



CHEMISTRY
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ARTISTRY

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CORCORAN STUDENT DEPARTURES



MIKE SHANAHAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Three Corcoran students said they already transferred or are waiting on an admissions decision, while 13 more are considering switching away from the school.

High costs, enrollment issues drive arts students to consider transferring

LAUREN PELLER &
PARTH KOTAK
REPORTERS

Amid growing concern about the value placed on GW's arts programs, students in the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design are considering transferring.

A year after the school officially merged with the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, 16 current and former students said in interviews that the high costs of projects, cross-listing of courses and feelings of alienation on campus contribute to their overall dissatisfaction with the program. Of the 16 students who study photography, fine arts photography and graphic design, three said they already transferred or are waiting on an admissions decision from another school, while the rest are considering switching to other schools at GW.

All current students spoke on the condition of anonymity to avoid retribution from the University, fearing they would be singled out in the small Corcoran program.

The Corcoran has come under fire in recent months for disruptive construction that posed health concerns for students. Officials hosted a town

hall in December for about 30 students and faculty to voice concerns about the noise, pests and dust that have covered the Corcoran's flagship building since renovations began in 2016.

Sanjit Sethi, the director of the Corcoran, said applications for the school's undergraduate programs have continued to grow, though renovations, faculty departures and curriculum adjustments have presented the school with "challenges." He said administrators are aware of student complaints about the school and will continue to "proactively make improvements to future class offerings and schedules."

Sethi declined to say how many students have transferred out of Corcoran since it merged with CCAS.

He said in the fall, Corcoran will launch a new program in which students will work with local organizations on projects, and the school is also developing partnerships with the history and anthropology departments, and the School of Media and Public Affairs "to build more intentional pathways to benefit student experience."

"The Corcoran is working to educate the next generation of cultural leaders and is working hard to im-

prove the experience of our talented students," Sethi said in an email. "We always welcome hearing concerns and feedback on how we can better support our community."

Cost burdens and malfunctioning equipment

A freshman majoring in fine arts photography said she is planning to transfer because expensive materials like film are often needed for projects and are a burden on top of already-high tuition costs.

For one project, the freshman said she spent about \$100 on film, but because she used one of the school's cameras with a broken shutter, the large majority of the film was ruined. Another camera had mold in the lens, she said.

For her two photography classes' final projects, she said she spent almost \$400 on materials needed to develop film.

"It's a really big financial burden because this stuff isn't included in our tuition, and it actually ends up being more expensive than any of the textbooks from my other classes," she said.

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Class-action lawsuit alleges University offers 'dizzying array' of expensive retirement plans

DANI GRACE
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

A former employee representing faculty and staff filed a class-action lawsuit earlier this month against the University for allegedly providing unnecessarily expensive retirement plans.

Former and current employees allege in a 74-page class-action complaint – filed April 13 in D.C.'s U.S. District Court – that GW breached its legal obligation to act in the best interest of its clients by offering a "dizzying array" of overpriced retirement plans that leave employees unsure of the best investment option. Experts said similar claims have been increasingly common over the past several years, and that while the plaintiff has good legal standing, parties are likely to settle out of court to avoid superfluous spending.

The plaintiffs claim GW violated the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, which compels the University to "act prudently and loyally to safeguard plan participants' retirement dollars." The plaintiffs request that the University reimburse its employees for retirement plan losses after the court determines the best way to calculate them.

The plaintiffs allege the University did not properly vet investment choices available for faculty and staff, which caused employees to pay higher fees than they would if they were offered plans from lower-cost fund providers. The University provides retirement plan participants with roughly 135 investment options from four companies instead of offering plans from a single provider, the suit states.

"The participants lost the potential growth their investments could have achieved had the defendants properly discharged their fiduciary duties," the complaint states. "By selecting a single recordkeeper, plan sponsors can enhance their purchasing power and

negotiate lower, transparent investment fees for participants."

University spokeswoman Lindsay Hamilton said the case is the 18th the plaintiff's lawyers – a series of attorneys from four separate firms – have filed against "the nation's most prestigious universities." She said the University intends to "vigorously defend itself in court."

"The University provides its retirement plan participants with a very competitive retirement savings program that is administered prudently and that offers its participants an array of investment options and tools to assist in making investment choices," Hamilton said.

Jason Rathod – an attorney at Migliaccio and Rathod LLP, one of the firms representing the plaintiffs and the only one to represent the plaintiff in court – declined to comment on the case.

Combating excessive fees

The complaint states that, despite offering lower-cost options, the University mostly offers investment options with higher administrative fees – payments that cover record-keeping costs – which has wasted millions of dollars in the past six years.

Norman Stein, a law professor at Drexel University, said administrative and investment fees are much lower than they were 10 to 15 years ago, and there is no perfect way to choose which retirement fund options to offer. But, he said there is a "strong argument" that institutions should constantly re-evaluate how costly their retirement plan fees are to avoid giving faculty and staff options that are unaffordable.

"You shouldn't assume employees simply have the ability to sift through and figure out which of the investments have the lowest fees," he said.

GWHATCHET.COM

H for more on the class-action lawsuit filed against the University

LEBLANC'S GW:

President's candid approach lifts morale, leads to staff departures

ANDREW GOUDSWARD
SENIOR NEWS EDITOR

At the end of a meeting with senior faculty in January, University President Thomas LeBlanc asked professors how officials should spend a hypothetical \$1 billion donation.

One possible approach, LeBlanc said, would be to spend \$600 million to fill gaps in unmet undergraduate financial aid, \$130 million to renovate the long-deteriorating Thurston Hall and about \$200 million to recruit and retain top-ranked faculty – spending the full check on just three key priorities.

The point, he said, was that moving a multi-billion-dollar university like GW forward would require enormous resources, and officials would need to be strategic about where to make major investments.

"The University does have some resources, and we're going to think about how to prioritize that in a world in which everything we care about is really expensive," LeBlanc told the Faculty Senate.

The episode reflected the first-year president leadership style that faculty, student leaders and former officials described as enthusiastic, evidence-driven and blunt about the need for change. In interviews, University leaders past and present said LeBlanc's approach has buoyed the University, boosting morale and raising hopes that long unaddressed issues may finally be improved.



ETHAN STOLER | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

In his first year, University President Thomas LeBlanc shed long-time administrators and began building an agenda aiming to enact gradual but far-reaching change across the University.

In his first year, LeBlanc shed administrators who have been longtime fixtures in Rice Hall, heard concerns from students, faculty and staff and began building an agenda aiming to enact gradual but far-reaching change across the University.

"I think people are much more optimistic," Harald Griesshammer, an associate professor of physics and a member of the Faculty Senate, said. "We have a lot of enthusiasm with our students, in research and faculty – he's tapping into that enthusiasm. People see things are moving forward."

Building a vision

LeBlanc began his ten-

ure at GW discussing five signature areas of focus for his presidency – including long-standing priorities, like fundraising and research, and new points of emphasis around the quality of student life and the bureaucratic culture of GW.

Faculty said he adopted the right approach, first hearing from community members at a series of town hall meetings about the issues hounding GW and then attempting to solve them by bringing professors and students into policy discussions.

In his second semester, LeBlanc has begun shifting his focus to improve long-derided areas of the Univer-

sity, like research support and student dining, and he has restructured the administration he now leads. The president has also convened a working group to identify ways to improve frustrating processes across departments and will start a task force by next month focused on faculty research support.

Charles Garris, a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering and the former chair of the Faculty Senate executive committee, said that as GW's reputation has improved in academic programs and research over the last couple of decades, officials have struggled to improve a transactional mentality and make campus

a "friendlier" place.

"I think this is probably the biggest contribution that President LeBlanc could make if he got us back to a culture where the staff, faculty and everybody has a service mentality that our role here is to serve and to make things work better and we get rewarded for serving," he said.

LeBlanc said his first significant decision was to change the student library fee to an opt-in system instead of tacking on the fee automatically. He also unveiled a new student meal plan for next academic year, worked with student leaders to craft changes to the Colonial Health Center and merged the enrollment and student affairs offices into one unit.

"We were not well structured to deal with the student experience, and I would just simply say we had all of these issues and all of these questions that were coming up at town halls, and there was no office that was responsible for thinking about them or worrying about them or solving them," LeBlanc said in an interview last week.

Student Association Executive Vice President Sydney Nelson said LeBlanc has been receptive to SA proposals and brought a "refreshing perspective" to University leadership.

"A lot of the concerns that we brought to LeBlanc this year have been really long-standing ones from students at this University, things that students routinely brought

up, but the usual status quo is to throw them under the rug or to say 'well that's just how it is here,'" she said.

Robert Chernak, the long-serving former senior vice president for student and academic support services, said LeBlanc has brought a "real sensitivity to student welfare" that has lifted the morale of student affairs employees bruised by years of budget cuts to administrative offices.

"People are a lot happier in student life," he said. "They think that their work is more valued. They feel that there's a recognition starting with the president that students are treated in a way that shows respect."

Officials make an exit

The first year of LeBlanc's tenure has also seen a parade of high-level departures from the University. Lou Katz, the executive vice president and treasurer, announced his retirement in February and Leo Chalupa, the vice president for research, said in March he will step down this summer. Peter Konwerski, the ever-visible vice provost and dean of student affairs, left his role in December.

The athletic director, campus police chief, associate dean of students and two school deans have all either resigned or moved into higher-level jobs outside the University this academic year.

GWHATCHET.COM

H for more on LeBlanc's first year as University president

CRIME LOG

THREATS

4/10/2018 – 7 p.m.
Munson Hall
A male student reported to the University Police Department that his roommate threatened him.
Referred to Division of Student Affairs

DISORDERLY CONDUCT/TROWING OBJECTS FROM BUILDING

4/13/2018 – 11:19 p.m.
Shenkman Hall
Case Closed
A female student reported to UPD that ice thrown from an upper floor of Shenkman Hall struck her in the head. EMeRG assessed the student and transported her to the GW Hospital emergency room for medical treatment.
No suspects or witnesses

HARASSMENT: EMAIL AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

4/16/2018 – 12 to 2:30 p.m.
Marvin Center
Open Case
UPD received a report from several members of the Student Association that they received unwanted emails asking for a public vote on an upcoming pro-Palestinian divestment resolution. There were no direct threats.
Open case

—Compiled by Brooke Migdon

Corcoran students highlight lack of campus community

From Page 1

Another freshman majoring in fine arts photography said broken cameras and malfunctioning thermometers, which measure the temperature of chemicals involved in developing film, hinder his ability to complete projects.

"All photo programs at other schools have quality equipment – we are not quite getting this because, I guess, it seems GW is not making the arts a priority," he said.

Feeling alienated

Delaney Hoffman, a former Corcoran student who transferred to the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque this past fall, said high tuition costs made her think about switching, but the final straw was feeling like the administration wasn't invested in her arts education.

Hoffman said she was repeatedly ignored by administrators when she asked officials to give her tap access to the Flag Building after hours to complete her projects. She added that students outside of Corcoran also often hold negative opinions about the school, which leave the small number of remaining Corcoran students feeling like they are not part of GW.

"I can't name how many times I said that I was a photo major and was immediately dismissed by an Elliott or CCAS student as not being as capable, intelligent or employable, which was entirely maddening honestly," she said.

One sophomore majoring in photojournalism said she often feels overlooked by the University and peers in other schools because of small class sizes.

"I have constantly had to fight and advocate for myself to not only get what I need to be a successful student, but to also feel a part of this community," she said.

Conflict with classes

A sophomore who was majoring in digital media design said she is transferring to the Ringling College of Art and Design in Florida in the fall after being told last semester that the Corcoran stopped offering her major.

"When I questioned the faculty about what this meant for my future, a professor said, 'You can still graduate with a digital

media design degree, but you'll take graphic design classes,'" she said.

She added that when she applied to Corcoran, she expected to learn and create a digital media portfolio to help her get a job, but the graphic design major option did not provide that same opportunity.

"I decided to transfer because I realized I wouldn't be getting the education I wanted and that administration was not remotely helpful or sympathetic," she said.

After Corcoran combined with CCAS in 2016, the school's classes were required to have at least 10 students – the minimum class size for all CCAS courses. Officials were lenient with low enrollment as students who enrolled in Corcoran before the merger approached graduation, Dean Kessmann, the program head of Corcoran's studio arts program, said.

As these students graduate, Kessmann said officials would allow non-Corcoran students to register for fine art photography and photojournalism core classes this fall to hit the enrollment requirement. After students in the programs raised concerns that cross-listing courses would dampen the quality of the classes, officials went back on their decision three days later, according to the emails.

Another freshman majoring in fine arts photography said the quality of classes would decrease if cross-listed because professors would lower expectations.

"It's really hard to expect the same quality of work out of somebody who's spent their entire life working to go to art school versus someone who's just taking it for a fun class," she said.

Another student said the decision to cross-list classes – though rolled back later – demonstrated the lack of importance placed on the quality of education at Corcoran.

"It's pretty sad to be attending a greater institution where administrators and classmates don't care about us and the arts," she said. "I honestly don't know who is advocating for us and who wants us to succeed because, as of now, it seems like we are on our own, as our program just deteriorates away."



Four-year-old Alexander Porto of Stafford, Va. examines a beehive during the National Zoo's Earth Optimism Day celebration Saturday.

Research office to launch new electronic compliance system

KATHRYN SHEEHAN
STAFF WRITER

Officials are moving research processes online amid a renewed focus on the efficiency of GW's research initiatives.

The Office of the Vice President for Research will transition to an electronic research compliance system, which will allow researchers to track the process of their applications and minimize paper trails, within the next year and a half. Faculty and experts said this type of system can better manage the workflow of ongoing projects because an online system is more accessible and more frequently updated than paper systems.

Sheila Garrity, the associate vice president for research integrity, said the committee that selected the electronic system included representatives from OVPR, the Division of Information Technology, faculty and research staff. Members of the committee spoke with other institutions using similar electronic tools before deciding on a platform to ensure the model would increase efficiency, she said.

Garrity said the Univer-

sity is planning to launch on-line modules to manage research processes for projects using human subjects, animals and biological agents, and to teach conflict of interest compliance. Modules for research involving human subjects will be the first project, to be launched by the end of the year, she said.

"Administrative systems and processes must keep pace as our research enterprise grows," she said.

The office announced that a faculty task force would work to review the research procedures within OVPR in February. Faculty members said they hoped the task force could improve research operations, like applying for grants and receiving general updates.

The electronic system was first announced earlier this month when officials launched a new website tracking each of University President Thomas LeBlanc's five major goals, one of which is research.

Harald Griesshammer, a professor of physics, said there is a lack of communication between OVPR and researchers under the current compliance system. He said

researchers are often frustrated because it's not always clear who is handling each part of a grant application, which an electronic system could make clear.

"I have no idea who is responsible in the administration, I have no idea which signatures are missing and all of this," Griesshammer said.

Griesshammer said GW is lagging behind many other peer institutions, as most schools have already transitioned to an electronic research compliance system in the last 10 years. This makes it difficult for University researchers to collaborate with institutions who use these types of systems, as the current system is much slower, he said.

Of GW's 12 peer schools, eight use an electronic research compliance system.

"We are absolutely falling behind," he said. "When I'm submitting collaborative grants and I tell my colleagues from other universities what's happening here, they automatically give me 15 days more to process everything because they know everything is working differently at GW."

Kathy McClelland, the research compliance office director at Stanford University, said an electronic system can allow faculty members to spend more time developing curriculum and assisting with independent research projects – and less time on clerical work.

"It was a rather laborious process because everything had to be transmitted, and the new system has been very dependable," McClelland said. "The clerical tasks have now been replaced by high-level tasks."

McClelland said with an electronic system, which Stanford implemented 10 years ago, the "paper burden" went away, but the system constantly has to keep up software updates. She said each time there is a change in federal policy on research practices, coding experts have to update the entire system.

"It doesn't happen overnight, it's a long process and it's never really finished," she said. "Once you get something completed, it's usually a couple versions behind. In that sense, there's a lot more challenge in staying current."

Task force examining problematic building names stalls eight months after launch



KIANA LEE | HATCHET PHOTOGRAPHER

Sen. Jan Yanon, CCAS-U, started an informal task force to research the history of University building names, but after eight months, the group includes just two members and has not yet recommended any formal name changes.

KATE MCCARTHY
REPORTER

Eight months after student leaders launched an effort to examine the problematic pasts behind University building names, the project is at a standstill.

An informal task force of about 10 students formed in September to research the problematic history of building names around campus. After eight months of research and administrator meetings, the group has not yet recommended any formal name changes to officials, and membership dropped to just two students amid other campus controversies.

Student leaders who initiated the task force said they aren't concerned about the task force's progress because

the project is a long-term undertaking with no set beginning and end date. The group centered their efforts around the Cloyd Heck Marvin Center – named after a former University president who was a proponent of segregation.

Imani Ross, a former Student Association senator who organized the group, said the task force is a lengthy project that requires a joint effort between students and administrators. She said members of the task force have met with administrators like University President Thomas LeBlanc and Anne Graham, the assistant director of student involvement and Greek life, this academic year to discuss the group's research.

"The president has prided himself on focusing on the student experience," Ross

said. "The moment we begin serious collaboration is the moment his vision comes into fruition."

Ross said the task force is compiling a report of recommendations to give to the University, but that there have been no formal proposals made because the group is "not at that stage yet."

University spokeswoman Maralee Csellar said students involved in the task force have expressed "concerns about the full nature of what President Marvin and his family represent to the GW community," but there has not yet been a formal proposal to change its name.

The task force was initially comprised of about 10 members from the SA and student organizations, including representatives from GW's chap-

ter of the NAACP, GW Democrats and Young Democratic Socialists of America.

But Sen. Jan Yanon, CCAS-U, said he and Ross are the only remaining students still leading the effort despite initial involvement from student leaders.

"We have definitely attempted to collaborate with various different students, some of which were mentioned and others popped up later in our efforts," he said. "I would say quite frankly it has been Imani and me for a majority of it."

Yanon said researching the past of the Marvin Center name has remained the group's main focus because of a student-wide push to rename the student hub.

"Students that have some knowledge of the University history have mixed feelings about the Marvin Center, largely because it is the hub of campus life," Yanon said. "It is certainly a focal point for any sort of external relations with the University, specifically admissions."

Keiko Tsuboi – the chapter leader of YDSA, a student organization that supported the task force – said students involved in the task force may have shifted their focus to other priorities, like drafting a list of demands after a racist Snapchat post depicting members of Alpha Phi circulated around campus in February.

"Half of the students involved were already working on multiple projects to improve the school," Tsuboi said. "When the Alpha Phi stuff happened the immediate priority became forming those demands and working with administration on safety and the climate."

Rising tuition costs push students to pursue three-year track

LIZZIE MINTZ & NIMUE WASHBURN
REPORTERS

Students are opting to scratch a fourth year of college and jump straight into graduate programs or work.

More than 10 students said in interviews that they are graduating in three years to avoid the cost of an extra year and begin a career as soon as their academic requirements are satisfied. Experts said the uptick in students pursuing three-year tracks is likely attributed to a growing desire to cash in on a graduate degree – a tool that's increasingly needed to land a job in today's workforce.

Oliver Street, the executive director of enrollment retention, said between 2 and 4 percent of students graduate in fewer than four years, which they can accomplish by taking AP credit courses in high school, entering a dual-enrollment program or taking a higher number of credits during their time at GW.

"Faculty and staff work with students to ensure they take a reasonable course load each semester so they can balance their in-class learning with out-of-class learning opportunities to receive a full and robust GW experience regardless of the length of time they remain on campus," he



ARIELLE BADER | HATCHET PHOTOGRAPHER
Rebecca Durango, a third-year senior, said she packed her schedule each semester to avoid debt from an extra year at GW.

said in an email.

But for 11 students, a tuition nearing \$70,000 is driving them to leave the University early to save money that could go toward travel or graduate school. The cost of attending GW will grow by about 4 percent next academic year.

Gage Cohen, a third-year senior studying international affairs, said he entered college with 24 AP credits under

his belt – the maximum number of credits that can be transferred from high school.

He said he wanted to graduate in three years to slash the extra year of college tuition, but administrators often pushed him to stay an extra year by requiring him to take general courses that don't pertain to his major.

"Some of the requirements they do put in are because they're pushing people

towards four years," he said. "But I do think they have an economic incentive to push people to stay longer here because they're getting more money."

High tuition costs have driven students at universities across the country to pack their course loads and pursue a three-year track, according to a series published in the Chronicle of Higher Education published earlier

this month. In the series, the Chronicle reported that colleges are increasingly offering accelerating programs to accommodate a growing group of frugal students hoping to get the most out of their tuition dollars.

Rebecca Durango, a third-year senior, said as soon as she found out her AP credits could help her graduate early, she packed her schedule each semester because she'd be in more debt if she stayed an extra year.

"It sounds cool to be able to graduate in three years," she said. "It was partially practical and logistical, and partially 'oh, that sounds like a cool accomplishment.'"

Experts said they have seen an increase in students pursuing three-year tracks at their respective universities because the move alleviates the financial burden of an extra year at universities with skyrocketing price tags. They said if these programs grow in popularity, schools should expand academic advising services so students can plan out a more detailed schedule to graduate early.

Peter Lake, a law professor at Stetson University in Florida, said he's seen more students pursuing three-year tracks so they can pocket money and use it to pay for post-graduation activities, like

graduate programs or travel.

But he said tuition revenue could plummet if more students cut their last year of college, and universities would lack the budget to fund student activities, sports or food services.

"As more programs are successful and become accepted, it becomes easier and easier to actually do it," he said, referring to three-year programs. "I wouldn't be the least bit surprised if we see more of this happening down the road."

Josh Boyd, the director of undergraduate studies at Purdue University, attributes student interest in three-year programs to a growing number of career-driven students who don't want to prolong their college years.

Purdue's College of Liberal Arts launched a new program catered to students on a three-year track last fall, where students work with an adviser to plan a course schedule to graduate early.

"When you go to college, there's an opportunity cost of four years of your life, so it's not just money that you're spending – it's that you're putting everything else on hold for four years," Boyd said. "These programs get students into the workforce a year earlier so they can get started on their career path."

Public health professors push back against health care work requirements

KATHRYN SHEEHAN
STAFF WRITER

Sixteen public health professors are urging a D.C. court to overturn a federal initiative allowing states to impose work requirements on Medicaid users.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced in January that states can now apply for waivers to force Medicaid recipients to provide proof of employment before receiving health benefits. Since then, three states have submitted waivers and been approved. Fifteen Medicaid enrollees from Kentucky – the first state to be granted a waiver – filed a lawsuit in January attempting to block the policy from going into effect.

In response to the lawsuit, 43 public health professors nationwide, including GW faculty members, collectively filed a "friend of the court" brief with D.C.'s U.S. District Court earlier this month. The complaint says the requirement, which would leave tens of thousands of people without health care, will spread nationwide if not stopped in Kentucky.

About 20,000 people in Kentucky could lose health coverage within the first year of the new health care policy, and after five years, almost 100,000 people could lose their coverage, according to the brief. Researchers evaluated the past impact of work requirements on food stamp recipients – which made thousands ineligible for the benefit – and concluded that a similar result would occur if the Medicaid stipulation was imposed.

Lynn Goldman, the dean of the Milken Institute School of Public Health, was one of eight public health deans who collaborated on the brief.

Sara Rosenbaum, a professor of health law and policy who helped conduct the research and write the brief, said the federal government should not have the authority to reduce health insurance benefits.

"That is not how this particular demonstration authority is supposed to be used, to strip people of their health insurance, particularly on the grounds that it's going to improve their health," Rosenbaum said.

Rosenbaum said the policy shift does not align with



KEEGAN MULLEN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Sixteen public health professors are urging a D.C. court to overturn a federal initiative allowing states to impose work requirements on Medicaid users.

the objective of Medicaid, which is meant to alleviate the cost of health care for low-income populations, which often includes people who are unemployed.

"There was no evidence that taking away insurance from people and making them dependent on employer coverage – when

they're this poor and unable to find jobs that have employer coverage in any way – furthers the objectives of the Medicaid program," she said.

Leighton Ku, a professor of health policy and management and director of the Center for Health Policy Research who worked on

the brief, said the federal policy shift was based on the assumption that work improves a person's health, which isn't always the case.

"The reality of the matter is they don't help beneficiaries in the way they expect, and the cost is that large numbers of people will lose their health insurance cover-

age, and because of this will have a much harder time getting health care," he said.

Peter Shin, an associate professor of health policy and management who contributed to the brief, said reducing access to Medicaid will have a negative impact on the health of the population of the state, especially for those who are unemployed. He said that better access to health care has been shown to improve health overall.

"Medicaid has been shown to make a tremendous impact in terms of health care access, which is tied to health care outcomes, and of course down the road to health care costs," Shin said.

Shin said he hopes the brief will encourage the government to reassess the impact that reducing access to Medicaid will have on low-income populations and perhaps lead to a policy change.

"Hopefully it will sway them a little bit in terms of either pulling back on what they want to do with work requirements, as well as looking at some of the legality of what they can actually do," he said.

French president seeks conversation with students at upcoming town hall

MEREDITH ROATEN
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The French president – like world leaders before him – is extending a global hand to college students.

The University announced last week that Emmanuel Macron will host a town hall with students Wednesday in the Smith Center. International affairs experts said the town hall is indicative of Macron's efforts to connect with and elevate the voices of young people, who will be the future of global politics.

University President Thomas LeBlanc said Macron specifically asked to interact with students, and GW students will be the only ones permitted to ask questions at the event. One thousand students will be selected via a lottery system and some student organizations, like the French Club, were allotted some tickets for members.

Because this is Macron's only public appearance outside of Congress, LeBlanc said the town hall is a unique opportunity for students to interact with a foreign leader – an opportunity that doesn't appear every day.

"It's going to be all about this dynamic, young president of France who is really in some ways the next voice of European politicians coming to GW to talk to our students," LeBlanc said in an interview last week. "We knew our students would turn out to see it."

Erwan Lagadec, a re-

search professor of international affairs, said he approached the French embassy in January with the idea to bring Macron to GW, since he heard the president wanted to connect with young people. Lagadec said he helped GW compete with other D.C. universities to host the event.

Macron wanted to engage with students because he was interested in interacting with average citizens, and the team from the French embassy liked the size of the Smith Center, he said.

Lagadec said Macron often seeks the opinions of young people to be more accessible to the public that elected him. Elected at just 39 years old, Macron is the youngest president in French history.

"I think that's just Macron – the fact that he is not showing up to give us a two-hour speech," Lagadec said. "I don't think he's going to give any speeches, he's going to jump in and take student questions seriously."

Macron will make a speech to a joint session of Congress Wednesday before his visit to GW, becoming the first French president to do so since 2007, according to a March press release.

The president of Georgia came to campus in 2016 and the Russian president visited in 2010. After he met with former President Barack Obama, the Vietnamese president stopped by the Jack Morton Auditorium in 2009.

Other world leaders have

spoken at universities around the world to spread their messages.

The prince of Saudi Arabia visited MIT and Harvard University in an attempt to rebrand the country in March, the Chronicle of Higher Education reported.

During the Obama years, the former president hosted a town hall at a university in India and gave speeches at colleges in several countries including Malaysia and South Africa.

Lagadec said Elliott School leaders wanted to take advantage of Macron's visit to focus on France and other French-speaking countries with a series of lectures and talks – led by the Institute of African Studies – on issues like climate change leading up to the event.

Liberata Mulamula, the acting director of the Institute for African Studies, said Macron will be able to tell the next generation of leaders how France under his leadership will be different from the one they have known.

"His message will resonate with the young students," he said. "Macron will also be talking more about the university education and the emphasis on the social world."

Scheherazade Rehman, a professor of international business and finance and international affairs, said Macron was a symbol of hope, as the left-leaning presidential candidate "picked up the political mantle" in Europe

when many state leaders were turning toward the conservative political spectrum.

She said the visit cements what makes GW stand out from other universities nationally and in D.C. The University's location a block from the White House and the World Bank provides a unique opportunity to hear

from foreign dignitaries and other important leaders, she said.

"These are the intangibles that other universities cannot replicate," she said.

Jeff Lightfoot, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, an international affairs think tank, said Macron's visit is unique because state visits

are typically more focused on protocol and meetings with leaders.

Lightfoot said Macron's town hall with students will help build GW's brand as an international affairs hub.

"GW has not been a stranger to senior people when they are in town," Lightfoot said.

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STAFF EDITORIAL

Graduate student unionization efforts deserve to be heard by administrators

Graduate students have been pushing for unionization to improve their experience since September. But the University has been firm with its opposition to unionization, arguing in March that graduate students are students first and not professionals or employees. But positions as teaching assistants and researchers aren't just an educational experience for graduates — they are their jobs.

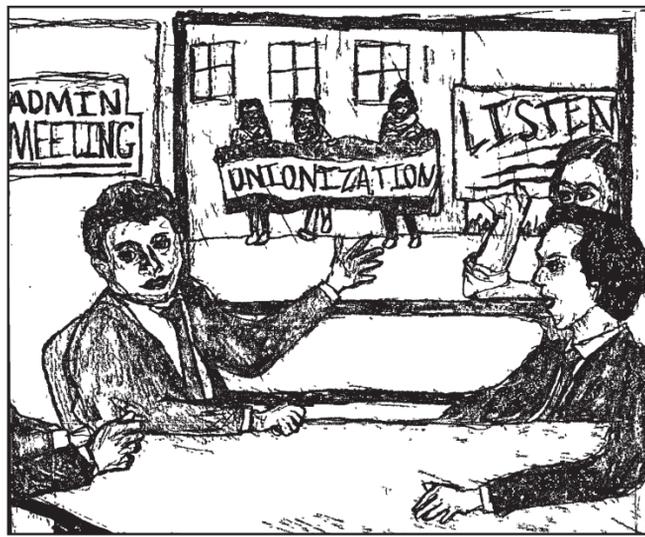
Graduate students shouldn't be blocked by the University for asking to form a union. While the union could gain recognition from the University or by getting approved by the National Labor Relations Board, the University shouldn't stand in the way by failing to meet with them. After receiving a letter from GW Graduate Students United — a group formed by graduate students attempting to organize a union — Provost Forrest Maltzman said that graduate students are not employees and therefore creating a union would strain their relationship with professors and students. But when graduate students are ignored by their own university, the relationship is already strained.

Although GW announced its opposition to the unionization, administrators have failed to sit down and have a conversation with GSU members. These graduate students — who work in teaching assistant positions where they grade assignments, lead discussion sections and

hold their own office hours — have been shut out of conversations about their experiences as employees. Graduate students come from all different financial situations, where some are living independently and others still rely on their parents, so it is unfair to dismiss their claims of low pay and food insecurity unilaterally. GSU members have come together to unionize to call for better working conditions, wages and benefits, which they say will benefit everyone at GW. Graduate students deserve to be heard by the University, but in order to persuade administrators to take them seriously, GSU must clearly define its demands and which students will benefit from these demands.

The University should be willing to meet with students, especially when they band together, but in order to be taken seriously by the University, GSU needs to clearly define the parameters that students must meet in order to fit into this union. Graduate student packages are fairly generous, but they differ on a case-by-case basis, and that means there is a difference between graduate students who are struggling and graduate students who aren't. While Maltzman has said that the packages are worth \$50,000, that money isn't necessarily covering expenses like housing, food and insurance.

Master's and doctorate students also vary in how independent they must be, which affects how much



Cartoon by Emily Venezky

need they have for better wages and benefits. Before the students move forward with their push for unionization, GSU needs to ensure that all graduate students are involved in the making of the demands in order to fully represent their community. This includes graduate students who are too busy to work another job outside of the research they are conducting for the University and students who may be asked, by their individual employers, to work exclusively for the department. The

graduate student community encompasses a diverse group, including students who just finished their undergraduate degree and some that have families of their own, so GSU must draft demands that will benefit all graduate students.

Although they are the largest part of the student population, graduate students do not have clear channels to administrators when issues arise. Master's and doctorate students can go to their department heads with concerns, but change

comes from the administration, not the departments. Just because these GSU members want to unionize, it shouldn't change the fact that administrators must communicate with and address the concerns of their students. This lack of communication shows prospective graduate students that the University isn't an institution that is willing to sit down and discuss concerns, like more comprehensive and affordable health insurance, and higher wages.

While students can achieve unionization through the NLRB — which has a history of denying union requests, like Harvard University's application, under Republican administrations — this shouldn't deter graduate employees. It took NYU's graduate union eight years to become recognized again after its original contract expired, and while current graduate students may not see the benefits — their work could help people down the line.

Graduate and doctorate students are a pivotal part of the student experience at GW and they should be treated as such. While University administrators may not support GSU's unionization efforts, they owe their students and employees an opportunity to argue and explain their case. Administrators must listen to their students because, at the end of the day, their job is to create and maintain an environment that supports their endeavors. And that starts with a seat at the table.

Elliott School course must address class concepts to prepare freshmen for success

As incoming college students are deciding where they will spend their undergraduate years over the next few weeks, the Elliott School of International Affairs is unveiling a course for first-year students that will start with the incoming freshman class. This shift involves eliminating discussion sections for the required foundation class, Introduction to International Affairs, and replacing it with a one-credit course titled First Year Experience.

Introduction to International Affairs is the bread and butter of the Elliott School's freshman course requirements. It's hard to major in international affairs if students aren't entirely sure what international affairs involves. This introduction course exists to clarify questions freshmen may have about what the major entails by giving them a taste of topics they will study, like conflict resolution and gender equality. Replacing the discussion section with the First Year Experience course has strong potential to help new students better prepare for their college years and professional life beyond GW — but it will need to fill the void of a missing discussion section by addressing content and program questions.

The new course will cover a variety of topics, including professional skills like writing a resume and cover letter, as well as identifying students' strengths and interests in the field to help advance their academic and professional careers. In the course, students will meet with professors in small, 20-person seminars on a weekly basis.

As one of the top schools in the world for studying international affairs, the Elliott School prides itself on building leaders in the field. The new course will prepare students for future employment, but the course must

also address international affairs concepts that were formerly covered in discussion sections in order to truly benefit students.

In addition to teaching concepts like leadership and ethics, the First Year Experience has an opportunity to be a venue for content questions and explain some of the more confusing aspects of the Elliott School. The new course should explain the differences between the 14 concentrations offered in the major. Deciding between so many options can be confusing, so students need an introductory course to explain the options so they can make an informed decision. I could have benefited from more guidance in a course like this, because it took until sophomore year for me to realize that I wanted to concentrate in international development.



Kris Brodeur
Columnist

Introduction to International Affairs is taught in just less than an hour to large 250-person lectures. The course currently has an additional weekly 50-minute discussion section with five to 25 students, where students can ask their teaching assistants questions from the week's lectures or readings. These discussions offer an opportunity to go into greater detail about some of the more confusing topics covered in the course.

In my experience, the discussion section was a helpful forum to break down complex issues, like the conflict in Syria, that are a needed baseline for future coursework. The smaller discussion section was also a more welcoming environment than the overwhelming lecture hall full of hundreds of students.

The TAs' abilities to translate tricky topics and my fellow students' thoughtful questions created one of the most beneficial discussion sections I have taken and helped me gain a more comprehensive understanding of the material.

Eliminating the discussion section may create anxiety for students who do not understand a concept from class, and their only options to clear up confusion are asking a question during a 250-person or more lecture or attending office hours. Asking questions during lectures is also impractical because if everyone asked questions during those mere 50 minutes, there wouldn't be enough time for the scheduled material. On the other hand, attending office hours is difficult for freshmen because professors can seem intimidating, and office hours are also frequently scheduled during common class times, which makes it challenging for students to attend without skipping another class. Without a time to fully grasp the major concepts, student could fall behind in their courses — and succeeding in the classroom is the first step to a prosperous career.

I'm cautiously optimistic about the future of the First Year Experience course, and I hope that it succeeds in better preparing Elliott School students for both their academic and professional careers. Although I'm sad to see the Introduction to International Affairs discussion section go, if the new course can provide a comprehensive explanation of concentrations and class concepts while helping students refine skills they will need in the professional world, the shift will be for the better.

— Kris Brodeur, a sophomore double-majoring in international affairs and Latin American hemispheric studies, is a Hatchet columnist.

Students of color, don't be afraid to raise your voices in college

When discussing college applications in high school, my psychology teacher told us about a former student who was accepted to the University of Virginia, but instead opted to go to a less prestigious state school. At the time, I thought she was crazy for declining a spot at UVA because of what I thought was such a small reason at the time — the lack of minority students.

It didn't take long after starting at GW for me to identify with this student's sentiments. I was aware that the schools I went to growing up — where minority students like me, a Chinese American, were the majority — were not what most colleges would be like. I was not ready for how different it would feel to be at a predominantly white institution. Throughout my first two years here, I wondered if I would have been happier had I gone to a more diverse school.

Now, with graduation less than a month away, I have found myself thinking about this again. These days, I realize I made the right decision in coming — and staying — here. With the sense of isolation that can come with being a student of color at a predominantly white institution, we shouldn't feel discouraged, but instead should raise our voices and educate others.

Looking back, I went to elementary, middle and high school in a bubble, since Fairfax County and its public schools are so diverse. My classmates came from all racial, ethnic, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds, so I was rarely put into situations that caused me to think about being an Asian American. Consequently, I didn't have to think about racial discrimination or discomfort that can come with being a minority, other than the dreaded and occasional "Where are you really from?" question.

Yet upon starting classes here, my Asian American identity made me feel like I stuck out. I have often felt like students assume people of one race or ethnicity must

be like any other person from other minority groups, and don't acknowledge cultural differences between them or concepts like white privilege. Alternatively, some assume because you aren't from the same racial background, you must have nothing in common. It's alienating when classmates assume you are an international student, like many have done to me, or make ignorant comments like "All Asians are rich" or "You must be so good at math." Neither of these, unfortunately, are true of me either.



Irene Ly
Opinions Editor

But if I hadn't gone to GW, I wouldn't have fully understood that many students who fall back on these stereotypes or preconceptions aren't racist. Sure, some people are racist — but a common culprit for ignorance is being brought up in a homogenous setting. However, stepping outside your comfort zone and going to college is an opportunity to educate people. This has made me realize the importance of speaking up to try to correct these misconceptions and demanding the respect we deserve.

Over the last four years, I have gone from someone who rarely spoke up about political or social issues to someone who is very vocal about the misrepresentation and lack of representation of Asian Americans and other minorities in the media, and how it can mislead people into believing harmful stereotypes. This may have never happened if I hadn't been confronted with the loneliness and frustration that can come with attending a predominantly white institution. My experience led me to see how having conversations about issues like misrepresentation can help students better understand different minority groups, and how we are both unique yet similar. I used to squirm

at the thought of discussing my racial identity, but now I am unapologetic about it because I know it's important to speak up.

This University is also full of students unafraid to call out problems on campus. I've seen students of color speak up together, like in February when a racist Snapchat rocked campus and sparked a conversation about campus racial tensions. In this year's Student Association election, three out of four presidential and executive vice presidential candidates were people of color, who ran on platforms of diversity and inclusion. While it's on the University to carry out actions they said they would, like implementing mandatory diversity training for all incoming students, I admire these students for speaking up and working to improve life for all students on campus.

I have been lucky. I've never personally felt unsafe or unwelcome here, but unfortunately some students will at predominantly white institutions. They shouldn't be afraid to transfer somewhere they would feel more welcome. But for students like me, staying can spur us to grow. I have become more aware and proud of my identity as an Asian American, which wouldn't have happened had I not been thrown into an environment where I wasn't surrounded by people who looked like me.

When you live in such an accepting and heterogeneous bubble like I did, you begin to take it for granted and assume every other environment is the same. Being a student of color at a predominantly white campus can be a rude awakening, but it can fuel students to call out problems and to propose solutions. College may have been easier for me had I gone somewhere with a similar student body to my past schools, but it certainly would not have made me the impassioned, outspoken individual I am today.

— Irene Ly, a senior majoring in psychology, is The Hatchet's opinions editor.

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RELEASED THIS WEEK:

'KOD,' AN ALBUM BY J. COLE

Living room becomes indie rock concert hall at student-run venue

MATT DYNES
CONTRIBUTING CULTURE EDITOR

In a three-story walk-up just off campus, music blares from the living room and Christmas lights shake with each booming riff of indie rock. As you enter the apartment, people wait at the top of the staircase asking for a suggested \$5 donation – it's for the touring bands.

The do-it-yourself music scene is spread across the District, but many students don't know one venue is right in their backyard. Above the Bayou is a DIY music space – where independent musicians finance and host their own concerts – that also houses three students.

Ben Ureles, a senior majoring in English and one of the students living at Above the Bayou, said he and his two roommates host one show in their living room a week, booking three or four act sets of different indie rock bands. The location of the space remains confidential, he said, because house venues are often shut down because they are not authorized to host large events.

At times, upwards of 80 to 90 concertgoers – typically students – pass through the space. But Ureles said

there is a demand from bands both local and out-of-town to play their venue. Through word of mouth, posters around campus and a Facebook page, they are a venue that offers exposure for musicians across skill levels.

Though they only began living in the space in August, he said Above the Bayou has historically been a house show venue. There have been dips in the building's activity since the 90s but the previous tenants also held shows, and Ureles said the new residents wanted to continue that.

"We've never really gotten any complaints," he said. "I think most of the tenants know what the deal is."

The living room walls are covered with dozens of bands' signatures surrounding a District flag wall mural, Pink Floyd posters and a chalkboard wall of doodles. Sound-proofed cushions under jigsaw mats cloak the floor. This room – with two couches, three large windows and a lot of open space – is the stage for shows.

Growing up, Ureles was classically trained in guitar and played with orchestras in large concert halls. He said the etiquette that comes with music ensembles is starkly

contrasted by house shows, which he prefers. While he is not completely devoted to the DIY music scene, Ureles appreciates the freedom of expression that comes from the intimate space.

"There are times where the audience actually sits down on the floor and watches the set," he said. "So this is a place where I think people aren't necessarily supposed to be pointed out for their musical ability, it's more of a sharing act."

Spoken word artists and novice guitarists perform in the space on some nights while on others it's a raucous experience where jams reach intense volumes. Ureles said you can sometimes see the crowd's jumps bending the floor from the adjoining kitchen.

"Sometimes people will break things or things will have a hole in them in the hallway," he said. "But, you know, those things are just part of the game."

Indie rock band Nowadays from Cape May, N.J. closed last week's set with a feisty, melodic act, taking elements from surf rock, punk and power pop with chanted refrains and searing guitar riffs.

Nowadays vocalist and guitarist Robert Cline, a



SAM FREY | HATCHET PHOTOGRAPHER

Connor St. James sets up at student-run do-it-yourself music venue, Above the Bayou.

sophomore majoring in political communication, first played Above the Bayou with his band in November. The band has since played the venue three or four times.

Compared to the "dozens" of nightly shows the band would play in Philadelphia – where Nowadays first broke ground – Above the Bayou is the only space in downtown D.C. he knows of that hosts house shows. The DIY scene in the District has become "small and scattered"

but Cline said he is trying to change that.

He said he hopes to rent a space in the Georgetown area that he can use for more events, and develop a scene that involves a downtown D.C. student population.

"I just want people to be themselves," he said. "So that's been something I've just been trying to navigate, trying to figure out how to do DIY on this campus, if we open the space to do shows are people gonna come. Who

knows?"

Cline said there is a challenge to get these scenes off the ground, and that college culture often means that students trade their creative passion for a career-focused lifestyle, especially at GW.

"I know there are people here because when you walk around you can see – that person's a punk, they'd be into this kind of thing," Cline said. "So I know there are people here, it's hard finding them through your friends."

Chemistry professor crafts fluorescent art using lab materials

ELIZABETH POWER
REPORTER

A chemistry professor is blurring the lines between art and science as he lights up the lab with fluorescent protein experiments and artwork.

Erik Rodriguez, an assistant professor of chemistry, conducts research using fluorescent proteins found in organisms, like jellyfish, to light up cancerous cells to target them during certain phases for treatment testing. Rodriguez said these proteins can be used to research cancer, as well as other diseases like diabetes. When he is not using them for research, the researcher uses the fluorescent proteins to create glowing artwork.

The artistic process involves biological material found in coral, jellyfish and cyanobacteria that give the organisms red, green and cyan luminescence, respectively. Then, he takes the DNA material and injects it into bacteria like *E. coli*, which responds to the glowing material. The bacteria is then spread on his canvas – a petri dish – with a paintbrush.

By editing the DNA of



GRAEME SLOAN | HATCHET PHOTOGRAPHER

Erik Rodriguez, an assistant professor of chemistry, conducts research and creates art using fluorescent proteins in his lab in the Science and Engineering Hall.

bacteria like *E. coli*, Rodriguez can make the cells glow various colors as it tracks different phases of the cell cycle. He first learned the technique from his former boss at the University of California San Diego, Nobel Prize-winning biochemist Roger Y. Tsien, who introduced him to the idea of using fluorescent proteins for art.

"We actually used to compete at UCSD in the

department of pharmacology and would make Christmas wreaths," he said. "Our lab would always win because we used fluorescent to make the wreaths."

Painting with bacteria is no easy feat, as the design is not visible under normal light. He said he must apply multiple layers in order for the design to show up, and it can be challenging to not overlap the colors. The bacte-

ria grows for a day or two until it is large enough for the image to be captured in a special fluorescent imager – where ultraviolet light brings out certain colors at different wavelengths and projects the entire image.

"It takes awhile to practice but once you get good, it looks right. And you can get very good at it," Rodriguez said.

His favorite creations so far include a multi-

colored turtle and a pink Hawaiian flower, though he has painted numerous designs that he posts on social media and shares with students, he said.

Rodriguez teaches his students to paint with leftover fluorescent dyes from chemistry labs after experiments. Though these paintings are not alive like the fluorescent proteins, he said his students enjoy the creative outlet.

"Instead of throwing away the dyes, we save them and we paint with them," Rodriguez said. "We're not wasting anything. We're using what we've already used for another lab and give it another purpose."

Justin Hachey, a sophomore double-majoring in chemistry and molecular biology, welcomed Rodriguez's desire to create cross-disciplinary projects between art and science.

"I love it," he said. "I think that they are two subject areas that should be combined more frequently."

For now, Rodriguez is prioritizing his research. His work with fluorescent proteins has been published in numerous scientific journals, and a

video of his cell cycle indicator project – which highlights cells changing colors going through its cycle phases – won the 2017 American Wiki Science Competition, a scientific digital media competition earlier this year. The video has more than 60,000 views on Twitter, and Rodriguez said he hopes it will win the international competition later this year.

"It's not easy. It takes money and it takes energy and it takes students," Rodriguez said. "But it's amazing."

Rodriguez said once he gets settled into his role over the summer, he hopes to create outreach programs like he had at his previous lab, where he invited high school students and Boy Scouts to protein-painting workshops.

He said he also sees a potential to collaborate with professional artists, inviting students in the Corcoran School of Arts and Design to work with the organic dyes.

"Eventually I think it would be fun to do more fine art, but it takes practice and skill," Rodriguez said. "I like the research, but that would be fun too."

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The Colonials will return to the Vern to host the Hawks on Senior Day in GW's final home weekend series of the year.



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The Colonials visit the Hoyas in a midweek matchup coming off a weekend series win against Fordham on the road.

Baseball's pitching staff cranks out solid performances on the mound

MADDIE RUNDLETT
STAFF WRITER

While the hard-hitting style of baseball's (22-17, 8-4 A-10) starting nine has grabbed the spotlight, the GW's bullpen has quietly churned out consistent performances on the mound.

In the Colonials' series against Fordham last weekend, five members of the pitching staff combined for 21 strikeouts and five walks while holding the Rams to 12 runs over three games to win the series. The Colonials' pitching staff owns a 3.77 earned run average, good for fifth in the Atlantic 10, and their 16 home runs allowed is fourth-best in the league.

Pitching coach Rick Oliveri said the ability of pitchers to step up across the board to compete has given the team a chance to win.

"Guys have answered the bell when their name has been called," Oliveri said. "We preach attacking the strike zone and they've done a really good job of that."

The Colonials have relied on their pitching depth throughout this season, with 17 different players seeing time at the mound out of the



FILE PHOTO BY ETHAN STOLER | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR
Senior pitcher Kevin Hodgson pitches the ball during a game against Towson in March.

19 pitchers on the team.

Junior pitcher Nathan Woods said that maintaining a level of competition within the bullpen has pushed the team to a higher level of play.

"During midweeks when we have practice we'll get the squad against each other to keep the intensity up," Woods said. "They're all competing for spots, like who is going to be the first guy out

when the starter gets pulled."

Sophomore pitcher Jaret Edwards started in game one of the Colonials series against Fordham Friday, holding on to a no-hitter through six innings. Edwards allowed just five hits, three runs with one earned through his 8.1 innings pitched.

Junior right hand pitcher Will Kobos secured the win with 2.2 innings of scoreless

relief, striking out two batters in the process. He said the ability of starters to stay in the game has contributed to the team's ability to shut down the opposition.

"It gives us a good thing to work off of," Kobos said. "It's pretty exhausting when there's long games where you use a lot of back end guys."

Kobos has been reliable playing in relief this season,

boasting a 1.69 ERA through 26.2 innings pitched.

Of the Colonials' starting pitchers, sophomore pitcher Elliott Raimo owns a team-best ERA of 2.36 overall, good for eighth in the A-10. His 24.2 inning shutout streak came to an end when the Rams broke through the scoreless tie in the bottom of the sixth in game two of the series Saturday.

Despite the Rams' late offensive surge in the 7-2 loss, Raimo recorded nine strikeouts through 7.2 innings pitched.

The Colonials are less likely to lose when they lead games in late innings. When the team is leading after six innings, they are 15-2. That record increases to 19-2 when they lead after seven innings.

Junior pitcher Nathan Woods said that run support from the team allows the pitchers to do their job with confidence.

GW's offense has been powered by senior third baseman Isaiah Pasteur. He holds a program record 27-game hit streak and has garnered a team-leading 42 runs this season.

"When we're scoring early and getting guys on, especially Isaiah getting on,

it just gets the spark started," Woods said. "I think it makes it easier for our pitchers to get in the groove."

Woods went the distance on Sunday, pitching the Colonials' second complete-game effort of the season to secure the 7-2 series win.

Woods held the Rams to just five hits and two runs in the game, striking out eight batters in the process. The Mansfield, Texas, native threw 117 pitches in the win.

With the weekend series win, the Colonials are in sole possession of fourth place in the conference.

In order to keep up the team's level of play on all sides of the ball heading into the rest of the season, the pitching staff needs to keep attacking the zone and get strikeouts to give the offense the chance to do well, Oliveri said.

"Everybody is talented enough," he said. "If we can compete in the strike zone we'll be on the attack and we just want to continue that."

The Colonials return to action Tuesday when they face off against the Georgetown Hoyas in Bethesda, Md. First pitch is slated for 7 p.m.

Renewed confidence carries women's water polo into conference play

BARBARA ALBERTS
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Women's water polo's victories against No. 19 Harvard and Brown last weekend could not have come at a better time for GW.

It had been 14 years since the Colonials (13-13, 3-5 CWPA) beat the Crimson, and six since they downed the Bears. The win against Brown gave the Colonials their third and final Collegiate Water Polo Association win of the regular season – the first time in 13 years GW won more than two conference games in a year.

Now the Colonials are heading into the CWPA Championship next weekend with a renewed confidence in their ability to compete with – and even beat – the very teams they lost to so many times before.

"They started to understand that maybe we were better than people wanted to give us credit for, and maybe that they were willing to give themselves credit for," head coach Barry King said.

This season, the Colonials have adjusted to a new coach, six rookies on the roster and a returning group of seven seniors who have played under three coaches in their four program years.

As the No. 6 seed, the Colonials are slated to play No. 3 Hartwick in the CWPA Championship quarterfinals Friday in Lewisburg, Pa. This is the second time the teams will meet this season.

Sophomore goalkeeper Samantha Runyon said having a group of freshmen who ended up being just as good – if not better – than the seniors, forced players to find and settle into new roles in the pool.

"Toward the end of the season we've really figured out our roles and how to work together instead of almost against each other," Runyon said.

The Colonials have worked past a slew of injuries that disrupted the team's lineup, including junior goalkeeper Katherine Moeller and freshman utility player Dara Bleiberg, whose 34 goals in the season make her one of the top three scorers on the squad.

King said having a deep bench has been "gigantic," especially at this time of the season when the physicality of the game catches up with players.

Senior utility player Scarlett Hallahan said the team's recent success came because the Colonials started to play as a team, rather than individual players trying to play



AARON SCHWARTZ | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Sophomore goalkeeper Samantha Runyon deflects a shot at a women's water polo practice Thursday.

"hero ball."

"We finally had everyone trust one another and realize that if we just play how we know how to play we're going to be fine," Hallahan said.

Years of losing have been "discouraging," Hallahan said, but the team can continue pushing forward and building on the foundation of selfless play set by her and fellow seniors. She added the team must make every game

and practice count toward the greater team goal of winning the CWPA Championship.

"We have always been told, and we've always seen, the potential of where this team can go," Hallahan said. "We're finally where we want to be, and where we should be, as we finish out. And I think we've done a really good job."

The team's goal for the tournament is to clean up

their offensive play and reduce unforced errors, Hallahan said. In their last meeting with the Hawks, the Colonials gave up eight goals in the first quarter, many of which stemmed from sloppy play, she said.

"I think there's a good chance Hartwick is looking past us," Hallahan said. "They are a higher seed and that's naturally how things go. So I think that can be used

to our advantage."

King said this year's tournament is the most competitive he's seen in his time as a coach in the league, and seeding is no indication of which teams will win and lose. After their game against Hartwick, the Colonials will either face Michigan – who the Colonials lost to 20-9 earlier this month – or Brown again.

"That's the difference I think," Hallahan said. "Really feeling like you belong and that you deserve success just as much as everyone else. Because we have put the work in, so now let's earn it, let's finish it up."

Heading into the tournament, the Colonials have already surpassed the total number of goals scored last season and made 30 more assists. With three freshmen in the team's top three scoring positions, King said the rookies need to be prepared for a higher intensity game.

"This tournament is unlike anything else that they've ever played in because this will be nearly my 20th conference championship in the CWPA and the one constant is that it's a brand new season for everybody," King said.

The Colonials will face Hartwick Friday at 3 p.m. in the quarterfinals of the CWPA Championships.

Track and field tops 12 personal-best records at weekend meets

KERRI CORCORAN
REPORTER

Men's and women's track and field are breaking outdoor track and field program records with one meet left before the Atlantic 10 Championships.

Over the weekend, 12 different Colonials set personal-best records at the Larry Ellis Invitational in Princeton, N.J. Friday and the Gallaudet University Invitational in D.C. Saturday.

"Everything points to the spring season, how we set up our training and how we do everything year-round," head coach Terry Weir said. "What we try to do is run our fastest this time of year."

On the women's side, the Colonials finished third out from a field of six with 57 points. The men's side came in fourth out of eight teams with 62 points. Catholic won the contest on both the men's and women's sides, scoring 152 and 150 points, respectively.

The Colonials set four new program records on the men's side and three on the women's side so far this season, and a combined 26 runners have set new personal records on the year.

Weir said he tries to encourage his runners to get into a mentality of winning each individual contest rather than focusing on their personal bests, and was satisfied with the level of competition he saw this weekend.

"What we're always preaching is getting away from 'how fast can I run and what's my time' to 'let's beat the guy next to you, let's beat the girl next to you, and even if it's a slower time or different mark, that's OK,'" he said.

GW sent 18 runners to Gallaudet, where the Colonials competed against Catholic, Hope College, Mary Washington, Howard Community College and Montgomery Community College.

Four GW runners took gold in individual events at Gallaudet. Senior Trevor Sye

won the men's 1,500-meter race with a time of 4:03.81, closely followed by sophomore Paul Hosey at 4:04.60. The Colonials also recorded a one-two finish in the women's 800-meter race, with senior Malone Gabor and junior Lauren Anderson taking first and second, respectively.

Junior Kelli Stetson won the 5,000-meter race with a time of 19:21.15, after finishing second in the women's 15,000-meter race.

"She came right down to the wire for the 1,500 and then came back and ran the 5,000 meters and won that," Weir said. "Running the 5K is more of a workout, but she looked really good."

Graduate student Matthew Lange recorded a 9:10.65 split in the steeplechase, good for an 11th place finish at Gallaudet. Lange and senior Carter Day are ranked 47th and 27th nationally, respectively, in the steeplechase.

The top 48 steeplechase runners qualify for the NCAA Championships. The

last chance to qualify for the national meet is at the Eastern College Athletic Conference May 11 and 12. If Lange and Day hold on to their rankings, they would be the first runners in both men's and women's program history to qualify for the national competition.

"We're still waiting for that first athlete to get in, but I'm feeling pretty confident this year," Weir said.

At the Larry Ellis Invitational Friday, sophomore Suzanne Dannheim broke the program record for steeplechase with a time of 10:46.26, good for 13th overall. She had previously set the record at the Colonial Relays earlier this month – the first time she ran the event.

Freshman Kathryn Nohilly finished behind Dannheim with a time of 10:59.76 and qualified for the USA Track and Field Junior Championships in June, the first time in program history GW will send a freshman to the meet. Runners



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must be between 14 and 19 years of age to compete at the championships. Dannheim, who turned 20 in November, was not eligible for the competition.

Next weekend the Colonials will travel to Philadelphia to compete in the Penn Relays.

Weir said before the A-10

Championships, he hopes the team can highlight its strengths on a stage that combines a sizable group of teams and athletes.

"We don't have a big flashy track and we don't have all the bells and whistles," he said. "But we're starting to develop our kids quickly."