid-fire competitive eating event held once a term. Engineering students gather in a tense circle, each armed with a single, standard-sized head of iceberg lettuce and nothing else. Upon the sound of a starting horn, competitors frantically consume the raw leafy greens. The rules are absolute: no dressing, no seasoning and no structural cooking permitted. The first individual to completely clear their plate is crowned the "Lettuce King/Queen", winning a cheap plastic crown and the immense responsibility of organizing the next term's geometric lettuce procurement.



Post-Alumni Lore & Iron Ring Rituals

Iron Ring Stag (IRS) & The Countdown

Worn on the pinky finger of the dominant hand since 1922, the Iron Ring is the Canadian symbol of professional obligation and engineering humility. The evening following the private ritual is IRS, a massive celebration enforcing an all-black dress code that marks the very first opportunity for graduating students to legally touch The Tool. "HOW MANY DAYS 'TILL IRS, FOURTH YEARS?!"

Conclusion

Of course, there are many other traditions in the society that I haven't even covered. While this looks at only a handful of the customs that shape our community, our traditions are more than just repetitive rituals. They are the invisible threads that tie our past to our present and connect us to one another. There are countless other traditions woven into the fabric of our society, some grand and public, others quiet and confined. But whether widely practiced or deeply personal, each one serves as a reminder of who we are, where we came from, and what we choose to carry forward into the future.

Editor's Note: Due to lack of space, please see the online article for references and other pictures.

Why are the Geese...

Jeremy Bijoux, 2N Chemical

Ever since the term started, I've been bothering almost everyone I know on-campus (or in Waterloo/Kitchener) with one question: how are the geese? I am a MASSIVE goose lover (I love them sooooo much!!!! and I have way too many geese pictures from last year), but I know many people aren't, and I can see why. They poop everywhere, the honking, the hissing, the chases... and the list goes on and on with reasons to hate the geese.

Though I am simultaneously a fan and hater of the geese, there is still so much I don't know about them. Truthfully, before writing this article, I didn't know why the geese are on our campus in the first place! And since I can't be the only one with no idea why geese are blessing/punishing us with their presence, why are the geese...

Everywhere on campus?

This is the one question I've wanted answered ever since I came to Waterloo, and I finally took the time to search it up. For the last few decades, the geese (Canada geese) have undergone a great population growth due to human-induced changes to the landscape that favour the geese. Geese usually live in mild climates with abundant wetland and grassland habitats, and have few natural predators. Many have come to live in urban areas due to being safer from predators, safer from hunters (I'll talk more about that later) and having more access to sources of food, not to mention that they've adapted to the changing urban environments [1]. When you think about it, our campus is a big open space with lots of grass and water, so it's no surprise this is one of many places they would stay.

Some people might notice it's almost like the geese never leave... even during winter (I'm sure some of you readers have noticed geese in the winter). While most geese migrate to warmer climates during the winter, some of them prefer to stay in one place all year long (i.e. our campus) [2]. And those that come back after the winter then find a mate, have babies, and stay on campus for a while to raise them. And then those babies grow up, also mate, and come back to campus to raise their own babies, and so on. (In other words, the geese come back because campus is, in a way, their ancestral home) [2].

Secretly one-legged?

Rest assured, they have 2 legs. This question is here just to highlight the fact that geese can often be seen standing on one leg, and that's something they do while sleeping/naping to help preserve body heat [3].

Pooping everywhere?

This question is only here for humour, and therefore deserves a short, humorous answer: they weren't potty trained.

Always with their children?

They're parents, duh!!!! On a serious note, geese watch over their children to make sure they are safe, to show them where to find the best food, and eventually to show them how to fly. You might also notice with some flocks a massive ratio of adult geese to goslings: parents sometimes bring their children together in "creches" so the parents can communally watch after all the children [4].

SOOOOOO fast (especially when chasing us)?

Geese are notoriously highly territorial, especially during breeding season (I once saw a video of a goose (not Canada goose, but still) attacking a horse... you can imagine how that ended for the goose). When trying to chase away interlopers, geese (with outstretched necks) wave their heads from side to side and up and down, honking loudly, and if the interlopers don't leave, they fly after them, biting with their beaks and flapping their wings like boxing punches. I know from experience because when I got attacked by a goose, it felt like it was trying to break my skull by hitting its wings on my head. And though I thought I could outrun the goose, it's highly unlikely I'd escape an angry bird flying at (maybe) 30 to 40 mph (much faster than any human) [5].

Though they're definitely not the fastest birds ever, geese (in general) are widely admired for their flight endurance, being able to fly hundreds of miles in a single nonstop flight, as well as at very high altitudes (like the bar-headed geese, which have been observed to fly at nearly 30,000 feet, i.e. high enough to cross the Himalayas!) [5].

Untrackable?

Well actually, they're not! Recently, Anirudh Dabas, a CS student, built Waddleloo, a platform that allows students to report goose sightings. The sightings are displayed on a map with verified sightings, hotspots and nesting areas. You can use the map to determine routes through campus for safe travel. I haven't checked it out myself, but it looks cool [6]! An older website, GooseWatch, very similar to Waddleloo, also exists to allow people on campus to monitor goose hotspots.

On the news?

Don't be surprised, but there are some online news articles of our very own geese! If you search online, Waddleloo has garnered quite a lot of attention, but I also found two CBC Stories from 2025, one of a goose entering a Laurier building and walking up to a Starbucks, and another of an aggressive nesting goose

trapping Laurier students inside their house for a week. In the article, they report another story, from 2015, of geese harassing a turkey to death, as well as another 2015 story about the 'Spawn of Satan'... (as you can guess, a very aggressive goose) [7]. I found another article on CTV News of geese getting relocated from Waterloo Park due to complaints (in that article, I found out that the city of Waterloo spent \$40,000 cleaning goose poop in 2024!) [8]

Protected by law?

The geese are protected under the Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA), which arose from the Migratory Birds Convention of 1916 between Canada and the US [1]. Back then, many migratory birds were in severe decline (and some species, like our Canada geese, were facing extinction) due to unregulated hunting and plumage trade [9], prompting the US and Canada to protect these birds through the law. Thanks to the MBCA, geese populations managed to drastically rise (ironically, to the point where the geese now exceed population objectives in several parts of the country) [1].

Some illegal acts against geese include destroying their nests; harassing, killing or capturing them (without some form of permission: geese are game birds and can be hunted during established hunting seasons); feeding them, or even honking your car horn at them while they're crossing the streets (for all you drivers reading this article, geese have the right of way!)

Not going to ruin your Summer 2026?

Because you're not gonna let them! There are so many things to enjoy on-campus and off-campus this term (including EngPlay!... GO TO ENGPLAY!), friends to hang out with and good movies out in cinemas right now! You're also (hopefully) going to give the geese lots of space this summer when you're wandering around. Though I'm not on campus this term, and have no idea what kind of problems the geese may have caused, I'm hoping that everyone is enjoying their summer and will continue to enjoy it... until Finals arrive. What I also hope is that you'll let the geese make your summer more memorable. One of the main reasons I remember Spring 2025 so fondly are the geese:

- Goslings are SOOO CUUUUUUUUUUUUTE (and there are so many too! I was at St. Jerome's that summer, and we had a lot of geese families near SJ2 and HS).
- Watching a goose defecate right in front of me (and on top of that, it defecated right where my foot was about to land; thankfully I stopped before my shoe landed on a biohazard).
- Seeing geese cross the street (the first time was a family crossing the street exactly like a kindergarten class would, with the parents in the front and back ushering the kids forward - a picture of that scene has been used in

- some of our previous articles - and the second time was at night, coming back from a movie with a friend, and crossing the street back to campus alongside a goose).
- Seeing the goslings grow up SOOOO FAST!!!!
- And the most memorable (of course): getting attacked by a goose (I was just minding my business walking to class and got hissed at behind me, then heard quick steps and wing flapping coming towards me, so I knew I was screwed despite starting to run away.)

Let's all agree Waterloo would not be Waterloo without its angry chickens.

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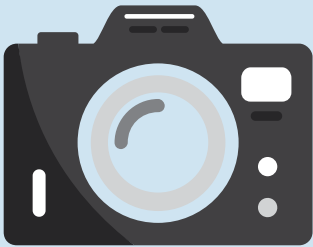
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EngDay Photo Contest!



EngDay Photo Contest

Send us your best EngDay photos for a chance to be featured in the O-Week Issue!!!

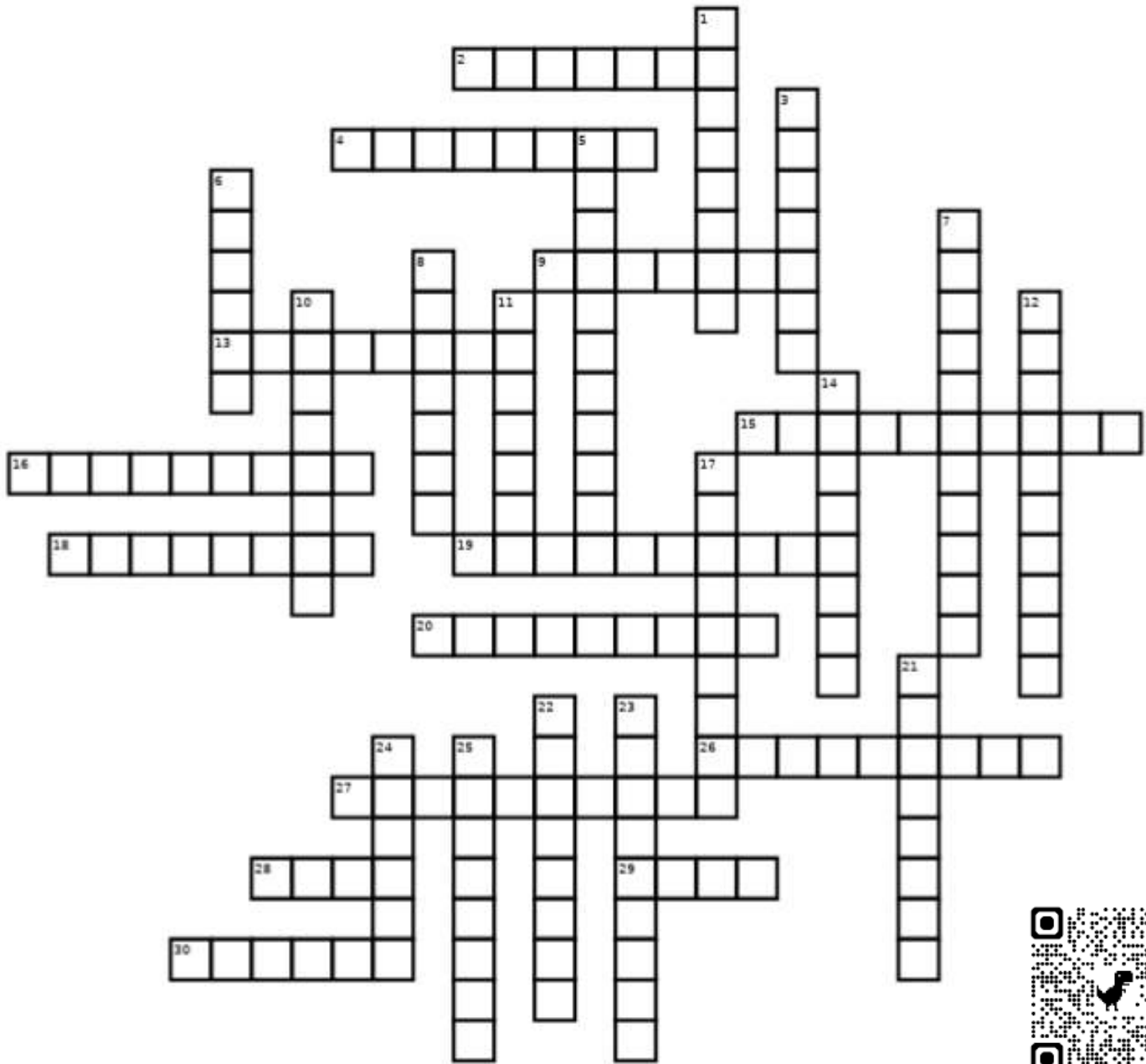


EngDay 2025 submission from Spruha Khaldilkar (CHE '29)



How to Submit:
 Email to **theironwarrior@gmail.com** or
 DM us **@theironwarrior_UW**
Deadline: July 20th, 2026

S26I2 Crossword



Past Sudoku/Crossword Solutions ^

Down

1. A semester roadmap outlining course expectations and policies
3. An assessment that typically falls around the halfway point of a course
5. An event designed to welcome and prepare new students
6. The credential awarded after successfully completing a program
7. Financial support awarded based on merit or need
8. The expense that covers the cost of attending university
10. The systematic investigation that forms the basis of many academic projects
11. A small class focused on discussion rather than lectures
12. Work completed outside of class for evaluation
14. A final project that brings together knowledge from an entire program
17. Shared student housing commonly found on campus
21. A place where students organize notes from class
22. The point after which late submissions may receive penalties
23. A faculty member responsible for teaching and conducting research
24. The collection of buildings and facilities belonging to a university
25. A person with whom you may share a residence during school

Across

2. A campus building where silence is usually expected
4. Course material that often costs more than expected
9. A scheduled session where one instructor addresses many students
13. A course chosen based on personal interest rather than program requirements
15. The ceremony marking the completion of an academic journey
16. A guide used to navigate unfamiliar university buildings
18. A student's mobile storage solution between classes
19. The official record listing completed courses and grades
20. A campus location known for meal plans and busy lunch hours
26. The office responsible for enrolment, records, and transcripts
27. A facility where scientific experiments and practical work take place
28. A work term that combines academic study with professional experience
29. A comprehensive test used to measure a student's knowledge
30. A lengthy research paper required for many graduate programs