

SENIOR YEAR SUMMER READING

The Last Lecture

BY Randy Pausch

“We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand.”

As the following excerpt from the book’s website explains, Professor Randy Pausch’s last lecture was both part of an academic tradition and an unique variation of that tradition:

“A LOT of professors give takes titled “The Last Lecture.” Professors are asked to consider their demise and to ruminate on what matters most to them. And while they speak, audiences can’t help but mull the same question: What wisdom would we impart to the world if we knew it was our last chance? If we had to vanish tomorrow, what would we want as our legacy?”

When Randy Pausch, a computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon, was asked to give such a lecture, he didn’t have to imagine it as his last, since he had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer. But the lecture he gave, “How to Really Achieve Your Childhood Dreams,” wasn’t about dying. It was about the importance of overcoming obstacles, of enabling the dreams of others, of seizing every moment (because “time is all you have....have you may find that one day that you have less than you think”). It was a summation of everything Randy had come to believe. It was about living.

The Last Lecture will be introduced at the end of junior year, and will be discussed during the opening week of the new school year in September. Following the fall discussion and upon completing our first novel in class, students will submit an essay based on both books. The essay is a culminating activity for each of the books, and is one of four mandatory papers senior students need to complete (and attain a passing grade on) as a graduation requirement.

THE STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING A COPY OF THE BOOK. THERE ARE PLENTY OF COPIES AVAILABLE IN OUR MEDIA CENTER, AS WELL AS IN LOCAL LIBRARIES.