

UF

**WHAT DID YOU
TEACH YOUR PROFESSORS
THIS WEEK?**

You may not realize it, but you are setting a higher standard in the classroom -- even for those who teach you. Our faculty benefit tremendously from your inspiration and enthusiasm.

Lessons learned from students like you are among our faculty's greatest rewards.

SO KEEP ON TEACHING.



#UFRISING

UREL.UFL.EDU/UFRISING

Column

**Parting
thoughts:
Here, try
these on**

Last year, I finally gave in and scheduled the eye exam I'd put off since high school. My lens prescription needed updating, and I was tired of the bright red frames my 15-year-old self thought were cool. I was ready for some new glasses. Afterward, I engaged in the usual dance of pulling frames on and off my face a ridiculous number of times to choose a complementary pair.



Katie McPherson
opinions@alligator.org

When my glasses were ready and fitted with the new lenses, I put them on and suddenly everything looked six inches farther away than before. The experience sparked an existential crisis.

We try on our friends' glasses and watch reality shift back and forth, but these glasses were mine to keep. When I put them on, I wondered where all of the objects in my field of vision truly existed.

Opinions aren't so different. Writing this column taught me a thing or two about how to present an opinion to an audience who may or may not agree, in varying levels of intensity. Each of us wears our perspective like glasses — not a novel analogy — and they color the way we see.

The beauty of glasses and opinions is we can try them on easily and, if they blur things beyond recognition, remove them and accuse the original wearer of blindness. However, we must never defend our views so ferociously that we would be ashamed to admit a change in perspective later. I've done that this semester, and people have a way of making sure you remember when it happens.

As the enigmatic author Dodinsky writes, "Do not make it a habit to dissect someone's opinion to the point where you see the presence of malice where none exists."

Even when it's straining, I urge you to try on the glasses of the person opposite you on the issue. Assume their beliefs and experiences and perhaps some clarity will come.

My biggest hope is that at least once this semester you tried my glasses and on — if only temporarily — considered the shift in perspective as more than a fleeting trial.

Katie McPherson is a UF English junior. Her column runs on Tuesdays.