

THE OAKLAND POST

Oakland University's Independent Student Newspaper

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Drive-in commencement honors 2020 grads

An atypical graduation was decided upon to follow state guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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SKATEBOARD STUDY

Oakland University student research shows impact of early injuries

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PHOTO BY NICOLE MORSFIELD

HORIZON LEAGUE

Fall sports competitions will be delayed until at least Oct. 1

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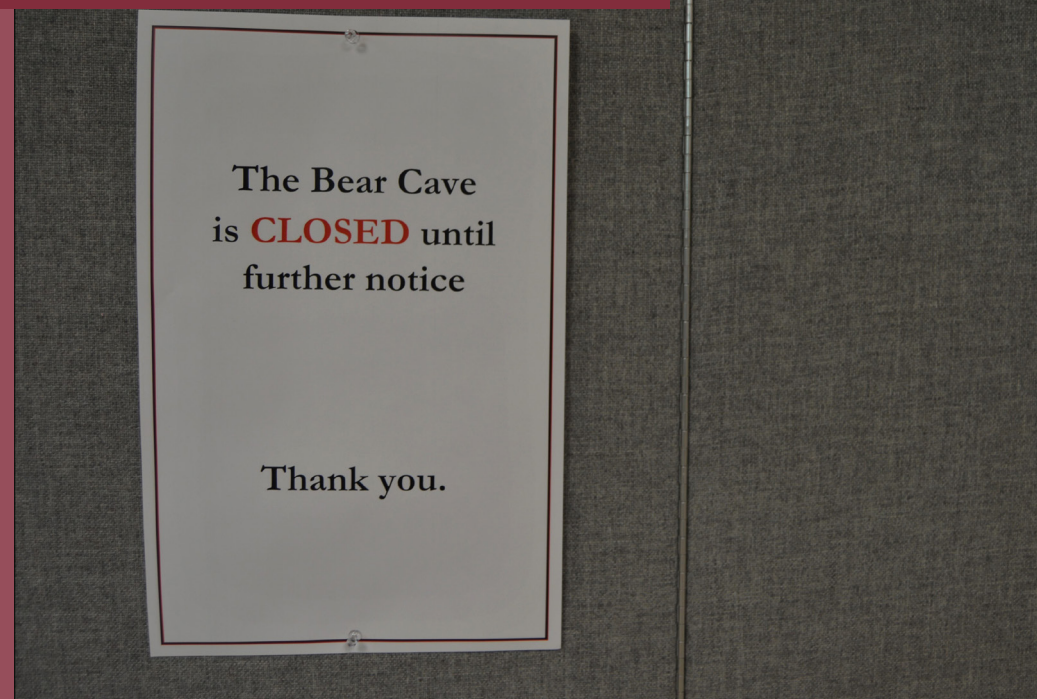
CONCERNS FORUM

Updates about the fall semester including, housing, internships and financial support

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PHOTO OF THE WEEK



COVID CLOSES CAVE For the foreseeable future, the Oakland Center's Bear Cave will be closed off to promote proper social distancing.
PHOTO / EMILY MORRIS

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OUSB promotes inclusivity with "The Kaleidoscope Project"
Photo/OUSB



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Meadow Brook Hall reopens its doors for tours, activities
Photo/Sophie Hume



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Breanna Perry finds a home with the women's basketball team
Photo/Jose Juarez

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POLL OF THE WEEK

HOW MANY OF YOUR CLASSES HAVE BEEN MOVED ONLINE IN SOME CAPACITY?

- A) NONE, YET
- B) JUST ONE
- C) TWO
- D) THREE OR MORE

LAST ISSUE'S POLL

WHAT IS THE BEST METHOD FOR COMMENCEMENT?



Looking Back: 2011 Planned Parenthood causes controversy, protests on campus

AUTUMN PAGE
Staff Reporter

In July 2011, Planned Parenthood — a healthcare organization with over 100 years of experience — tried to open a location in Auburn Hills. This caused mixed feelings and controversy between pro-life and pro-choice students on campus.

“I think that a Planned Parenthood so close to both our university, other colleges and also the city of Pontiac is beneficial in many ways,” said Catherine Pannell, a senior majoring in social work at the time. “College students may be reluctant to use on campus resources, so with Planned Parenthood, they can go straight to professionals for services they might not otherwise seek. For the people of Pontiac, it’s beneficial because of the limited resources provided in the city. This will be a tremendous help to those who can sometimes not afford to provide for their families, let alone pay a medical bill or fee to be tested or treated for sexual conditions.”

Many student organizations worked together to make Oakland University more Planned Parenthood-friendly. Groups, like the Gay, Straight Alliance (GSA), women and gender studies classes and other feminist organizations, were implemented.

Alexa Van Vilet, the GSA president, hoped the organizations would make OU more well-rounded.

“Through communicating with different organizations outside of campus, the GSA will be hosting programs in the fall to promote women’s advocacy and awareness about health and legislation, especially in relation to pay equity and Title IX,” Van Vilet said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE OAKLAND POST ARCHIVES
People gather on campus to support Planned Parenthood on campus in July 2011. The focus ranged from reproductive to general health care.

Not everyone agrees with Planned Parenthood and what they do — pro-life advocates have historically opposed the organization. Opposers to Planned Parenthood have many reasons why they believe why they do.

“I think any place that kills innocent human life is always a bad idea, no matter where it does,” said Monica Miller, director for Citizens for a Pro-life Society. “The issue is abortion, not contraception. I think more students are going to be getting abortions at that clinic if it happens to open. I feel the death of any unborn child is a tragedy... It’s something that everybody should be opposed to.”

Barb Yagley, a coordinator for 40 Days for Life, believed that Planned Parenthood encourages minors to deceive their parents.

“Planned Parenthood, beyond the fact they do abortions, severs relationships between mothers and their daughters by encouraging teenagers to come to them for their sexual education and birth control, without requiring parental consent,” she said. “They are underhanded and sneaky about encouraging teenagers to go behind their parents back.”

The president of the Frederick Douglass Foundation of Michigan, Stacy Swimp, said the organization is trying to exterminate the African American population.

“Margret Sanger, who founded Planned Parenthood, wrote in a letter to Clarence Gamble that she wanted to exterminate the Negro population,” he said. “The fact that they are positioning abortion clinics in black communities alerts us to the fact that the sinister agenda of Planned Parenthood is to commit genocide against black children.”

Planned Parenthood still faces backlash from pro-life supporters today. In Louisiana on June 29, the Supreme Court blocked an action that would leave the state with one abortion clinic. The policy that required all abortion procedures be performed by individuals with admitting privileges at a nearby hospital was protected. Moreover, President Donald Trump has tried to pass bills that limit accessibility to abortions and the legality of them.

“I believe that Planned Parenthood is important for women’s health,” said Elisa Malile, OU student body vice president. “When I heard students telling me that they don’t have health care and have to drive all the way to Livonia or Ann Arbor to get an annual exam or birth control, it’s devastating.”

THE

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OUWB's "The Kaleidoscope Project" promotes inclusivity, support for all

DEAN VAGLIA

Staff Reporter

Key to the college experience is the freedom to be yourself. However some groups, such as the LGBTQIA+ community, are not always able to do so safely. A group of Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine (OUWB) students are making sure OU is known as a safe campus for everyone.

The Kaleidoscope Project is a student-lead initiative allowing OUWB students and faculty to show their support for the LGBTQIA+ community. The project is an online list of signatories and their role within OUWB.

The project has been a goal of the OUWB student group Queers & Allies (Q&A) since around 2018.

According to Amelia Kruse, a Kaleidoscope Project founder, Q&A members saw how underrepresented LGBTQ+ community was at OU and realized how Oakland County being a historically conservative area affected people's ability to confidently speak up.

"A lot of the other members of [Q&A] had seen when they were applying to medical school that other schools had these sorts of lists," Kruse said. "You could see the environment on campus and whether or not it was a welcoming environment and OUWB did not have that."

Project founders reached out to medical schools with out and ally lists such as Yale and Stanford to find out what the process of making the list would be like. Privacy was one of the founders' and faculty's biggest concerns, citing incidents like when University of Michigan students were unable to remove them-

selves from the school's out list when it was published.

Adding a name to the list requires filling out a short form asking for a name, a verification email address and the signer's role within the OUWB community. The only information published to the list are the names and roles. Even so, filling out the form does not guarantee someone will be published on the site.

"There is a set of checks and balances as far as who gets published," Victoria Roach, Q&A faculty advisor, said. "Individuals applying to be listed must maintain an affiliation with OUWB in some way; whether it be as a student, a resident, an employee of Beaumont Health, OUWB, OU or as alumni. OU faculty, staff and students interested in joining the list, are encouraged to do so by indicating their role as an OU community member."

Since the project's unveiling, the OUWB community responded with enthusiastic support.

"Within the first week over 100 people signed onto [the project]," Kruse said. "We sent out so many surveys in the months leading up to this ... seeing who would be interested in this list, and we had an overwhelming positive response."

As of July 2020, 118 OU and OUWB community members have applied to be added to the list, according to Roach.

By showing LGBTQ+ students OU is a welcoming place, the Kaleidoscope Project is meant to serve as an example for the rest of the OU community.

"If we are not saying something, if we are not putting any message out there, then we are basically silencing ourselves," Kruse said.

FYAC strives for success amid COVID-19

LAUREN REID

Staff Reporter

As COVID-19 continues into the fall, first-year students will step into college in a predominantly online format. The First Year Advising Center (FYAC) promises continued communication, advising and availability, regardless of the situation the pandemic presents.

"Our incoming freshmen will receive a high level of communication and availability to their advisers, reinforcing our past practices," Assistant Director of Academic Advising Deborah Cash said. "Although we've changed our approach with meetings in a virtual setting, our advisers continue to engage with students and help with their questions and concerns regarding the fall semester."

The 2020 orientation consists of five steps this year, starting with a new student orientation module and finishing with a virtual new student welcome.

"Virtual orientation programming is allowing us to connect with students and their families in ways we never have before," said Amy Joa, assistant director of orientation and new student programs. "This month we've teamed up with campus partners from so many departments, offices and services to connect students with the people and places they'll get support from when they begin their journey at OU."

Most events and opportunities are virtual, aside from campus kickoff. Students partaking in campus kickoff will have the chance to experience campus, meet other students and the dean of their college, as well as get their Grizz Card and books. Masks are required (free OU masks will be provided) and 6 foot social distancing will be enforced.

Although it may look different this

year, the new student welcome is still taking place on Wednesday, Sept. 2.

"Traditionally, new students would attend a new student welcome event consisting of a convocation ceremony (as the official welcome to the academic year) along with the academic open house," Joa said. "This year, the events will be virtual. First, students will log in for a welcome from OU's president — Dr. Ora Pescovitz — then they'll virtually attend a welcome session hosted by their academic department."

Appointments with FYAC advisers are still available via internet. According to Cash, advisers currently operate via phone, email or virtually. FYAC chat may also help to answer commonly-asked questions.

As far as advice for incoming freshmen, Cash encourages students to review the student guide for online learning, familiarize themselves with Moodle and take a look at opportunities for academic support, whether from the tutoring center, FYAC academic coaching, residential academic support services, among others.

"Online learning requires a higher level of independent motivation. Keeping a calendar of assignments and their due dates is also a priority," Cash said. "Students should begin connecting in new ways with other students in their online classes in order to develop relationships and have contact for study groups or course questions, in addition to their faculty members. The FYAC advisers are always here to support student success."

For information on new student orientation or to register for campus kickoff, visit Orientation 2020. To learn more about FYAC resources or schedule an appointment with an academic advisor, visit Academic Advising. Lastly, visit the FYAC chat to connect with a FYAC staff member for answers to questions online.

www.oaklandpostonline.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF OUWB

The OUWB students and staff in October 2019 in support of National Coming Out Day.

Drive-in commencement honors 2020 grads amid COVID-19 restrictions

LAUREN KARMO

Campus Editor

Winter 2020 grads are finally getting their commencement ceremony, but it's not exactly what they might have been expecting. To comply with the executive orders set forth by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, Oakland University is hosting a drive-in commencement ceremony in parking lot P1 to honor their newest set of alumni.

While the original suggestion of a drive-in commencement was met with backlash when it was first announced on CNN back in May, Aug. 28 and 29 are fast approaching and the university was running out of safe options that comply with the regulations set forth by the state. Settling on a drive-in commencement still allows graduates to walk across a stage to accept their diploma without risking the health of anyone involved.

"I think this is going to be a great experience for the students in the climate that we're in," said Stephanie Lee, administrative associate in Academic Affairs. "Now with the COVID-19 virus, this is the best opportunity we thought of that will be good for the students."

Graduates and their family will be allowed one car, and they will tune in to the ceremony over the radio, where the remarks will be delivered on a big screen. The graduates will get out of their vehicles to walk across the stage

to receive their diploma in their cap and gown as photos with graduates' names, degrees and a personal message play on the screen.

The commencement fair will be virtual, but students will still be able to upload a photo and get their graduation regalia, departmental honors, parking pass and an electronic gift that will allow graduates to post on social media with special OU tags and filters.

In a poll conducted by The Oakland Post's in May on what style of ceremony graduates preferred, a drive-in commencement polled in at 15%, the lowest of the four options presented. The other options included waiting for an in-person ceremony (39%), a social-distanced ceremony (28%) and a virtual ceremony (18%).

In order to combat the different preferences, Academic Affairs is allowing all winter 2020 graduates — regardless of their attendance at the drive-in ceremony — to attend the next traditional commencement ceremony, whenever that might occur.

"We didn't want to do a virtual one, we wanted to do something creative," Lee said. "We could have just canceled it or postponed it — some other institutions just did that, just gave them a video saying 'thank you for your time here,' and we're giving these students the opportunity to have something within the year in which they graduated."



ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF OU MAGAZINE AND LILY STOTZ
2020 graduates will be honored with a drive-in commencement

Having an in-person ceremony was just not possible because the university would be penalized for disregarding the governor's executive orders. While some considered using the Meadow Brook Amphitheatre, it was quickly dismissed as an option when it presented limitations on parents and families of graduates to attend even within the outdoor space.

Despite the efforts put forth by Academic Affairs, not all plan to attend the drive-in commencement.

"I do not plan on attending because they are only allowing us to have one car, and coming from a really big family, that's just not really possible," said Mary Jindo, a graduate from the school of

business administration. "Just to avoid conflict, I decided I'm not going to go."

Even though Jindo does not plan to attend, she is grateful Oakland is doing something to honor graduates during the pandemic instead of canceling the ceremony like other universities.

"I really appreciate OU trying their best to accommodate us," Jindo said. "I know a lot of major schools like MSU or U of M only did a virtual one, they never considered something like this. I definitely appreciate OU for trying."

To find more information on the drive-in commencement, to apply for graduation or request a parking pass, visit the OU website.

Student congress fights for no-class, no-test election days

DEAN VAGLIA

Staff Reporter

If the Oakland University Student Congress (OUSC) has its way, students will get one more day off.

OUSC will present a proposal regarding election day workloads to the OU Senate on Tuesday, Aug. 4. The proposal will be presented by OUSC President Ethan Bradley and Civic Affairs Director Jeremy Johnson.

The plan to pursue no-class election days began last year, when Bradley was the director of civic affairs.

"I tried a bit to get the election day proposal going, but I never really got anywhere myself," Bradley said. "When [Johnson] came on I helped point him in some directions that might be useful, and from there he took it up himself."

When Bradley became president in March, Johnson filled his spot and focused heavily on the elections issue.

"When I first got this position ... I knew I wanted to do something with election days," Johnson said. "I see it my job [as director of civic affairs] to make sure students are able to vote without having barriers."

Johnson, with the help of Steering Chair Brisilda Musaka, got the idea of class-free election days codified into C.R. 21-01, a resolution approved by the Student Congress.

C.R. 21-01 states the Congress recommends for classes, exams and major course assignment due dates to not occur on election days. Students having the opportunity to vote and an awareness of the important role students play in the civic process are the reasons given for the change. The resolution can be found on the OUSC GrizzOrgs page.

Due to the relatively limited powers of the Senate, Johnson and Bradley will be presenting a modified version of the proposal.

"[OUSC] decided we wanted to find a way to get excused absences for students on election days," Johnson said. "There would be some provision in their syllabus ... that would say they are not required to attend [class on election days]. They will not be deducted points; nothing bad will happen to their grade."

Additionally, Johnson and Bradley will argue against scheduling exams and assignment due dates on general and primary election days. While not the full proposal,

the presenters see it as a starting point for greater changes.

Should the Senate adopt the proposal, there is still a long way for it to go before being made into an official university policy.

"The current state of this initiative is making sure the steering committee of the university Senate is open to the idea," Johnson said. "Once I convince the [the steering committee], then it will go to the whole Senate as a resolution or some type of syllabus policy."

Johnson is hoping the presented proposal will be official policy by Nov. 3, so students can take excused absences to vote in the 2020 presidential election.

Much of the process to get no-class election days will go on in meetings and legislatures, but students can still contribute to the effort by showing support.

"There is a form that we have where students can submit testimonials about how having election days off would help them," Bradley said.

The form asks students how long it takes or them to vote, if their education has ever hindered their ability to vote and why voting is important to them. The answers students give will be used in the Aug. 4 Senate meeting.

The impact of shopping locally during the COVID-19 pandemic

BRIDGET JANIS

Staff Reporter

A local business owner in Howell, MI, Kennedy Martin owns an online shop called Bee Love Candles Co. She makes and sells spiritually-charged soy candles made from all-natural ingredients since January 2019.

"Shopping at small businesses is better for the environment because they are not working at huge factories — it's just one person running it," Martin said. "Also, it supports people rather than a corporation."

Martin also works at a local coffee shop in downtown Howell, Black Iron Coffee Roasters. She said since reopening their business, it has been slower. Since she relies on these two local businesses for income, Martin encourages people to shop locally.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, shopping locally has become a bigger conversation topic.

"Buying local today and in the coming weeks isn't going to improve our economy, better the quality of our lives, and generally build a stronger community right away," Levi Lawrence, the founder of Real Food Connections, said. "But, it's intentioned and effective, it has an effect, an action in the right direction, a paddle toward the destination we want to go to."

Lawrence has been working for six years to build relationships between those who produce food and those who eat food near New Brunswick, Canada.

In the TED Talk "The powerful impact of buying local," he talks about how compared to 50 years ago, communities have come out of balance.

By shopping at corporations, the money spent there is not staying within that community and is going elsewhere.

While these companies do pay local wages, Lawrence said the biggest portion of those profits do not stay within the system of the community which

consumers are spending in.

Lawrence said how shopping locally can help this issue, making the money circulate within that community and creating that balanced community that was there 50 years ago.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, local shops have been struggling to keep their doors open and online business owners have been trying to get more customers to stay afloat.

According to an article published by the Washington Post called "Keeping your distance is good for public health but tough for small businesses" by Jeanne Whalen, small businesses make up 44% of the U.S. economy.

The article "Why is it important to support local and small businesses", by André Gonçalves, said how shopping locally is a win-win situation. Purchasing from local businesses will directly help that shop with being able to stay open and have an environmental impact.

"These businesses usually carry a

greater portion of locally-produced goods coming from smaller-scale producers and farms, Gonçalves said. "Therefore, their products may be eco-friendlier since smaller quantities are produced."

Gonçalves said most small businesses try to use all-natural products when producing items.

This guarantees the customer will know exactly where their products are made, what it is made with and how it helps out the environment.

According to "9 ways your small business can help save the environment" by Devin Martin, small businesses can have many opportunities to be better for the planet.

He said small businesses can switch to sustainable packaging for their customers and evaluate their vendor's social and environmental impact.

With these steps, local shops can be eco-friendlier and provide customers with the satisfaction of knowing they are shopping more environmentally friendly.

OUWB student recognized for study on skateboarding injuries and brain trauma

KATELYN HILL

Staff Reporter

Skateboarding is a popular pastime for many Americans, with around 6.4 million people who actively participate in the sport.

However, even with its great popularity, there is also a widely ignored side to the sport: the severe injuries.

Benjamin Partiali, a fourth year medical student at OUWB and former skateboarder, realized there was a lack of information on hospitalizations due to skateboarding accidents.

Drawing inspiration from his days of skating, Partiali designed the study, "Injuries to the Head and Face From Skateboarding: A 10-Year Analysis From National Electronic Injury Surveillance System Hospitals."

"There's not a lot of published literature looking at skateboarding injuries specifically and there's nothing — at least from what we saw — that was about head and face injuries," he said. "With skateboarding being added to the Olympic sports, I thought it would be an interesting study to look at because no one else has done anything like this."

According to the OUWB website, the study was published in the Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and presented at the Oakland University Graduate Student Research Conference prior to the COVID-19 shutdown.

Partiali and his team looked through the National

Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) to collect data. According to the Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery's website, they focused on "skateboard-related head and face fractures, contusions, abrasions, and lacerations from 2009 through 2018."

The team identified 2,519 reported injuries, which extrapolates to 100,201 injuries nationally. Fractures account for 14.1% of those injuries. The patients were predominantly male, with an average age of 16.

"Our most common injury that we found was a skull fracture," Partiali said. "Unfortunately we know repeated head trauma and head trauma in general has pretty grave consequences, especially if you're not wearing a helmet and if you're young."

According to a sciencedaily.com article referencing the University of Oxford, brain trauma during childhood increases the risk for mental illness, poor school attainment and premature death.

Growing up, Partiali wasn't a fan of wearing protective gear like helmets. Now, especially after conducting this study, he hopes to spread awareness of how severe the consequences could be for skaters.

The conclusion drawn at the end of his study — given the potentially detrimental consequences of severe head trauma — was more aggressive injury prevention programs and helmet use in order to reduce the amount of hospitalizations caused by these injuries.

Partiali said his team specifically looked at legislation in place in his home state of California. According to



PHOTO COURTESY OF OUWB
Partiali, a former skateboarder, designed the study about head and face injuries

be without a helmet if they are riding bikes, skateboards or scooters while on public streets, bike paths or trails, with fines as steep as \$200.

Partiali also hopes this study will find its way to pediatricians in order to open up early conversations with young skaters about the importance of protective gear while they're skating.

"I think skateboarding is a great sport; it's a lot of fun and it's a great way to spend your time," he said. "I think everyone also has to be aware that there are risks with skateboarding and you can mitigate those risks by using proper safety equipment."

Meadow Brook Hall to reopen grounds for tours, lawn activities

KATELYN HILL

Staff Reporter

Meadow Brook Hall, the old summer home of Oakland University founder Matilda Dodge Wilson, is once again open to the public after being shut down due to COVID-19.

Shannon O'Berski, the director of external relations at Meadow Brook, has been hard at work with her team behind the scenes in order to open the hall in a way that is safe for visitors.

"As part of the leadership team here at Meadow Brook, we had to really come up with ways to reopen the house," she said. "But we never knew when the updates or mandates were going to come."

When the stay-at-home order was rolled back, the staff made sure the grounds were clean and safe for visitors.

As with most places around the state, it is required for guests to wear face masks and to maintain social distancing to the best of their ability while they are touring.

Though the estate has offered guided tours in the past, they will not be available over the summer. Instead, visitors are encouraged to download the Meadow Brook app and take a self guided tour, which is able to provide historical anecdotes about the house and gardens.

The tours will be available on a reduced schedule, with visitation hours being cut back to Friday through Tuesday, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"We are taking this very seriously and we've implemented every precaution that has been mandated," O'Berski said.

ski said. "We have a really good, professional team here. They took it very seriously and they're implementing those policies. People seem to be enjoying themselves."

Though social distancing is still encouraged, touring the grounds is free and offers guests the chance to enjoy the mansion has to offer in a fun and safe way.

"People are itching to get outside and do something and I think they feel safe here," O'Berski said. "Just enjoy the space until you're more comfortable to come inside."

O'Berski said guests are encouraged to have a picnic on the grounds and partake in any of the lawn games, which are sanitized daily. For those looking for other recreational activities, the estate has also been offering yoga classes and summer concerts.

Abigail Austin is a sophomore at Oakland and has previously visited the mansion. She has especially enjoyed coming to the estate for their Christmas celebrations with her family. She personally feels more comfortable visiting in the fall, but she said she would most likely attend one of the fall events if they still happen.

"Depending on the status of the pandemic, I would most likely go," she said. "I think the mansion is a place where you could easily space people and maintain social distancing, so I believe it would be pretty safe."

Mary Gass, a senior at Oakland, said she has enjoyed the events in the past and if the hall takes social distancing seriously, she would be okay attending the events.

"Personally, I think if I'm wearing a mask and I know everyone else is required to wear a mask and they're not



SOPHIE HUME | PHOTOGRAPHER

Meadow Brook Hall is open oncemore, allowing tours from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. for those interested.

hosting at full capacity, then I would feel safe," she said.

O'Berski said it's understandable if people are nervous, since this is an unprecedented time and everyone's personal circumstances differ, but she encouraged those who feel safe to come out and enjoy what the mansion has to offer.

"We are staying on top of it because we are a public museum, a public institution and we want people to come and feel safe," O'Berski said. "We want to be a place that people can come and have a positive experience and maybe forget for just a little bit all the craziness that's happening in the world right now."

Bioengineering program sees growth after first year

BRIDGET JANIS

Staff Reporter

Due to the growing number of jobs in the field, Oakland University decided to create the Department of Bioengineering in 2019.

This department is different compared to other departments at OU, because it is a part of both the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering and Computer Sciences.

"The department is shared between two schools, which is something that has never happened before at Oakland University, so it is a very collaborative effect," Shailesh Lal, the professor of biological sciences and chair of the Department of Bioengineering said.

The department started as a program in engineering biology in 2007. Now, with it officially being a department, there are over 80 students with this declared major. The first students to graduate from this department were at the end of the winter semester in 2020.

"It's a field that combines biology, the knowledge of biological sciences and the knowledge of engineering," Lal said.

The department is trying to become certified from the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology within the next year. This will help the department be able to have long-term success within the university.

Students that major in Bioengineering can have

a range of possible careers after graduation. Some possible routes students can take are bioinstrumentation, prosthetics, orthopedics and pharmaceuticals.

"The job growth in the field of bioengineering is going to be very good," Lal said. "It's better than other engineering fields, like electrical engineering and computer sciences. The job market is pretty bright, they think the job market will grow."

Senior bioengineering major, Megan Fry, is the president of Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society (EMBS), a student organization on campus.

EMBS invites speakers to come and talk about the different things students can do with bioengineering to

inform students about the career path. The subjects of the speakers can range from dentistry to engineering.

"We try to show students different things you can do with your bioengineering degree because it's so diverse," Fry said. "I think it's a great club to get connected with other people in your major."

Another senior bioengineering major and social media chair of EMBS, Paige Nightingale, has spent a year conducting research in a tissue engineering lab at OU.

"I thought it was really beneficial, you don't know what lab work is until you get into the grit of lab work and it teaches you a lot of skills outside of the classroom — which I think is very important," Nightingale said. "It also shows you

working in a lab, if that's something you want to do post-graduation."

Nightingale experienced small class sizes, which allowed her to be able to form connections within her major. She was able to become informed about her possibilities and network throughout the process.

"The best way I can explain bioengineering is you take half biological sciences and half engineering and you mix them together," Nightingale said. "A big thing is the engineering behind the human body."

Students from any major can join EMBS. To ask questions or join, email megan-fry@oakland.edu. Students with questions about the department can email Lal at lal@oakland.edu

Oakland Center reopens, prepares to welcome students this fall

by Autumn Page | design by Emily Morris | photos by Sophie Hume and Emily Morris

The Oakland Center (OC) has begun to reopen with limited hours and is preparing to welcome students back in the fall. Subway was the first food service to open on July 6, with protective measures in place.

“[Subway has] specific lines for entering and exiting,” said Chris Reed, director of the OC. “The line does require everyone to stay six feet apart, there’s markings on the floor and there’s additional plexiglass put out, so when you’re ordering your food there’s an additional barrier.”

The other food services are getting ready to open as well, along with the bookstore. The bookstore is planning to reopen on Aug. 3. The OC is working with the Oakland University Credit Union location across the street to see if the one on campus will open in the fall.

“I think the biggest change that students will see is that face masks are required and the amount of seating in the building has been reduced by at least 50% to accommodate social distancing,” Reed said. “You’ll also see more effort to clean and sanitize the building — there’s additional hand sanitizers on walls, and our cleaning staff is more regularly sanitizing.”

Right now, only certain entrances open, but there are no specific designations for enter or exit only doors. There are four entrances open, and more will be accessible when they can be cleaned more regularly. Northwest and Northeast corner doors, the main entrance facing the P1 parking lot and the large entrances that faces O’Dowd Hall are open.

There is a possibility for limited capacity at the OC, but Reed and OC Associate Director, Anita Hicks, both agree they don’t expect to reach maximum capacity because of the lack of in-person classes.

“With less people on campus, there’ll be less people in the building, but that’s something that our team is really passionate about — monitoring the number of people in the building and to make sure everyone is safe,” Hicks said.

The OC staff are tracking the amount of traffic inside the building, and will continue to track as the fall semester starts to determine the capacity.

If the OC does reach maximum capacity, there will be a line outside that people can wait in — no one will be turned away. Both Reed and Hicks agreed that they don’t see a lot of students being in the building besides coming and going.

Each student, upon returning to campus, will be given a reusable mask.

“All entrance points have signs reminding people to wear masks and the university did purchase washable, reusable masks that are branded with the interlocking OU [logo] will be given to every student when they return to campus,” Reed said.

The mask will be available to pick up next month — only one mask per student.

Organizations are still allowed to meet within the OC as long as they follow the guidelines set forth by the state and the university. They have been given those guidelines for small meetings, and it’s recommended they go outside if they want to have bigger gatherings.

“As long as it’s going along with the executive order, yes [student organizations can meet in the OC],” Hicks said “We do want some student presence and to be able to have some student socialization within the building.”



The outside of the Oakland Center

Photo by Sophie Hume



Photo by Emily Morris

The seating in the Oakland Center has been social distanced to prepare for students' return in the fall. All furniture is six feet apart and enclosed by yellow tape boundaries.

Booths that are in the Oakland Center have been social distanced with caution tape for students on campus during the fall semester. Any permanent fixtures of the OC were blocked off if they are closer than six feet apart.



Photo by Emily Morris



Photo by Emily Morris

Only a fraction of the chairs remain in the Founder's Ballroom, which used to have one of the largest capacities on campus. Depending on the event, this venue previously held 600-1,000 people -- the maximum is now 101.

Political focus: Spikes in COVID-19 can send us back to quarantine

AUTUMN PAGE

Staff Reporter

The COVID-19 outbreak was catastrophic to the economy and society, and the economy will take years to recover. Society will never be the same, and it's devastating.

One of the most popular trading stocks, Dow Jones, had one of the biggest drops during the chaos. On March 16, there was a point change of -2,997.10 — that is a percent change of -12.93%. To put it in perspective, the last time Dow Jones had that significant of a drop was in 1987, and before that, 1929.

Millions of cases and hundreds of thousands of deaths have been the result of COVID-19. By July 13, the number of cases in the U.S. alone reached 3,461,937. The total number of deaths exceeded 138,000.

Society preached wearing masks and staying inside — for the first two months or so. Then, the protests began. My personal favorite was the astronomical need for haircuts — you couldn't go on YouTube and figure out how to cut your own hair?

When the number of cases and deaths slowed in June, the nation slowly started to open up, except Florida — they hit full send on the 'open places where COVID-19 can run free' button.

Then the number of cases started increasing again in early July. California, Texas, Arizona and Florida saw some of the greatest spikes.

In Michigan, a spike of 543 cases were reported on July 2. This is the highest reported single-day spike since May, according to WXYZ Detroit. An outbreak was traced to Harper's Restaurant and Brew Pub in East Lansing, with 138 positive COVID-19 cases. Bars indoor services across Michigan have been closed, but outdoor seating and carry out is allowed.

Other states will begin to close down if the cases continue to rise.

The economy is just starting to recover, and another shutdown could result in irreversible damage. It would result in zero trade and possibly an increase in taxes down the road. Unemployment could increase and many businesses would permanently close.

As for society, this could result in schools continuing all online education or a hybrid. You can count

on more protesting and people not wearing masks or personal protection equipment. This will lead to a lot of conflict with people and the government, which isn't new at this point.

I'm usually all for uprising and overthrowing over the government, but not during a pandemic. I think — in this moment and when we had the lowest number of cases — we were all doing something right. It's annoying that things are still limited or closed, and so is having to walk around with masks, but I think it's worth it if it keeps the death toll down.

Moreover, if everyone wears masks still, then the possible vaccine, Moderna, could have a chance. I think it could be good, as long as the anti-vaxxers don't find out.

If everyone wears masks and keeps the numbers down, then all the people who say wearing a mask is "infringing on their freedom" can finally be quiet — talk about tranquility.



NICOLE MORSFIELD | OAKLAND POST ARCHIVES

"I'm usually all for uprising and overthrowing over the government, but not during a pandemic." - Autumn Page

Netflix's "365 Days" teeters between misogyny and marketable

EMILY MORRIS

Managing Editor

Curious viewers have pushed obscure Polish flick, "365 Days," to the top of Netflix's trending, despite condemning ratings. New problematic themes — glorifying rape, kidnap and manipulation — seem to continue to bubble to the surface from each view, but "365 Days" prevails with record breaking popularity.

The protagonist — by default — Massimo (Michele Morrone) becomes the leader of the Torricelli crime family and uses his power to pinpoint the woman he obsessed over for years, Laura (Anna-Maria Sieklucka). Massimo kidnaps her from her troubled relationship and doubtful life. This plot point is just the start of disgustingly incorrect framing.

Massimo reveals his storybook timeline and gives her "365 days" to fall in love with him before she can be released from his lair.

The borderline pornographic film has continued to balance receiving backlash from critics yet maintain worldwide popularity. In fact, "365 Days" is on track to be the most popular movie of 2020 on Netflix.

The plot thoughtfully weaves together manipulation and romance, which makes "365 Days" so intriguing. For instance, Laura's fiery reactions to her kidnapping ease into a sexy tease throughout her year in captivity. This is far from a climactic point in the plot, but the manipulation of Laura's personality facilitates an audience to overlook greater questionable themes.

"Are you lost, baby girl?"

Massimo's signature response following Laura's escape attempts could actually be an aside to the audience. Naturally, viewers will try to piece together this erotic fairytale and emerge a little "lost."

Netflix accurately describes the film as "controversial." The film leaves its audience scanning for a protagonist amidst main characters that are rapists, kidnappers and experiencing Stockholm syndrome — the hero, of course, is Massimo, but even that conclusion either welcomes viewers

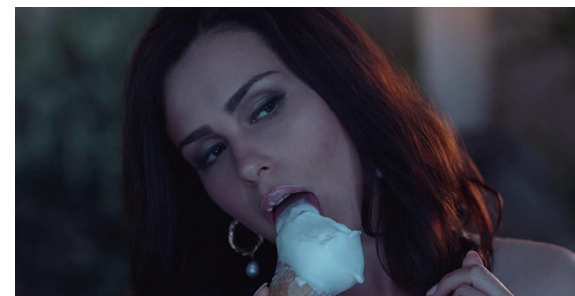


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES
Netflix's "365 days" is a mess of misogyny .

to feel "lost" or blame the plot on simply stirring "controversy."

An audience devoted to a sexy nod to Beauty and the Beast may be far and in between, but there is always an audience for "controversy." Hence, if making waves was the goal of "365 Days," Netflix has achieved that.

Although "365 Days" is a fictional movie, there's a fine line between "depraved abduction turns to cookie-cutter fairy tale," according to feminist website, Jezebel. The New York Times addressed the "carnality to ogle" at in the film, exemplifying that consent is fluid instead of direct.

These ideas are partially derived from the first peek into Massimo's love life before Laura. His suave demeanor is at risk when he forces a flight attendant to perform oral sex, but his charm is muddled when the woman emerges from the cabin with a small smile. Next, Massimo attempts to lure Laura by making her watch staged intimacy with a prostitute.

Despite his mysogic introduction, he framed the kidnapping as a grand romantic gesture — comparing his actions to Greek mythology. Against all odds, Laura even jestingly agrees with his self-proclaimed royalty.

"Great Massimo. Slayer of lions and little women."

Although "365 Days" clearly had murky intentions, it is projected to continue to draw audiences — Morrone confirmed a sequel last month.

Massimo and Laura's happily ever after in "365 Days" is definitely one for the books — it's just questionable which genre suits it the most: erotica, crime or romance. The tone of the film could also lean more toward shock than an actual genre.

Rating: 0/5 Stars

Juice WRLD brings the pain with album, “Legends Never Die”

MICHAEL PEARCE

Editor-in-Chief

Just over seven months after his death, Juice WRLD’s new album, “Legends Never Die,” released worldwide on Friday, July 10. The album received incredible reception, with almost every song reaching the Spotify trending page days after being released.

Juice discusses some familiar and some atypical topics in this new project. Of course, the main themes are darkness, demons, drug addiction and depression, but these four D’s are far from what makes this album. Juice goes into many positive topics as well — his loving relationship, his mother and his self-image.

As a whole, the album touches on many basic human feelings and struggles, while still reminding listeners that Juice was a special up-and-coming artist. There are noticeable tone shifts throughout the album — from an upbeat melody with Halsey expressing love for his girlfriend to a soul-crushing solo song about his struggles with addiction, depression and anxiety — the listener gains a deeper appreciation for what Juice WRLD could have been.

His first two projects, “Goodbye & Good Riddance” and “Death Race For

Love,” were both great albums for a young artist to start off with, but “Legends Never Die” steps it up a notch. The production quality and provoked emotion radiates from every song, impacting the person listening on a deeper level. The emotions run especially deep considering how Juice passed.

On Dec. 8, 2019, Juice (Jarad Higgins) and his crew were flying into an airport with illegal drugs and guns on board. The pilot called the police before landing, and the plane was being searched when Higgins had a seizure from ingesting too many painkillers.

Knowing the context of his death makes Juice’s lyrics even more powerful, especially with his history of addiction. Lines like, “Let’s be for real / If it wasn’t for the pills, I wouldn’t be here / But if I keep taking these pills, I won’t be here,” hit especially hard with what the world knows now — those pills which made him famous ultimately cost him his life — and he knew they would.

Despite the painful lyrics which foreshadow Juice’s demise, there are fun songs on “Legends Never Die.” Both of the songs which Marshmello produced are high quality, with “Come and Go,” providing a punk rock feel to it. “Man of the Year” sounds like a fun, college song that



PHOTO COURTESY OF CONSEQUENCES OF SOUND

The former Chicago rapper’s first posthumous album hit streaming services on July 10, 2020.

would intro a teen rom-com. These kind of songs provide more depth to “Legends Never Die,” something that wasn’t as present in Juice’s first two albums.

It’s hard to find a part of this album that feels incomplete. There are two interludes as well as an intro and outro — which tug on the emotions of listeners — and 17 total songs. On subsequent listens, these are skippable, but there are

few to no songs that are throwaways. This album was very close to being finished when Juice died.

With such high quality and very few songs that are skippable, “Legends Never Die” reveals the hard truth of Juice WRLD’s death — he was incredibly talented, but the best was still yet to come.

Rating: 5/5 stars

Gracie Abrams is one to watch with heartbreaking EP “minor”

LAUREN KARMO

Campus Editor

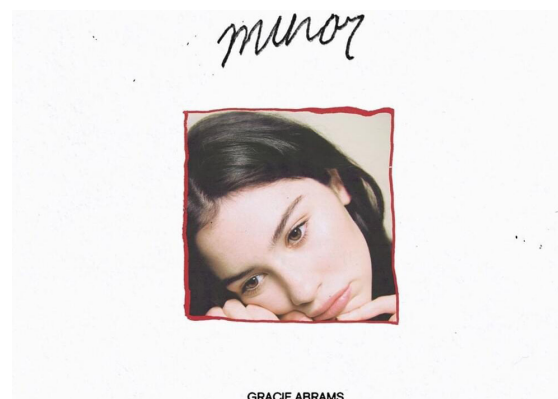
In her first-ever long form project, Gracie Abrams touches hearts with her new EP “minor,” which hit streaming services on July 14. Mixing previously-released singles with new drops, “minor” is an excellent listening experience from beginning to end.

Abrams is an up-and-coming artist who this reviewer would definitely say is one to watch. Her beautiful ballads display the incredible range she has with her sugary-sweet notes while not sacrificing strength, support or power. While the 20-year-old certainly brings her own style to the table, her voice mixes elements of Billie Eilish’s well-known breathiness with Lorde’s robust sound.

“minor” follows Abrams through seven tracks of heartache, and while some songs pull at the heartstrings, others have a more upbeat and bright feeling, true to the course of a breakup.

The opening track, “Friend” gives listeners insight into the emotions Abrams was experiencing while she wrote it. Setting the tone with a minimal chorus and exposed verses, raw moments make this track a highlight of the album.

One of the best tracks — “21” — follows with its incredible range and honey-like harmonies. If layers of melodies didn’t make this song memorable, the lyrics about remembering someone’s birthday but not celebrating with them certainly do.



GRACIE ABRAMS

PHOTO COURTESY OF GENIUS

Gracie Abrams dropped her first long-form project.

“minor” is the debut EP for the 20-year-old.

All 20 minutes of “minor” creates a cohesive sound without deviating too far away from the basics. While out-of-the-box creations are always ones to remember, Abrams does a lot with a little and lets her talent speak for itself, demonstrated through tracks like “Under/Over” and “tehe.” For a young new artist, establishing a sound and showing off her voice is the way to attract attention, and Abrams does exactly that.

“minor” has similar vibes to Billie Eilish’s first album “dont smile at me” with similar exposed melodies that rely on the talent of the artist above anything else. Listening to “minor” for the first time brought the same thought to mind as “ocean eyes” and

“bellyache” did back in 2017 — this girl will be big.

“I miss you, I’m sorry” is one of the strongest and most emotional songs on the EP, instantly bringing tears to the eye on first listen. Allowing her emotions to take the forefront, Abrams breathes new life in what should have been repetitive melodies.

Following “I miss you, I’m sorry” is “Long Sleeves,” which is the best song by Abrams, thus far. Its placement after “I miss you, I’m sorry” does not give the listener time to recover before taking them on another emotional journey. Starting softly, Abrams builds her sound up to the powerful chorus that washes over the listener with a satisfying feeling. “Long Sleeves” expresses both acceptance and nostalgia, which are often overlooked aspects of a breakup, making it a beautifully relatable song.

Closing with the sweeter and faster-paced titular track “minor,” Abrams expertly demonstrates her ability to fit in with the modern pop scene with a fresh sound. Including a shout-out to her “Star Wars”-director father, J.J. Abrams, she maintains her exposed style while adding elements that carry the song along. “minor” is most reminiscent of Lorde’s music, particularly her earlier work “Pure Heroine” in 2013.

Gracie Abrams is a rising star in the pop world, and “minor” is an excellent start to tease the world with what’s to come from her. She has our attention and left us wondering what she will do next.

Rating: 5/5 stars

Cross country, soccer, volleyball start date delayed until at least Oct. 1, Horizon League announces

MICHAEL PEARCE

Editor-in-Chief

The future of the fall sports season is still unclear with the ever-changing COVID-19 numbers in the U.S., but no matter what case numbers look in September, Golden Grizzly athletes and fans will have to wait until October at the earliest to see sports return to OU.

The Horizon League announced on Thursday, July 16 that fall competition for cross country, soccer and volleyball will be delayed until at least Thursday, Oct. 1.

“Guided by its core value of student-athlete well-being, the Horizon League Council decided on Thursday, July 16 to delay the start of fall competition for all sports (championship and non-championship) with the understanding that if competition occurs, it will not begin before Oct. 1,” the official Horizon League press release said.

The Horizon League Council is made up of all athletic directors, a representative from the faculty athletic group, a representative from the senior woman administration group and a student-athlete representative.

They decided that delaying the fall season was the best option to protect student-athletes after recent information from the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) was gathered from state and local health agencies and showed that COVID-19 numbers were trending upward.

“The Horizon Council has been meeting weekly — multiple times usually — to discuss the landscape, which started in



MARY MITCHELL | OAKLAND POST ARCHIVES

Due to the unpredictability of COVID-19, fall sports will start no earlier than October.

March,” Oakland Athletic Director Steve Waterfield said. “The question was then ‘how can we have a safe fall season?’ We decided to wait it out and see what things look like as we get more information because things change so quickly.”

Right now, the plan is to play fall sports in the fall. However, that plan could change depending on the virus’ outlook.

“If we decide we can’t conduct the fall sports teams’ competition in a manner that aligns with student well-being and

safety, then I think there will be a decision or timeline developed as to if fall sports will move to the spring,” Waterfield said.

The tentative Oct. 1 start date for fall competition was chosen to give student-athletes time to get back into playing shape once they return to campus in late-August or early-September.

According to the Horizon League press release, “Decisions related to training and practice will be left to members’ discretion.”

The main concern for student-athletes, coaches and administration is adhering to OU’s social distancing guidelines while still training and practicing together.

Waterfield has worked with OU administration over the past four months to determine what practicing and meeting would look like for athletes.

“It’s ultimately going to be a departmental decision that needs to be blessed and approved by the university and campus,” he said. “Since April I’ve had a group of athletic department staff members to develop Oakland University’s return to sport or resocialization of sport plans and phases.”

The fall sports season, while still up in the air, will be closely monitored by the Horizon Council.

“The Horizon League’s Council will continue to monitor developments related to COVID-19, and will evaluate fall schedules and competitions with the understanding that there may be future changes,” the press release said.

The weekly council meetings will determine the future of the fall sports season at OU, meaning fans can either expect to see their teams on courts, fields and tracks — or not see them at all.

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Breanna Perry rediscovers her love of basketball at OU

MICHAEL PEARCE
Editor-in-Chief

Losing the love of the game can be the end of a college athlete's career. Breanna Perry was close to calling it quits after leaving Temple University, but a visit to Oakland University changed her mind.

Temple was the one team Perry felt was consistent with her after she tore her ACL during her high school junior season. Once she got there, she felt the coaches were different than they were during recruitment, and she began to lose the love of basketball.

"I said 'okay, mom I'm not really feeling the same about basketball — I don't really have the same passion and the same love,'" Perry said. "I was still looking for another school because I wasn't sure if I didn't want to play anymore."

Head Coach Jeff Tungate, who saw Perry play at Flushing High School, said he just needed two hours. Shortly after visiting OU, Perry committed.

"I just was like, 'this is the most genuine person I've ever dealt with in basketball since I've been in high school or middle school,'" Perry said. "I liked the vibes he gave me, and everything wasn't sugar coated when I did come here. I really loved the fact he was so genuine with me."

Perry won a state championship at Flushing, recording 12 points, 13 rebounds, four steals and three blocks in the title game. Flushing won three metro league titles with her on the team.

"As soon as I heard she was leaving we wanted to make sure we made that phone call and got her on campus as quick as possible," Tungate said.

Tungate, who likes to press on defense, stressed the importance of Perry being on the team to help play that style of aggressive defense.

"She's super athletic, can really run the floor and is a really good rebounder," he said. "She's going to allow us to press a lot this upcoming season because she's really going to be good on the ball and trapping in the press. That part is exciting."

For Perry, continuing her typical aggression on defense will be no problem. Her main goal for the 2020-2021 season is to improve on the offensive end.

"I don't want to shy away from the ball on offense," Perry said. "I don't want to be someone who just passes the ball or doesn't look to take shots. I want to break out of that shell because I have the capability to do it."

Despite not playing last season, Tungate noticed that Perry took no time accepting a leadership role, something she will be expected to do as a junior.



COURTESY OF JOSE JUAREZ

Perry (second from the left, back row) poses with her teammates, showing off their Mamba Mentality T-Shirts.

"Everybody on the team loves her — she has a great personality," he said. "She came in and took a leadership role right from the start — she's someone that is very well respected."

Aside from X's and O's, Perry felt she fits in with the team off the court, despite entering the locker room as a newcomer.

"I saw how goofy, outgoing and fun they were, they seemed really cool," she said. "I started talking to everybody and getting feedback from everybody, and everyone was so open and welcoming. I really liked how they just took me in as if I'd been here the whole time they had been here."

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Counseling Center moves to HHB, launches programs

LAUREN KARMO

Campus Editor

Entering a new school year can already be a challenge, but navigating online and hybrid learning, a global pandemic and racial justice movements can be taxing on the campus community's mental health.

The Counseling Center has been monitoring these stressors and plans to help guide students through them with their new group counseling sessions and outreach programs from their new location at Suite 2050 in the Human Health Building (HHB).

According to Counseling Center Director Dr. David Schwartz, the counseling center needed to make the move out of the Graham Health Center in March in order to comply with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's Executive Order No. 2020-7, which states only essential health care professionals and patients should be within a health center. Seeing as counseling can be done virtually, the counseling center left Graham and will stay in HHB during the academic year.

"I don't see it being a permanent [change]," Schwartz said. "There was certainly no indication that that would be from the higher ups, and I would be opposed to that as well because I think it's very helpful to be in that same building as the health center because

we have such a close and good working relationship with them — we share so many of the same clients."

Even if the order is lifted in the near future, Schwartz said they will remain in HHB because "switching back mid-year would be a very chaotic process."

While the Counseling Center has been and will continue to do mostly Telehealth visits, they plan to convert some of their office space into "Zoom rooms" where students can set up their computers to talk with their counselor in a private and quiet place.

The Graham Health Center has no impending plans for the vacant space left behind by the Counseling Center.

"At this point in time, we are having it available so if we need additional patient care rooms we can expand into that area," said Graham Health Center Director Nancy Jansen, ANP-BC. "A lot of this depends on the demand for our services, so we have that plan ready to go should we need it."

In addition to their new location, the Counseling Center is launching new programs to help combat the mental health crisis that will hit Oakland University following quarantine. Schwartz predicts a surge in demand for services in August and September as people begin to process the trauma of COVID-19's "new normal" and the graphic exposure of racial injustice after the death of George Floyd.



MARY MITCHELL | OAKLAND POST ARCHIVES

The counseling center has moved to the Human Health Building in Suite 2050.

"In the past, incidents that have happened like other pandemics or 9/11 or big moments in history like that, there tends to be about a 3-6 month delay in terms of people seeking services," Schwartz said. "A lot of times, people might not seek services at the beginning of the quarantine or pandemic because they're just so busy adjusting to this new world around them and getting their bearings."

In order to combat this, the Counseling Center has hired on a new part-time employee and will be introducing group

counseling, which Schwartz has been interested in bringing to OU for a while.

According to Schwartz, there will be different groups based on pressing topics — especially in relation to COVID-19 — like grief and loss, depression and anxiety.

"Regardless of the demand, I think we'll find creative ways of meeting it and dealing with anything that comes our way," Schwartz said. "This next year, I think, is going to be all about making sure we're being flexible and adaptable."

Trump administration reverses international restrictions

EMILY MORRIS

Managing Editor

International students across the country were uncertain about their residence when the Trump administration introduced a policy that divided education and health in early July.

Shortly after, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) filed lawsuits against the Trump administration, which was backed by other institutes — including Oakland University.

"This includes many students that come from countries where freedom of speech is not a thing," Claudia Marques-Molina, an international student at OU, said. "So even after moving here — to a country where that is supposed to be a constitutional right — they don't feel entitled to speaking up and voicing their needs, which really benefits ICE's arbitrary and inconsiderate rulings."

Late afternoon on Tuesday, July 14, their voices were heard.

The policy that weighed on many international students will be paused for the impending school year. This development comes a week after Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) introduced that online classes posed a risk to international students' residency in the United States.

"I certainly expected this rescinding of the visa rules for international students — which were nothing but cruel and punitive — not to mention, made with neither rhyme nor reason," said Lily Mendoza, associate professor of culture and communication.

Many classes were moved online to encourage social distancing amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and any international students with predominantly online classes risked deportation.

If a student were to be deported, there could be "an infinitely diverse set of cases," including losing access to their university's portal (some countries have restricted internet access), unreliable or unavailable internet access or financial strain, according to Marques-Molina.

Oakland University announced a hybrid learning

approach for the 2020-2021 school year, which already offered some in-person classes to the 1,100 international students on campus.

While the rescind of the policy is a comfort to current international students, the Trump administration still intends to impose the guidelines on new students though. Any international students who planned on beginning their post-secondary education in the U.S. this fall will be restricted indefinitely.

President Ora Pescovitz assured that Oakland University stands with international students. As hybrid learning unfolds further, she promised that OU will be able to "protect" its international students and most students will be able to have at least one in-person class this year.

"We welcome our international students to Oakland University," Pescovitz said. "They're an important part of our diverse population, and they contribute mightily to making Oakland University the vibrant and exciting campus that we are."

Campus life, COVID-19 relief addressed at July concerns forum

LAUREN KARMO

Campus Editor

From student activities to financial struggles, Oakland University Student Congress's (OUSC) student concerns forum allowed university administration to address a wide range of topics on Tuesday, July 14.

While previous forums have mostly focused on on-line and hybrid learning in the upcoming fall semester, many students have now been wondering what campus life will look like with questions about support services, activities and amenities dominated the dialogue.

Student activities take a hybrid approach

Jean Ann Miller, senior director of the Office of Student Involvement (OSI), mentioned that welcome week plans have been adjusted to include both virtual and in-person events and will take advantage of outdoor spaces.

"We have a hybrid plan for our student activities that will be both in person — as much as possible — but also virtual and live streaming," Miller said. "We plan to do many activities during welcome week. Some traditional ones may end up being more virtual — like carnival is going to be happening in a live version and also a virtual version throughout the entire day."

Club sports have been devising similar safety plans to use outdoor space to organize activities, but competitions are still in question due to potential travel restrictions. University Recreation and Well-Being hopes club sports as well as virtual classes and events will keep the OU community active and involved until the rec center opens.

The rec center is being reorganized to space out equipment and planning to adjust hours and occupancy limits in accordance with government restrictions when it reopens. The same goes for Kresge Library and the Oakland Center.

According to Greg Jordan, director of University Recreation and Well-Being, while he doesn't see many intramural sports happening this fall, e-sports, virtual fitness classes and minimal-to-no contact sports may be in the cards.

"We're still going to have a virtual presence, as well as probably some non-traditional things because I don't see intramural flag football, but I certainly see intramural kickball or intramural wiffleball — those kinds of activities happening this fall," Jordan said.

The Graham Health Center advised anyone who is worried about their physical health to talk with their physician before deciding to return to campus housing or face-to-face classes and events. They are offering COVID-19 testing for anyone experiencing symptoms, as well as antibody testing and both in-person and health visits.

Housing addresses move-in, renewal of awards

In addition to student activities, housing has been adjusting move-in and visiting policies. While early move-in will still be available, housing director James Zentmeyer warns students to expect a more low-key and fast-moving event than the usual long lines and "parties" of a normal move-in.

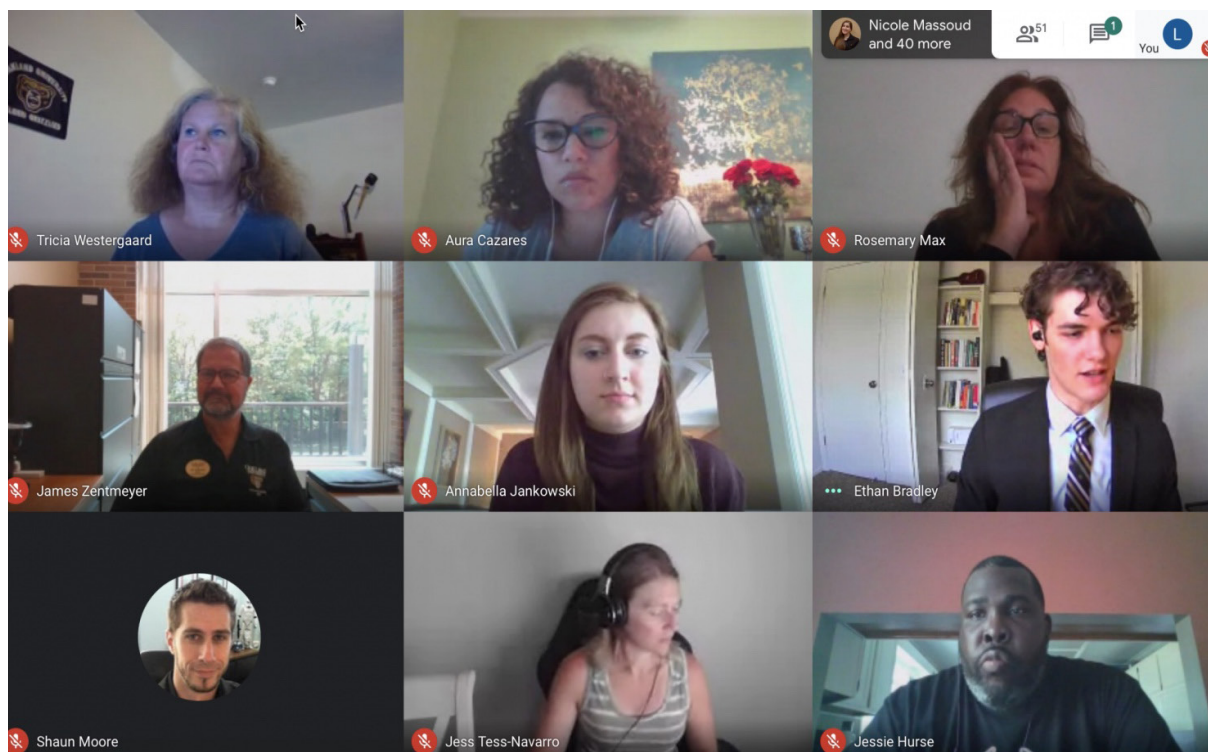


PHOTO BY LAUREN KARMO

Student Body President, Ethan Bradley, moderates a virtual concern forum in July 2020 to prepare for the fall semester. The meeting focused on campus life and financial aid for the upcoming fall semester.

Move-in this fall will take place over five days instead of three, and the six check-in locations will be organized so there are no more than 10 students checking in per hour.

The university has acknowledged the risks of living on campus for students and has allowed for any housing contracts to be canceled with no penalty. Students with housing awards will be able to opt out of on-campus living without losing their scholarships, but the semester will still count regardless of the student's choice.

"All the different factors that can take into account are probably more than we can imagine right now — so we remain flexible with our customers and have to give them the most flexibility to handle this difficult situation as possible," Zentmeyer said. "Besides, we want you to come back again next year."

Internship requirements called into question

In addition to campus life and wellness, many were concerned with fulfilling internship requirements before graduation. With the economy taking a hit since March, internships — especially in hands-on disciplines — have been few and far between.

Registrar Tricia Westergaard suggests speaking to department chairs and internship advisers and coordinators to get better access to opportunities and find ways to stay on track for graduation.

Financial support, COVID-19 relief continued

Financial aid and relief is a recurring topic at the concern forums, as students continue to wonder how the university will support them during COVID-19 economic hardships. Student Financial Services reminded everyone to file their free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) to be eligible for Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding.

"We also have the possibility for students, if you have already filed your 2021 FAFSA, that's using income from two years ago, you can submit information telling us — Student Financial Services — that your family or your financial circumstances have changed since filing the FAFSA and we will review that information and see if we can make changes to your FAFSA data in hopes of making you eligible or more eligible for more aid and better types of financial aid," said Nancy Fetzer, associate director of Student Financial Services.

In addition to CARES Act funding, OU is offering its own COVID-19 relief fund through the dean of students website for those who are ineligible for other types of relief.

The next OUSC student concerns forum will take place in August with the exact date to be announced.

Offensive videos circle around campus, results in fired employee



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEWS BREAK

The Wuestenbergs were the subject of media attention after Jillian (right) pointed a gun at a woman in a parking lot

LAUREN KARMO

Campus Editor

Videos of Oakland University affiliates displaying offensive behavior have come to light via social media in recent weeks, leading the university to respond in various ways.

Garnering the most attention was a video floating around on Twitter of the coordinator of Veterans Support Services, Eric Wuestenberg, 42 — along with his wife, Jillian, 32 — threatening a Black mother and her children with a gun following an altercation outside of Chipotle in Orion Township on July 1.

OU quickly responded to the video, stating he had been fired from the university on July 2.

“We have seen the video and we deem his behavior unacceptable,” the statement said. “The employee has been notified that his employment has been terminated by the university.”

The full video released by The Detroit News shows Wuestenberg and his wife threatening the four Black women after she bumped into one of the children, but refused to apologize when asked. The disagreement quickly escalated from a minor misunderstanding to a violent altercation.

“Before I could walk into Chipotle, this woman was coming out, and I had moved out the way so she can walk out,” Makayla Green, 15, told The Detroit News. “She bumped me, and I said, ‘Excuse you.’ And then she started cussing me out and saying things like I was invading her personal space.”

Oakland County Prosecutor Jessica Cooper soon charged the couple on July 3 with felonious assault — a four year felony.

Another video of a student has also been circling on Twitter of a white OU student saying the n-word. While there have been no updates on the status of the student’s enrollment or punishment for this behavior, many students have seen the video and expressed anger or offense toward it.

OU Student Congress (OUSC) released a statement acknowledging the situation and denouncing the student’s behavior, signed by Diversity Director P.J. Roberts and the rest of the OUSC staff on June 25.

“OUSC is vehemently against any and all acts of racism and hate speech within the student body and within our various communities,” the statement said. “We are the voices of the student body and an organization where you can be heard. However, we wholeheartedly denounce and hatred or discrimination of any kind.”

The Dean of Students office has assured the campus community that any and all complaints of this nature brought to their office are fully investigated and handled appropriately.

According to Aura Cazares, assistant dean of students, every situation reported is taken seriously, investigated from all sides and seen as an opportunity to “address behavior and support growth” when the topic was brought up at the July OUSC Student Concerns Forum. Cazares also said that the university is committed to creating an environment for students to feel safe, heard and grow from mistakes, in line with the university’s pillar of diversity, equity and inclusion.

If anyone encounters a situation that makes them uncomfortable, hurt or upset, they are encouraged to report it to the Dean of Students at deanofstudents@oakland.edu.



Information courtesy of Oakland University and the Center for Disease Control

COVID-19 BEST PRACTICES

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
4. Stay home when you are sick.
5. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue. Immediately throw tissues away.
6. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects or surfaces.
7. Keep all age recommended vaccines up to date including annual flu vaccine.