



GRAEME SLOAN | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

Business school faculty said Anuj Mehrotra, the school's dean, said earlier this month that he is considering bringing in more postdoctoral fellows to help make up for the loss of expected revenue.

Business school faces revenue shortfall as enrollment declines

MEREDITH ROATEN
NEWS EDITOR

The business school missed its projected graduate enrollment this year by nearly 30 percent, resulting in a multimillion-dollar revenue shortage, faculty said.

In a meeting with business school faculty Sept. 7, the school's new dean said enrollment dropped by about 17 percent between 2017 and 2018, though officials had anticipated a roughly 19 percent increase, according to five faculty who attended the meeting. About 500 students enrolled in the business school's graduate programs this year, according to a PowerPoint slide from the dean's presentation, which was obtained by The Hatchet.

Thirteen of the 17 graduate programs missed their projected enrollments for the fiscal year 2018 budget, according to the slide. The business school's overall enrollment in master's programs has been steadily declining since 2012, decreasing by nearly 16 percent over five years, according to institutional data.

Of the highest deficits, the Global Master of Business Administration program was expected to accommodate 80 students in 2018 but instead enrolled 50, according to the slide. With a tuition of roughly \$105,000, the global program's shortage alone cost the business school more than \$3 million.

The international Master of Science in Finance, headquartered in Beijing, China, also enrolled 22 students fewer than anticipated, according to the slide – running a \$1.5 million loss.

University spokesman Jason Shevrin said the school's enrollment was discussed at a recent meeting between faculty and administrators, but officials didn't discuss

changing any existing programs. He said the school is always considering how to prioritize students and be prepared for "shifts in the global marketplace."

"The business school will continually examine all its programs while it strives to align its offerings with the needs of its students and the demands of the marketplace," he said.

Shevrin declined to confirm that graduate enrollment dropped by about 17 percent. He declined to say why enrollment declined or how officials reacted to the enrollment drop.

He declined to say what the business school's deficit is after the enrollment downturn and how the decrease will affect the school and GW as a whole.

Shevrin also declined to say how the newly created assistant dean of graduate recruitment and admissions position – which was posted online Sept. 6 – would help increase enrollment in the school's graduate programs. He declined to say when or why officials created the position.

The business school has faced a series of budget concerns in recent years, after former business school Dean Doug Guthrie was fired in 2014 for overspending \$13 million. Linda Livingstone, who took Guthrie's place, set up a repayment plan that included administrative budget cuts that will continue through 2020.

Livingstone left the school in spring 2017 to become the president of Baylor University.

Business school faculty said Anuj Mehrotra, the dean of the school, said at the meeting earlier this month that he is considering bringing in more postdoctoral fellows – researchers with doctorates – to cut costs and make up for the multimil-

lion-dollar loss of expected revenue. The faculty said Mehrotra also announced the assistant dean position at the gathering.

A business school professor – who attended the meeting and spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of retribution from business school officials – said roughly 50 faculty members attended the meeting on Sept. 7. They said that if enrollment continues to decline, the master's programs could become too small to be considered for ranking, which could cost them potential students.

"It's a downward spiral – you don't get ranked, so you don't attract students," they said.

Pradeep Rau, a professor of marketing who attended the meeting, said officials did not provide a clear pathway to make up for the loss at the meeting, but he said the dean indicated that he was negotiating with administrators to find a solution.

"Oftentimes admin is quite helpful in trying to cook up some kind of arrangement," he said.

Rau added that if postdoctoral fellows are brought into the program, they should not be used primarily to teach doctoral students – though doing so would save money. He said postdoctoral fellows should conduct research to build their resumes and grow their reputations.

James Bailey, a professor of leadership, said the downturn this year is likely a result of increased competition from other graduate school programs. The market of business schools is saturated, and schools have to market themselves more each year to attract students, he said.

"More competition would lead me to believe that a temporary downturn is not a long-term concern," Bailey said.

Disability Support Services registration continues to surge

SARAH ROACH
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

About 1,500 graduate and undergraduate students are currently registered with Disability Support Services – a roughly 36 percent jump from the year before.

The number of students registered with the disabilities office has surged over the past several years, which experts attributed to more students feeling comfortable seeking accommodations. Among undergraduates, 6 percent of the student population registered with the office in 2017 – the highest in at least nine years, according to federal data.

For seven years, GW reported that fewer than 3 percent of its students registered with DSS. Before that, the University hadn't registered more than 3 percent of students with disabilities since 2009, when it reported registering 5 percent of the undergraduate population.

The National Center for Education Statistics does not provide specific data for schools that register fewer than 3 percent of undergraduates.

Susan McMenemy, the director of DSS, said the percentage of undergraduate and graduate students who registered with the center has risen by about 50 percent over the past five years and increased by more than 100 percent for students registered with a chronic or mental health condition over the same period.

DSS offers accommodations like note taking assistance, special technology labs in Gelman Library and test-proctoring services. Students registered with DSS must submit a form documenting their disability and notify professors about their disability in a letter on the DSS website.

"Because of our commitment to serving our students and since stu-

dents and their families are becoming more familiar with the services that are available to them as students continue their studies at the collegiate level, we are seeing an increase in requests for assistance," McMenemy said.

Not every student with a disability needs to register with DSS if they don't require accommodations "to maintain active, ongoing participation in their academic program," she said.

"DSS is committed to ensuring full and equivalent participation for persons with disabilities in the GW community by providing essential accommodations for housing and for academic participation," McMenemy said in an email.

Before last academic year, fewer than 3 percent of undergraduates registered with DSS – behind the percentages logged by at least seven of GW's peer institutions, like Georgetown and Tufts universities. The University was among six of its 12 peer institutions that registered fewer than 3 percent of undergraduates with a registered disability in 2016.

Wake Forest University has the highest percentage of students with a registered disability, registering 10 percent of undergraduates in 2017.

The University fell under investigation for possible discrimination against students with disabilities last academic year – the same year that the percentage of students with disabilities jumped. The Office for Civil Rights found that the University lacked proper formatting and captions for students on GW webpages.

Officials resolved to develop a plan that would improve online accessibility on University websites after the probe closed in March.

Higher education ex-

perts said the sudden rise mirrors a nationwide shift toward students feeling more comfortable telling others about their disabilities, especially for those with mental health conditions like anxiety or depression.

Patrick Randolph, the director of the center for student accessibility at Tulane University, said the jump could represent a shift in students' perceptions of their disabilities. Students often highlight their disability as "a badge of courage" when applying to school – using it as a way to show they can excel at a competitive university, he said.

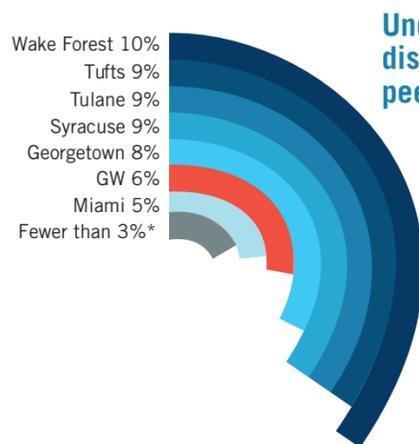
About 9 percent of students registered with a disability at Tulane last academic year – down from 11 percent the previous year, according to federal data.

"They're being better supported in high school and earlier so they're able to matriculate to college more successfully," Randolph said. "More and more students are starting to embrace their diversity in general and because of that, it's not as stigmatizing as it once was."

Rory Stein, the assistant dean of students with disabilities at Boston College, said that officials could be more conscious of ensuring that students with disabilities have the resources they need because they are more likely to withdraw from a school than other students.

By promoting mental health services and offering more academic accommodations, students with a registered disability could feel more inclined to stay at a school because their needs are met, he said.

"These withdrawals could be prevented with some education and outreach about these services and what we can offer them to ameliorate the accommodations of their condition," he said.



Undergraduates registered with disability support services at peer institutions in fall 2017

*Six of GW's peer schools are not included because they reported that fewer than 3 percent of undergraduates were registered with disabilities.

EMILY RECKO | GRAPHICS EDITOR

Students say they provided little input in diversity training committee

CAITLYN PHUNG &
LIZZIE MINTZ
REPORTERS

In the University's records, Abiola Agoro contributed to a student-administrator committee that brainstormed how to implement the first-ever mandatory diversity and inclusion training for incoming students.

But in reality, Agoro, a former student and last year's president of GW's NAACP chapter, said she didn't even know her name was included in an administrative report listing members of the committee until a peer brought it to her attention after it was posted. The report was released 45 days after a racist Snapchat post rocked campus in February and officials vowed to include student voices in a series of new diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Agoro said she was

likely listed after publicly calling on officials to enact major campus climate reforms and institute a zero-tolerance policy for racism in the days following the incident. But she said she never actually attended a committee meeting and didn't receive information from officials about when the meetings would be held.

"The University plays a very good game up front, but when it comes to actually implementing student feedback, they do what they want," she said. "Ultimately, it's whatever they think is best even if that's not the case for students."

Agoro is one of four individuals who were listed on the committee to develop diversity training for incoming students and said they had little to no input in the first installation of the training at freshman orientation this summer. In total, the

report listed 11 students as members of the committee, which was tasked with designing skits and online and in-person discussions.

Nine staffers were also listed on the committee,

"There were staff there to report what was happening up the food chain and it was up to them to report on what would get advanced."

JAMES HARNETT
JUNIOR, DIVERSITY TRAINING COMMITTEE MEMBER

for a total of 20 members – the largest group of all seven named in the report.

Of the remaining seven students, three said they provided input for the committee, two did not return multiple requests for comment and two declined to comment.

Members of the committee said the group met three times in total

and dissolved in March, though administrators emailed the committee April 11 saying the teams would continue to meet.

"We will continue to take your suggestions under consideration as we

members of the committee were emailed in May to pilot an online training tool administrators planned to use during the summer diversity training – the final communication about the committee, they said.

Two members of the committee, including Agoro, said they were never notified about meeting dates or times even though they were listed on the report. One member added that she knew when the meetings were held but couldn't attend any of them because of scheduling conflicts.

Another member, junior James Harnett, said he met with the group three times in Rice Hall for about one hour each with roughly five students and five faculty. He said the meetings were too short and infrequent for students to provide any meaningful feedback.

Though officials said

the committees would continue meeting, Harnett said he received no communication with officials about meetings during the summer or fall.

"We didn't have a lot of insight to what was happening," Harnett said. "There were staff there to report what was happening up the food chain and it was up to them to report on what would get advanced."

Angel Jones, a second-year doctoral student, said she was listed on the report as a member of the committee but never received notice that she was accepted. Before she was listed in the report, Jones said she emailed officials at the Office for Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement about the application process for the committees but never heard back.

"The part of me that

See COMMITTEE Page 2

CRIME LOG

THEFT II/FROM BUILDING

Media and Public Affairs Building
Unknown – Unknown
Closed Case
Contractors working at the Jack Morton Auditorium reported to the GW Police Department that two video memory cards and two Sony battery chargers were stolen from their bag.
No suspects or witnesses

UNLAWFUL ENTRY

South Hall
9/7/2018 – 6:29 p.m.
Closed Case
GWPD responded to a report of a previously barred male subject roaming the residence hall. The man was sighted at Mitchell Hall, but GWPD did not see the individual at first response. GWPD arrested the man, and the Metropolitan Police Department transported him to the Second District police station.
Subject arrested

URINATING IN PUBLIC

20th and F streets NW
9/8/2018 – 10:52 p.m.
Closed Case
GWPD responded to a report of a man urinating in public. Officers issued him a bar notice and asked him to leave the area.
Subject barred

HARASSING TELEPHONE CALLS

Thurston Hall
Multiple – Multiple
Closed Case
A female student reported receiving multiple phone calls from an unidentified caller. She reported hearing heavy breathing from the other line.
No identifiable subjects

THEFT II/FROM BUILDING

District House
9/11/2018 – 10:30 a.m.
Open Case
A male student reported that his iPhone 8 with a blue case was stolen from Peet's Coffee.
No identifiable subjects

—Compiled by Valerie Yurk

GW raises nearly \$116 million after close of largest fundraising campaign



FILE PHOTO BY ETHAN STOLER | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Donna Arbide, the vice president for development and alumni relations, said GW raised \$115.7 million last fiscal year from more than 22,000 donors.

MEREDITH ROATEN NEWS EDITOR

On the heels of the conclusion of the University's campaign to raise \$1 billion, officials raised nearly \$116 million last fiscal year – the fifth-highest amount in the University's history.

Donna Arbide, the vice president for development and alumni relations, said GW raised \$115.7 million last fiscal year from more than 22,000 donors. Fundraising experts said the high total after a major fundraising drive is likely the product of strong donor relationships forged during the campaign.

Arbide said fundraising efforts did not cease with the end of the \$1 billion campaign, and several donors who gave for the first time during the campaign have since continued to give.

She said of the 22,000 donors, 5,000 were alumni, parents or "friends" of the University.

Large gifts from donors last year included an \$18 million donation from Atlantic Philanthropies, an organization that donates to health and social public policy causes internationally, to the Milken In-

stitute School of Public Health to support a fellowship program. Another popular donation area was the University's Power and Promise student scholarship fund, which received nearly \$13 million last year, she said.

She said 50 percent of the Class of 2018 also gave back to the University, with a record 16 percent making recurring gifts.

"We are incredibly grateful to the students, alumni, families, faculty, staff, institutional partners and friends of GW who helped us to surpass our annual fundraising goal," she said in an email.

She added that the University's development office continues to strategize to ensure it is meeting University President Thomas LeBlanc's strategic initiative to improve philanthropy, which he announced in the spring.

She declined to say what strategies or events contributed to last year's fundraising success. She also declined to say how much money each school fundraised in fiscal year 2018.

At a Faculty Senate meeting earlier this month, LeBlanc said raising the \$116 million was possible despite staff

turnover in the development office and having an interim chief development officer for the last year of the campaign.

During the campaign's term from 2014 to 2017, three different vice presidents for development and alumni relations led fundraising efforts. Mike Morsberger left GW during the first year of the campaign, and his replacement, Aristide Collins, left the office in 2017 to take over as head of LeBlanc's presidential transition team. Arbide officially took the reins at the development office in March.

LeBlanc said marking a good fundraising year despite the turnover makes him "optimistic" about the future of philanthropy.

"It's not a matter of luck. It's a matter of blocking and tackling," LeBlanc said. "It's a matter of getting out and meeting your donors and showing them respect."

Fundraising experts said hitting nearly \$116 million last year is laudable because turnover in development offices typically makes it less likely for donors to give back to universities because they don't form personal relationships with staffers.

Anne Gore, the senior de-

velopment officer of annual giving for the community and technical college at the University of Alaska, said turnover can be especially difficult for offices to handle because donors have to get to know new people in the office and develop trusting relationships with them, she said.

She said fundraising depends on successful relationships, which officials likely achieved during the \$1 billion campaign.

"Giving can be kind of an emotional thing, it's a feel-good thing," Gore said. "They want to make a difference."

Tim Seiler, a clinical professor of philanthropic studies at Indiana University, said that in some cases, it can be easy to build fundraising efforts after a big campaign by highlighting the success of the campaign and showing its impact. Large gifts are generally what help reach fundraising goals, and development staff can focus on working with the donors who give these kinds of gifts, he said.

The public health school received a total of \$80 million from Michael Milken and Summer Redstone in 2014 – the largest donation to the \$1 billion campaign and in the University's history. The University renamed Ivory Tower to Shenkman Hall in 2014 after receiving a \$5 million gift from Mark Shenkman.

"People want to be on the winning team," he said. "It's a sense of belonging – I'm part of this group of people now."

But it's impossible for staff to reach every alumnus and potential donor in one big campaign, said Brian Gower, the vice president of research at Ruffalo Noel Levitz, a fundraising consulting company for universities that GW has used in the past. He said between new donors and those who have been inspired by the campaign to give back, GW should be able to increase potential donations.

"There's a lot of evidence here to say that GW has done such a great job with the campaign that they'll see increases in the coming years," he said.

—Dani Grace contributed reporting.

Diversity training committee met three times before dissolving: students

From Page 1

wants to give people the benefit of the doubt was like, 'oh, maybe it was a list of everyone who showed interested in the committee,'" Jones said. "But the other side of me was like 'oh, are they trying to make it look like there were more students involved than there actually was?'"

But Student Association President Ashley Le, who also served on the committee, said that while few students attended the meetings, members were able to share their personal experiences on campus and discuss potential solutions to racial tensions after the Snapchat post. She said she was able to talk about her perspective

on diversity training for students of multiple racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Le said she assumed the committees stopped meeting after March because the team had accomplished its goal: to provide recommendations to administrators as they developed the training. The committees haven't met since their last meeting in March and haven't been told by officials when their next meeting would be held, she said.

"My input was definitely heard in a lot of ways," she said.

Helping shape policies

Caroline LaGuerre-Brown, the vice provost for diversity, equity and community engagement, said the committees were

meant to "help shape" initiatives included in the diversity and inclusion report. All committees met at least once and organized future meetings in their respective teams, she said.

"They then organized their own structure for future meetings and communications tailored to the needs of the issues they were considering," she said in an email.

She said the training committee is continuing to meet and met twice over the summer, but multiple students, including Harnett and Le, said they haven't been contacted about the meetings.

LaGuerre-Brown said officials will evaluate initiatives included in the diversity and inclusion plan "on an ongoing basis." To

track the effectiveness of diversity training for incoming students, officials will conduct an evaluation after a "full cycle" of the pilot program and solicit feedback through surveys and in-person discussions, she said.

"Student feedback is an integral part of assessing the progress we're making," she said. "We will continue to seek student feedback from those who participated in last year's meetings and from all students who wish to provide input."

Since the committees launched, officials also announced that they hired a diversity and inclusion training director, created a website for bias-incident reporting and developed diversity and inclusion training for staff.

'Longstanding' solutions

Higher education experts said that if the University wants to fully commit to promoting diversity and inclusion, officials need longstanding systems – including committees – that can track their goals over time.

Darnell Cole, an associate professor of education at the University of Southern California, said officials must have a follow-up process to track the committees' long-term progress with feedback from students and officials.

He said that by declining to involve students affected by issues of diversity and inclusion in the project teams, "you're really not addressing the problem, you're addressing the ap-

pearance of the problem."

"If you don't have critical stakeholders who have been involved and particularly those least served by the institution on these issues, there's a fundamental flaw," he said.

Sandra Messick, the communications director at the Division of Equity and Inclusion at the University of California Berkeley, said diversity and inclusion initiatives need to be a joint effort between students, faculty and administrators because each group can contribute its own perspectives.

"It's not just about taking, 'okay, you students go do this, okay faculty you go do that,' but it is about increasing the numbers because then everyone is in the dialogue," she said.

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GW, insurance agency sue company for causing water damage in 2000 Penn

DANI GRACE
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The University and its insurance agency are suing a maintenance company for almost \$100,000, claiming the company caused water damage in the 2000 Pennsylvania Avenue complex while performing sprinkler maintenance in 2015.

In a four-page complaint filed in the D.C. Superior Court Wednesday, the plaintiffs claim that Chesapeake Protection Services – a company contracted by the University – acted negligently and breached its contract with GW by failing to inspect drain pipes in The Shops at 2000 Penn. The suit alleges that the company caused water leakage in multiple stairwells in the complex, causing tens of thousands of dollars in damages.

The University and the Continental Casualty Company – which provided general liability insurance to

GW – are asking for \$92,110 to cover \$82,110 in property damage paid by the insurance company and GW's \$10,000 deductible.

“Chesapeake Protection Services had a duty to adhere to the standard of care when performing the sprinkler repair,” the suit states. “They breached the standard of care when they failed to properly inspect the drain riser prior to the draining of the second-floor sprinkler system.”

Chesapeake Protection Services did not respond to a request for comment. The lawyer representing the plaintiffs and a spokeswoman for the University both did not immediately return a request for comment.

The University contracted Chesapeake Protection Services to work on sprinkler pipes on the second floor of 2000 Penn – which houses the second floor of CVS – in September 2015, the suit states. The complex also houses several vendors and restaurants,

including UPS, Chipotle and Paul.

While performing maintenance, an agent for Chesapeake Protection Services shut off the floor control supply valves in two stairwells to “isolate the system.” But five minutes after the drain valve for the second-floor sprinkler opened, multiple leaks in the sprinkler drain system caused water to collect in the stairwells and the fire pump room at the garage level, the suit states.

Chesapeake Protection Services also did not report corrosion-related damage to a drain pipe in 2014 and 2015 reports, according to the complaint.

“Had Chesapeake Protection Services properly inspected and reported the condition of the corrosion related damage to the drain riser, fugitive water would not have discharged within the stairwells and caused a dangerous condition to property and life,” the complaint reads.



OLIVIA ANDERSON | PHOTO EDITOR

GW and its insurance agency are suing a maintenance company, claiming the company caused water damage in the 2000 Pennsylvania Avenue complex.

The suit alleges that the company did not adequately inspect and test the sprinkler

system and failed to properly hire, supervise or control its agents – breaching its con-

tract with the University. An initial scheduling conference is set for Dec. 14.



CONNOR WITSCHONKE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sen. Amy Martin, ESIA-U, will restart several projects that SA leaders spearheaded last academic year.

SA leaders to relaunch projects from previous administration

SARAH ROACH
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

New Student Association leaders are trying to pick up where last year's administration left off.

Three SA senators said they are planning to restart projects that SA leaders spearheaded last academic year but did not continue after leadership turnover. The senators said they intend to make the initiatives, most of which launched as pilot programs last academic year, outlast their tenure by instating the projects as administrator-supported fixtures of the University.

“I saw a lot of really great things get started in the SA during my time last year but maybe not necessarily get finished all the way through,” said Sen. Amy Martin, ESIA-U, who is working to revamp several initiatives. “Projects take more than one seated year in the SA.”

Hungry Harvest

Martin said that as a freshman representative last academic year, she was paired with Logan Malik, the SA's former vice president for undergraduate student policy, to work on projects like instituting a GWorld partnership with Hungry Harvest, a produce delivery service, and a paper-saving campaign.

The SA first collaborated with Hungry Harvest in January, adding the service to GWorld and allowing students to sign up in-person to receive boxes of produce.

Martin said that this year, students will be able to sign up for Hungry Harvest through the SA Facebook page or website instead of in-person to expand the hours that students can sign up for meals. She added that she's working with Tara Scully, an assistant professor of biology, to help advertise the program to her students.

“Hopefully it will be part of the SA's regular functioning – that's my hope, that it's something that outlasts me and Logan,” she said.

SA President Ashley Le said one of the group's main goals this year is to establish Hungry Harvest as an official dining vendor, which

she said officials like John Ralls, the director of communications and outreach for the Division of Operations, have been receptive to since the partnership relaunched this year.

“Seeing the success of the program last semester, I think they have a good reception about that,” she said, referring to officials.

SA senators and cabinet members have been enrolling students in Hungry Harvest at tables around campus for about two weeks since the academic year began.

People for Periods

Former SA President Peak Sen Chua said that after People for Periods – a campaign providing menstrual hygiene products in public campus bathrooms – launched last year, he advised current SA leaders to establish a sustained system for stocking bathrooms.

The program started in November as a joint effort between the Feminist Student Union, the University's student-led food pantry and the SA.

“My role in creating People for Periods was to facilitate enthusiasm towards a good cause into something tangible – my role as a facilitator ended when I left office,” Chua said.

Le, the current SA president, said that at the end of last academic year, there were few volunteers involved to maintain the project, causing students to stock bathrooms on an irregular schedule. This year, Le said she wants students to stock shelves on a weekly instead of biweekly basis, which she said the SA has the “manpower” to do.

“It's important to show students this is not just a one-time thing, it wasn't just a project by one administration,” Le said.

Martin, the SA senator, said she is taking over the program this academic year. Martin said she anticipates that the project will be up and running by the end of the month, operated by SA senators, cabinet members and student organizations involved in its initial launch.

Martin said her long-term goal for the project is to institutionalize the program so it becomes the responsibility

of officials instead of SA leaders, adding that schools like Brown University have a permanent program similar to People for Periods.

“These are products that should be a given – they're obviously not things we don't need, they're necessities,” Martin said.

Changing the nickname

Sen. Hayley Margolis, CCAS-U, said she's planning to restart advocacy work to change the University's nickname from the Colonials to the hippos.

Students launched a petition last year calling to switch the nickname, saying the colonial is offensive to international students whose home countries could have experienced the effects of colonialism.

Margolis said she will continue conversations with officials to determine whether a name change is “feasible in the near future.”

“By the end of the year, almost everyone on campus was aware of our movement to change the team name and that we have a large following of GW community members passionate about hippo school pride,” Margolis said in an email.

Le, the SA president, released a statement after the petition reached 500 signatures in May, saying she would “consider available options” to change the mascot. Le said she is now in favor of changing the name after saying she didn't have an official stance in her initial statement.

She said officials like M.L. “Cissy” Petty, the dean of the student experience, and Tanya Vogel, the athletics director, have been receptive to a potential name change, but they are unsure if alumni are also on board.

Sen. Rico Pride, CCAS-U, said he's also taking over Hippo Day – a social event in Kogan Plaza celebrating GW's unofficial mascot – which launched last academic year.

“There is tons of improvement to be done in terms of spaces and events where the GW community can come together,” Pride said in an email. “Hippo Day is one of the few moments during the academic year that is possible.”

Staff departures leave microbiology department short on research funds

JARED GANS
STAFF WRITER

Summer departures in one of the University's medical departments left the office understaffed and took a major research grant away from current projects, faculty said.

The head of the microbiology, immunology and tropical medicine department left July 1, taking thousands of dollars in research grants away from the department as he brings his research to Cornell University, Michael Bukrinsky, the interim chair of the department, said. At least five departmental departures – including that of the former director, a faculty member and a handful of researchers – have left the current research team short-handed and without prestigious research grants, limiting the growth of future projects, Bukrinsky said.

Bukrinsky said the department's former chair, Douglas Nixon, left his position at GW at about the same time that Brad Jones, a former assistant professor of medicine, departed. Both went to work at Cornell, he said.

Several researchers who worked in the department's labs also left when Nixon resigned, he said.

Bukrinsky said that while turnover in the office means fewer researchers and less grant funding, it is also a chance to revisit the department's focus and encourage more collaboration among the department's researchers. Including Bukrinsky, the department boasts 16 faculty members, according to its website.

“We're now in the transitional phase, looking at how to basically maintain the department, but this also presents an opportunity to move forward and improve the department,” he said.

Bukrinsky said that when the former department chair left, he took several substantial grants with him. The most significant was the multimillion-dollar BELIEVE grant, which is dedicated to providing funding for researching a cure for HIV. Bukrinsky

said this type of grant stays with whoever applied for it.

Bukrinsky said the former chair also had several grants for about \$300,000 a year that will be transferred to Cornell, and the loss of money will force the department to hire another HIV investigator and seek new federal funding sources to provide equipment and materials to researchers.

He said some of the money will remain at the University because a few of Nixon's collaborators have stayed. But he said the department will now need to hire several new investigators to bring in more grants to conduct research in the next few months.

“It's not that all the money is gone because certain subcontracts will be left at GW for those people who are involved in this project who stay at GW,” Bukrinsky said.

Bukrinsky said the dean of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences is responsible for hiring a new chair for the department but he does not know if the hiring process has started.

He added that Nixon was the co-director of and one of the leading investigators for the Center for AIDS Research – a multi-institutional center in D.C. funded by the National Institutes of Health. He said Nixon's departure could mean fewer connections with the center that could have generated more research grants for the department.

“That's also a blow for the center because they're up for renewal of the grant application, and usually the departure of leaders has some negative impact on the reviewers who review the application,” he said.

Nixon did not return multiple requests for comment.

Medical school spokeswoman Lisa Anderson declined to say how the University is addressing turnover in departments conducting research projects and what incentives are provided to researchers if they are thinking about leaving.

Anderson declined to

say how faculty expressed their concerns about high turnover in research labs and how the University will work with the microbiology department to help attract more researchers. She declined to say how researcher turnover can affect research projects or research prestige.

Anderson also declined to say how turnover affects GW's goal to become an internationally recognized research institution. She declined to say if officials have seen research turnover in other departments.

Intiaz Khan, a professor of microbiology, immunology and tropical medicine, said “a number of people will just leave” if a university doesn't offer good facilities.

“There is a risk of that because these days medical research has become really complicated, and in order to be successful, you need really strong core facilities,” Khan said.

He said that despite losing Nixon and Jones – the two faculty members who left the department in July – the department will be able to effectively continue to help patients with HIV and research new treatment options to fight the disease.

“I don't see that the department is falling apart,” Khan said.

But he said the department's incoming faculty may be hurt without a mentor because the chair's role typically includes guiding the focus of the department's research. He said current faculty will direct the new researchers.

Alberto Bosque-Pardos, an assistant professor of microbiology, immunology and tropical medicine, said researchers occasionally change institutions for personal, financial and scientific reasons. He said the University should take more steps to incentivize researchers to stay at GW – which could include covering the costs of instruments and lab equipment that are typically too costly for researchers.

“For researchers, one of the most important things is to have really good core services and facilities that are up to date,” he said.



MAX WANG | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Michael Bukrinsky, the interim chair of the microbiology, immunology and tropical medicine department, said the previous chair's departure left the department understaffed and without a major research grant.

Senior class events shouldn't be focused on asking for students' money

As a senior slowly approaching graduation, the month of May feels both a million years away and just around the corner. I am constantly reminded that my time at GW is soon coming to a close from my parents, professors and my calendar as events for the Class of 2019 pop up.

Renee Pineda
Opinions Editor

At the end of the first week of this academic year, I headed to Hotel Hive for a senior event with a few friends. The main draw — and the reason my friends and I were really going — was that the first 100 students would receive free drink tickets at the hotel's rooftop bar. But we knew the real reason behind the event was to draw support for the senior class gift campaign. The event brought seniors together while encouraging graduating students to donate to the University. Students who chose to make a donation at the event were rewarded with an extra drink ticket.

While both of my friends chose not to donate that night, I was incentivized to make a monthly donation to GW. I was happy

to support the University, and it also didn't hurt that an extra margarita was involved. When deciding whether I was ready to make a small, recurring donation, it was easier for me to choose to do so because I am currently employed. But for graduating seniors who are not financially able to donate, it can be embarrassing to attend events that are designed for us but have a goal of securing donations. There is a time and place for senior gift campaigning, but fundraising should not make up the majority of events for seniors. There must be events that are not tied to donations and are strictly focused on bringing the senior class together. Otherwise, the strong connection between senior events and the senior class gift campaign implies that students are just seen as cash cows.

The senior class gift campaign has certainly seen success. Last year, the campaign collected more than \$140,000 from the Class of 2018. Those collected funds can be dispersed to numerous scholarships, departments, student organizations and even specific research projects, which is an obvious positive for students and the University.

But it is concerning that so many events for seniors have the ulterior



Cartoon by Jeanne Franchesca Dela Cruz

motive of asking students — who have already paid an annual fixed tuition of more than \$50,000 per school year — to make further payments to the University before they even finish paying tuition. Across the country, the average student loan debt was \$39,400 for the Class of 2017, and that amount is likely to rise due to the trend of climbing tuition and housing costs. While it is great that some students, including myself, are able to make those recurring donations, it leaves a weird taste in my

mouth that events like giving out free ice pops come with the caveat of talking about contributing to the senior class gift.

Of course, students who attend these events but don't want to donate can politely decline to do so. But graduating students shouldn't feel guilty or like they must avoid events that are specifically for them because they don't want to or can't contribute to the senior class gift.

Last year, University President Thomas LeBlanc encouraged the Class

of 2018 to continue to donate after graduation in order to leave a legacy. Donating to student organizations or scholarships is definitely one way to leave something for future students, but it is certainly not the only way, and alongside contributing funds, there should be a push to find other ways to give back to GW.

Graduating students who will stay in the DMV area after graduating can offer advice or help student organizations, which can be just as helpful as making financial contri-

butions. I am fortunate to still be close to alumni who were seniors when I was a freshman, and now that I am a senior, I still use them as resources and hope to do the same for current students after I graduate in the spring.

Beyond bringing students together, there can and should be events that are beneficial to the University without the goal of donations. An event that asks graduating seniors for feedback about their time at GW would be a good use of students' and administrators' time and would benefit GW more than a small donation will once seniors leave campus.

Senior year is a time full of stress and uncertainty. With thoughts of postgraduate plans and paying off loans, it is off-putting when students are met with donation requests before they've even paid their last year of tuition. Senior events should be celebratory, as they are commemorating an important and increasingly expensive life event, but those events shouldn't just include writing down your credit card information in exchange for a frosty margarita.

—Renee Pineda, a senior majoring in political science, is *The Hatchet's* opinions editor.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Calling social media a problem is misguided

At GW's peer institution, the University of Southern California, the interim president told the freshman class that embracing and leading change was vital for the future during the school's convocation ceremony. At Boston University, another one of GW's peer schools, the president addressed the freshman class at their matriculation ceremony and used the time to discuss the importance of embracing diversity.

Meanwhile, last weekend at GW's convocation ceremony, University President Thomas LeBlanc told the Class of 2022 to be careful on social media.

While LeBlanc briefly told freshmen to take advantage of GW's resources to meet and work with people different than themselves, he focused on warning students that social media can ruin your reputation. Two major social media-centered scandals divided campus during the spring semester, so it is understandable why LeBlanc wanted to issue this warning to the freshman class. But, this well-intentioned message is misguided because social media is not the problem. His speech criticizes the platform instead of the individuals who made racist posts, and having this conversation without employing tangible changes is not productive.

The Alpha Phi sorority was embroiled in a social media scandal in February when a Snapchat depicting two members with a racist caption circulated on campus. Just more than one month later, Student Association executive vice presidential candidate Brady Forrest was condemned and called anti-Semitic by several student organizations and student leaders for criticizing a multicultural event for including pro-Israel student organizations in old Facebook posts that had resurfaced. Two days later, former SA senator and presidential

candidate Imani Ross apologized for "offensive" posts about minorities published on her Facebook page when she was about 13.

Those situations were shocking and made some students on campus feel uncomfortable, and while social media was the platform that delivered racist messages — it was not the cause of the inappropriate posts. The warning that LeBlanc gave to students at convocation is fair, but preventing racist posts from appearing on social media only puts a Band-Aid on the problem of racism on campus.

LeBlanc's concern isn't wrong, but placing the blame on social media is. Instead of discussing social media as the problem, he could have followed the lead of Boston University's president and discussed the importance of embracing diversity. Or he could have used the time to embolden the Class of 2022 to speak out when they see injustices on campus. Simply telling students to be careful when they post on social media is not a positive use of this time.

This topic choice is also concerning because LeBlanc later said he has no formal plans to address the issue of social media through training, but will continue to speak out about the topic throughout the year. However, continuing a conversation about what the president sees as a problem without taking any steps to remedy the issue is a waste of time.

Social media can worsen the pervasiveness of racism on campus, so some training on how to appropriately use the platform could be beneficial. Providing a training in social media could remind students that posts are permanent and prevent the spread of offensive messages that affect others in the future. But training is a step — not a solution — to reducing incidents of racism

and bigotry that spread on campus.

Using this time to instead encourage students to speak out when they see problems on campus would both address the scandals that have played out and actually take steps to prevent racism on campus. All students have an equal part in making up the GW community, so all students should have been told during convocation that they have the power make a difference when they see concerning behavior.

If students are prompted to call out their peers when they have crossed a line and said something offensive, GW would be taking a step to ensure all students know that hateful speech will not be tolerated on campus.

In both instances where social media sparked a campuswide discussion on hate on campus, students were involved in large student organizations. This convocation speech could have also taken time to tell future student leaders that they are responsible for overseeing their members and each member represents their organization.

While the University could consider addressing social media and providing some form of training, it's more important that officials recognize that the larger problem centers around diversity and hatefulness, not social media.

When racist or otherwise offensive posts appear on social media, the platform isn't the problem. These posts signal larger problems in the culture of GW that will not be addressed by urging students to think before they post. LeBlanc's decision to spend some of his first moments with the Class of 2022 discussing social media was a misguided decision and in doing so, he squandered an opportunity to inspire the freshman class to spark change to fix the underlying issue.

The University needs a separate department for criminal justice

If you are interested in studying criminal justice, you're in luck. GW offers a major and minor in the subject. But what students may not realize is that most of the coursework falls in the sociology department. GW needs a separate criminal justice department to give students a more personalized curriculum and help their career prospects.

Diana Wallens
Writer

Sociology is defined as the study of the development, structure and functioning of human society. Some aspects of criminal justice are similar to sociology, like analyzing the systemic factors that cause crime, but the two fields are ultimately not equal. While criminal justice fits within that large schema, it has a much more specific focus. Sociology covers a lot of territory, from economic trends to sports and entertainment. These subjects may be tangentially related to criminal justice, but they are not central to it. Although there is some overlap, there is not nearly enough to justify lumping criminal justice with the sociology department.

Since 2011, there have been about 60 to 100 students majoring in criminal justice every year, according to institutional data. Those students deserve additional resources. For criminal justice majors and minors, there are several benefits to having a specific department. Most notably, the professors and office resources would not be split up between the sociology and criminal justice majors, so criminal justice majors and minors will have a specific place to go for help. This would also give students more personalized attention when searching for internships and additional education, and when selecting their course schedules each semester. Having a boosted group of expert professors and administrators to guide students would be a benefit.

Because of the University's location, it is especially important for GW to have a criminal justice department. The D.C. area contains some of the most prestigious criminal justice agencies in the country,

including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency. Although not all criminal justice majors go on to work for those agencies, they are still two of the many major job opportunities within their chosen field. Federal departments that are so close to campus offer a great opportunity for the University to hire true experts in the field as adjunct professors. GW should take advantage of its location and cater to students with its own department for criminal justice majors and minors.

A separate department may also allow GW to expand its number of criminal justice courses, and even offer classes geared toward police work for interested students. Currently, the University only offers eight courses that would be considered part of the field. Expanding the number of classes would give future officers more time and training in areas such as firearms, first aid and crime scene investigation. The sociology department does not offer this hands-on experience, but a criminal justice department could.

Northeastern University, one of GW's peer institutions, has a criminal justice department that has been established since 1967. When the department first started, the prime focus of its students was to enter the law enforcement field. However, over the years, the department has shifted its focus to criminal justice and criminology. GW's department of criminal justice should look at Northeastern as an example to follow in order to serve its current students in the future.

Sociology is a much broader field than criminal justice, yet GW treats these fields as if they are the same by housing them in the same department. Instead, they should have their own departments so criminal justice majors are able to receive a more individualized program. This change would also allow GW to expand the range of courses it offers and give students more hands-on experience. GW's location is at the heart of law enforcement in the United States, so it is time it capitalizes on this unique advantage, instead of shying away from it.

—Diana Wallens, a senior majoring in criminal justice, is *a Hatchet* opinions writer.

CHILDISH GAMBINO
Capital One Arena
Sept 19 • \$50
Rap fans will love Childish Gambino's nonstop energy and clever lyrics as he performs live.

OWL CITY
9:30 Club
Sept 22 • \$30
Owl City's signature synthpop sound turns the concert venue into a chill hangout.

STING AND SHAGGY
The Theater at MGM National Harbor
Sept 23 • \$60
Rock star Sting and reggae fusion singer Shaggy join forces in their Caribbean-themed 44/876 tour.

RELEASED THIS WEEK:

SEASON 5 OF NETFLIX'S 'BOJACK HORSEMAN'

Greenhouse atop SEH accommodates unorthodox student experiments



ARIELLE BADER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elijah Aquilina waters plants in the Harlan Greenhouse on the 8th floor of SEH.

AMANDA HILLWARE
REPORTER

On the top floor of the Science and Engineering Hall, plants, bees and fruiting flowers sit in a nursery side-by-side in line with the D.C. skyline.

The Wilbur Harlan Greenhouse opened on the eighth floor of SEH more than a year ago as a research greenhouse for scientific projects and rare species of plants. But even after a year of operation,

the greenhouse remains an untapped green space on campus where students conduct research across several departments.

During open hours each Friday, students can tour the plant selection or devote hours to volunteer from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Rachel Klein, the greenhouse manager, said leaders in the space began hosting plant sales last year and pushing the money earned toward funding students' research projects.

"It's really important for people to have a space where they can conduct this type of research because we're one of the only research greenhouses in the city," Klein said.

To apply to work in the space, students propose projects to Klein and others, and if accepted, students are allotted a budget for the resources needed to fulfill their project.

Eden Smalley, a senior studying mechanical engineering, was one of the students whose



ARIELLE BADER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

project first inspired the greenhouse's plant sales. Smalley, along with two students who have now graduated, designed an aquaponics project that used the nutrient-rich excretions of koi fish and goldfish to fertilize plants above the water.

Smalley said on an urban campus, places like the rooftop greenhouse are especially important.

"We're also a city school, so we like to push the idea of how to make urban life coincide with agriculture, and it's doable," she said.

Upon entering, a netted enclosure holds butterflies in an active experiment conducted by Arnaud Martin, an assistant professor in the biology department. The first of its three rooms contains a timeline of plant history. Klein said

she curated the wing for a course on plant evolution and taxonomy. Its catalog ranges from algae and ferns, which originated on Earth millions of years ago, to the newest evolved angiosperms, which are flowering or fruiting plants, she said.

Although the greenhouse is not partnered with specific organizations on campus, it has worked with several organizations on campus to operate.

The Textile Museum contacted Klein about a month ago to collaborate on an exhibit, she said. The museum will work on a showcase of different types of dyes, and the greenhouse will host a corresponding exhibit with the dyes' plants of origin.

Although the greenhouse rarely grows veg-

etables, Klein said it features a wide variety of tropical fruits and plants – coffee, papaya and mango – which were the research focus of the primary donor to the greenhouse. The late benefactor Harlan, who earned a degree in botany, was a specialist in tropical fruits at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and there is an entire collection in the greenhouse dedicated to his life's work, Klein said.

"He didn't have any children, so he just left his money to us and I think we use it pretty well, try to do things that he would be interested in," Klein said.

Scott Dai, a senior studying biology, worked on a project in the greenhouse that replicated coastal agricultural fields, which exist in Maryland counties but are two to three hours from campus. Dai said since December, the space has allowed him to perform fieldwork that couldn't normally be done in D.C.

"When you think about science, there are a bunch of different things, and even in ecology, which is what I study, there are different sub-branches," Dai said. "Working in this lab and working on this project in the greenhouse has made me a little bit more confident in which route I want to take."

Professor films documentary on MLB training camps in China

KATHERINE ABUGHAZALEH
CONTRIBUTING CULTURE EDITOR

A professor's class trip to China inspired him to film a documentary about a new cultural phenomenon in the country: training centers for America's pastime.

Mark Hyman, an assistant teaching professor of management and tourism studies, is a director for the documentary "The Great China Baseball Hunt." Still in its filming stages, the movie delves into the lives of Chinese students at three Major League Baseball development centers – schools that provide education and intense baseball training to children in the area.

The documentary partly focuses on the story of Xu Guiyuan, the first Chinese MLB player in 100 years and a development center alumnus, while also following the students currently at China's baseball centers. Hyman considers both aspects of the film imperative to understanding the burgeoning interest in baseball in China.

"We were observing children not only being taught to play baseball, but being taught to become Major League Baseball players," Hyman said. "With 1.4 billion people, you'd figure there's probably one Major League Baseball player there, but where the heck do you find them?"

In China – a country that has fewer baseball diamonds in its mainland than the entire city of Cleveland – Hyman said MLB saw an untapped market of fans and players.

MLB first opened the baseball centers nearly a decade ago and began offering traditional education and room and board for each student. The students attend academic classes during the day and learn how to play baseball on afternoons and weekends, Hyman said.

Hyman originally thought of the idea for the documentary during a trip to China in 2015 with his Sport Globalization class, a course in sports management. The class visited one of the MLB development centers and met with students, including professional aspirant Guiyuan – who signed a contract with the Baltimore Orioles one month later.

Hyman and his collaborators – Kenneth Eng, Jeff Barker and John Zhang – envision

"The Great China Baseball Hunt" as an in-depth look at MLB's efforts to expand internationally, as well as a symbol of the globalization of sports worldwide.

"Most people in the U.S. are already fans and they've already bought a baseball cap," he said. "So these leagues are looking for new fans in new places across the world."

The documentary team captured the diversity of China's new baseball culture with scenes shot at the centers, along with scenes in rural Tibet, Shanghai, Tokyo and Florida for MLB's spring training.

Many of the children at the centers had limited exposure to baseball before they went to the development centers. Families of the sports students, including two parents who are yak herders in Tibet, consider baseball a path to a better life, Hyman said.

"Xu Guiyuan is the first player who was a product from this system," Hyman said. "But there are 150 kids who are training to become that guy. We will continue to follow them and their stories."

In the past three years, MLB has drafted five players from China's mainland who trained at the centers, but the league has a long way to go to increase its national viewership.

Owning a baseball bat was looked down upon in China because the sport "embodied everything that was Western and capitalistic," Hyman said. But now the new centers create a way for kids to learn a skill that will afford them a future funded by the MLB.

"For the families, baseball is kind of an entree into a Western culture and way of life," he said. "The parents are encouraging that because they want their kids to be citizens of the world. They sell baseball as a lifestyle, as opposed to a sport where you want to win the game."

A trailer for the movie was released earlier this month, but the team must now focus on fundraising to continue the story.

"We don't know how this story ends," he said. "A movie has to have an ending and ours doesn't have an ending yet. We need to go back to China because part of our film is about the young people who are still there."



MARGOT DYNES | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A photo by John Paradiso and a hand-cut paper work by Antonius Bui are two of the 17 pieces in "Queer(ing) Pleasure."

Idea sparked in graduate school 'manifests' into art exhibit exploring LGBTQ sexuality

MARGOT DYNES
CULTURE EDITOR

Andy Johnson, a two-time alumnus and faculty member at the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, is no stranger to showcasing sex in his art exhibits.

One of his pieces contains collated footage of gay pornography from the '60s to today. But the work isn't meant to be shocking or overtly sexual. Instead, it stitches together small, intimate moments between sexual acts like stolen glances, awkward pauses and gentle caresses and is meant to show pleasure that is rarely discussed in portrayals of LGBTQ eroticism.

For his latest work, Johnson selected artists that similarly challenge sexual politics to curate the exhibit "Queer(ing) Pleasure."

Johnson, the program administrator for the art history program and the director of Gallery 102, was chosen to curate the exhibit as part of the D.C. Arts Center's curatorial initiative this year. As a junior curator, Johnson put together two exhibits that he said are a product of an idea initially sparked when he attended graduate school.

"These ideas have evolved over several years, beginning in grad school, and have now manifested themselves into these two shows," Johnson said. "You get those ideas now out of your head because they were lingering there for so long."

The intimate exhibit at 2438 18th St. NW opened earlier this month and runs through mid-October. The

17 works are confrontational and sparse in the blank white space, running the gamut of mixed media, acquired objects and handmade works by five local and national artists.

In the work of Tsenday Makkonen, flowing gowns are arranged in columns below rose petals and gilded gold casts of pelvises.

Continuing this contrast of airiness and heft, "Torso Floret" features an intricately hand-cut sculpture made from an '80s porn magazine, precisely sliced with a scalpel by artist Jade Yumang.

Even when you see an exposed private part in the art, it hardly registers as more than decoration to the larger emotions and messages at hand, Johnson said.

"Pleasure can be a space in which we can begin to unpack the layers that have been put on of how the body has to function in society or is required to in order to be deemed legitimate or valuable," Johnson said.

Yumang, an artist who just began his tenure at the School of Art Institute of Chicago, has three other artworks featured, which at first look indecipherable. Glancing at the chosen three abstract wall sculptures from his 2013 collection, you would never guess the cotton rags were scanned photos from a "well-loved" erotic magazine called "My-Oh-My" that he said was embroiled in legal trouble for obscenity in the 1970s.

"What I found fascinating was if you look through the magazine, it's two people that are slowly undressing, every page," Yumang said. "It's

nothing hardcore at all. They're just touching, loving, embracing, undressing, caressing and kissing. That was, I guess, considered obscene."

But it's not just about pleasure – sometimes the exhibit deals in a human existence molded by trauma, Johnson said, or pieces of family and home. Some artists dive into more intersectional art on being a black queer woman, like the video work of D.C.-based artist Monique Muse Dodd.

"Trauma, healing, pleasure, the erotic and desire, as Dodd illustrates, are not mutually exclusive, but in fact share space," Johnson said in the exhibit's catalog.

Johnson said he experienced homophobic encounters in Adams Morgan, a "hyper-heteronormative, hyper-masculine" neighborhood, while attending GW through 2015. To juxtapose the neighborhood, he said that he wanted to feature an exhibit that was "overtly queer."

"I don't focus on straight white men – you won't find them in any of my work that I do," Johnson said.

Johnson previously curated an exhibit, "Queer(ed) Performativity," at the same venue which ran from April to May. He posed the exhibit as a critique of expectations about LGBTQ embodiment and the baggage behind images in popular culture and social media.

But with "Queer(ing) Pleasure," Johnson said he wanted to use what he learned from his last exhibit and choose art pieces that could fit as tools for resistance and celebration, rather than of doom and gloom.

GAMES OF THE WEEK



MEN'S SOCCER
vs. Binghamton
2 p.m. • Tuesday
Coming off a three-game road trip, the Colonials will host the Bearcats at Mount Vernon field for GW's final home game until October.



VOLLEYBALL
vs. Saint Louis
7 p.m. • Friday
Coming off its fourth straight win, GW will open its conference schedule against the Billikens at the Smith Center.

NUMBER CRUNCH

0.220

Volleyball's attack percentage in its three-win weekend at the Dig the District Invitational.

Women's soccer slows early-season momentum heading into A-10 play

MADDIE RUNDLETT
STAFF WRITER

Women's soccer lost its early-season spark going scoreless in the last four games of GW's nonconference slate.

The Colonials (4-3-1) had a strong start to the season with first-year head coach Michelle Demko at the helm, recording four-straight wins to open the season for the first time since 2016.

But now heading into Atlantic 10 play Thursday, the team has not recorded a goal since their 4-1 victory against Stetson last month. The Colonials were shut out in their losses to Georgetown on Aug. 30 and NC State earlier this month before playing Maryland to a 0-0 draw Sept. 9. The Colonials lost their third game of the season 3-0 to James Madison Sunday.

GW's record so far puts them tied for seventh place in the conference with Dayton. Reigning A-10 champions La Salle (5-1-1), Saint Joseph's (5-2-2) and George Mason (5-3-0) headline the top-three teams in the conference.

The Colonials were ranked No. 8 in the fourth United States Coaches' Week East Region Poll. La Salle ranked above the Colonials in fourth place, while Saint Joseph's and Dayton followed GW at ninth and 10th, respectively.

Although GW's offense

has been struggling, the team's defense has remained strong. The Colonials' backline has held opponents to a .97 goals against average, fifth among conference competition. Before their 3-0 loss to James Madison, the Colonials had conceded just three goals in two losses.

Senior goalkeeper Anna Tapen has been solid at the backstop for the Colonials. Through 732 minutes, Tapen boasts a 0.857 save percentage, good for first in the A-10. The first-time starter's 48 saves rank second among conference competition.

Despite their strong start, the Colonials have had a low-scoring season, with their 1.13 goals per game average ranking 10th in the league. Last season, GW ended with a 1.11 goals per game average.

Now on a four-game scoring drought, GW will need to focus on its offensive output to match its competitors.

Ahead of the start of A-10 play, here is a look at key competitors the Colonials will face.

George Mason (5-3-0):

As the No. 3 seed, the Patriots fell to No. 6 seed VCU in the A-10 quarterfinals last season. This season, the Patriots are averaging 1.50 goals per game, good for fifth in the league, but the team's defense has been permeable. George Mason has given up 15 goals this season compared to



FILE PHOTO BY ARIELLE BADER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Senior goalkeeper Anna Tapen has been solid at the backstop for the Colonials, boasting a 0.857 save percentage.

GW's eight, and opponents average 1.88 goals against the Patriots. Last season, the Colonials battled the Patriots to a 3-4 loss. With both offenses even on the stat sheet, the teams' Sept. 27 meeting looks like it will be a defensive battle in favor of GW.

Saint Joseph's (5-2-2):

Saint Joseph's returns 10 starters this season. Another low-scoring team, Saint Joseph's relies heavily on defensive play to win games. The Hawks rank fourth in the A-10 with a .95 goals against

average, though the numbers are skewed by high-scoring losses to Bucknell and Princeton. GW faces Saint Joseph's on the road on Oct. 11.

Saint Louis (5-3-1):

The Colonials' toughest competition comes at the end of their A-10 regular season slate on Oct. 21. The Billikens are heavily favored to finish first in the conference, receiving 10 first-place votes in the preseason poll. In all five of its wins this season, the team has held its opponents scoreless, thanks to junior

goalkeeper Olivia Silverman. Silverman's 0.77 goals against average leads the conference and could spell trouble for the Colonials after their recent offensive drought. The Billikens have the makings of an all-around team, averaging 1.89 goals per game, the second-highest in the league.

Dayton (4-3-1):

Last season, Dayton made it to the quarterfinals of the A-10 tournament as the eighth seed, only to fall to La Salle. The Flyers are relatively average in all categories com-

pared to conference competitors, ranking ninth in conference play with an average of 1.25 goals per game and sixth with a 1.09 goals against average. Dayton has also been held scoreless in four of its eight matches this season, opening the door for the Colonials to capitalize on a lack of consistency from their offense. However, the Flyers are a consistent competitor in the conference, making the tournament every year since joining the A-10 in 1995, and are an interesting bubble team to keep an eye out for. The Flyers and the Colonials will face off at home Oct. 14.

Duquesne (4-3-0):

Last season, the Colonials faced the Dukes in back-to-back matchups. GW tied Duquesne 0-0 in the Colonials' final regular season game before a double-overtime 1-0 loss in the A-10 Championship quarterfinals ended their season. Heading into conference play, the Dukes are averaging 1.29 goals per game, barely edging GW's average. Duquesne's weak spot could be the team's defense, which allows an average of 1.29 goals scored against them, ranking them eighth among A-10 competition. Even while struggling on offense, the Colonials might have an easier time finding the back of the net in their Oct. 4 match against the Dukes.

Williams excels on soccer field while playing with sickle cell trait

KERRI CORCORAN
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Women's soccer sophomore midfielder Alexis Williams was playing with her club high school team at a tournament in Colorado when she found she could not keep up her endurance on the field.

"It was the weirdest thing because I've never had problems running or anything, but I would have to stop every second," she said. "I couldn't run."

Williams knew she was physically fit, but questions from her coaches asking if she was out of shape frustrated her — especially because being quick on the field was a hallmark of her play.

"She forgot about the incident when she returned home to New Jersey, where she was able to return back to her normal ability on the field."

But the moment in Colorado would return to Williams' mind when she went in for a sickle cell trait test before her freshman year of college — an NCAA requirement for athletes before their first season — and it came back positive.

"I was a little bit scared at first because I didn't really know much about it," she said. "I mean I had heard of it, but I didn't know that it would affect me playing soccer."

Sickle cell trait occurs when a person inherits both a sickle cell and a normal hemoglobin gene. Possessing two sickle cell genes results

in sickle cell anemia, which is when blood cells form in a crescent shape that increases clotting and decreases oxygen flow.

Sickle cell trait, what Williams was diagnosed with last year, tends to be asymptomatic.

Williams was first tested for sickle cell trait when she was an infant, alongside her older and younger sisters. Williams' mother took her three daughters to be tested for the sickle cell gene because their father has sickle cell anemia.

The results for Williams and her younger sister came back negative, while her older sister tested positive for the trait. But the positive test that the doctors believed to belong to her older sister years ago actually belonged to Williams, she said.

Williams led an active childhood despite unknowingly having sickle cell trait. She tested out softball, lacrosse, basketball, soccer and track, before continuing track and soccer into her high school years. She drew collegiate coaches to her soccer games as early as her freshman year.

At GW, Williams has started in seven of eight games this season for the Colonials. She leads the team in goals scored with four and is one of three players to have tallied an assist.

"Conversations were had earlier in the season and she knows how important she is to the team," head coach Michelle Demko said.

The biggest risk factors that could lead to complica-

tions with sickle cell trait are low oxygen levels, dehydration and high altitudes — like what Williams experienced in Colorado.

When experiencing symptoms, Williams said her heart rate spikes to more than 200 beats per minute, well over the average of 60 to 100 beats per minute. Her chest tightens and she said she would sometimes feel lightheaded and on the verge of passing out.

Now, she drinks a bottle of Pedialyte or Powerade Zero the night before every game and three on the morning of a game to ensure she is fully hydrated to prevent symptoms.

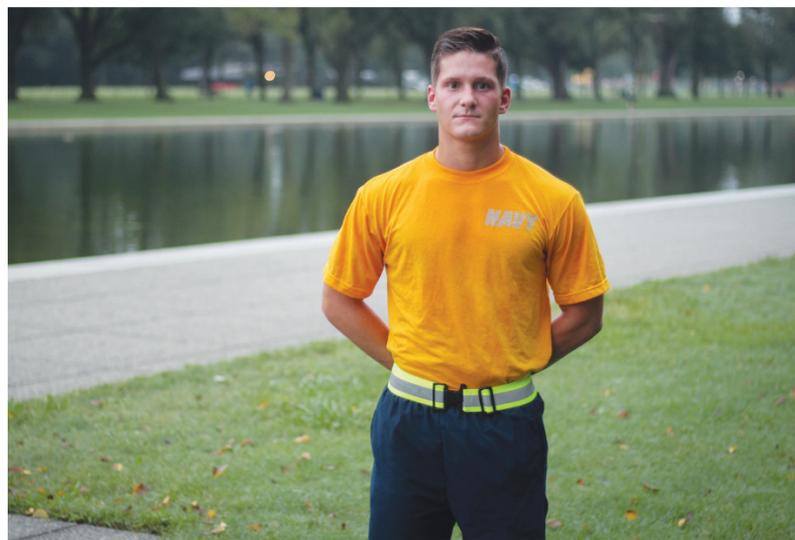
Demko, who took over the women's soccer program in April, said she was immediately informed of Williams' condition the first day she came to train the team at the end of the spring season.

"She's a competitor, she doesn't want to step away at all," Demko said. "So it's just really reminding her and asking her 'how are you feeling, do you need a break?'"

Williams said it can be hard for teammates to understand why she might not seem to be hustling on every play, but she explains that her decreased speed is not because of a lack of effort.

Although the initial moment of diagnosis was shocking for her, Williams said the coaching staff and athletic training team at GW have made her feel more secure.

"I'm not afraid anymore," she said. "I just know that I'll be OK because I have good support around me."



JACK BOROWIAK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Sophomore Nick Tomczyk is a diver on the men's swimming and diving team and is currently a member of GW's Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps program.

Student-athletes bring military training back to their teams

BARBARA ALBERTS
SPORTS EDITOR

Two student-athletes are bringing military training and discipline to Division I competition.

Senior Riley Tejcek, an infielder for softball, completed her final training with the Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Course over the summer. Sophomore Nick Tomczyk, a diver on the men's swimming and diving team, is currently a member of GW's Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps program.

On top of the extra physical training that comes with participating in their respective programs, both athletes said being a part of the military has helped with their leadership on the field and in the pool and made them remember they are always competing for something bigger than themselves.

"It's all about a team unit, it's not about you, it's about the people next to you," Tejcek said. "That's the important thing, is it's not about you."

Tomczyk said he wanted to be in the military starting at a young age because he had relatives in the Army. But as a diver who was constantly in the water, he was drawn to the Navy instead, he said.

As a member of GW's NROTC program, Tomczyk's military life is blended into his college and athletic life.

A typical day for him starts at 5 a.m. and ends around midnight. In the span

of 19 hours, Tomczyk fits in six hours of class, physical training for NROTC and two diving practices before spending his evenings at the library studying.

"Once I'm done with one thing, I focus on the next thing and that's how I get through it," Tomczyk said. "I just take it one step at a time each day."

As a squad leader, Tomczyk is responsible for seven other people in his platoon. He said he takes the leadership and physical training he practices in NROTC into the pool as a diver, but also applies what he learns from the swimming and diving captains to his squad leader position.

"Being a part of a team definitely helps because I'm learning from the captains of the swim and dive team how they're being leaders," he said. "I can take stuff off of them and transfer it to the unit to be a leader."

Unlike NROTC, Platoon Leaders Course training takes place during two six-week summer courses that are spread out over two years instead of integrated into a student's life, so Tejcek's workload is more manageable.

Tejcek — who finished her final six-week training this summer — said filling out medical paperwork and gaining government clearances took months, but soon she found herself starting her first six-week training three days after competing in the Atlantic 10 Championship her freshman year.

On top of softball practices and workouts, Tejcek does body-weight training and long-distance runs and rucks to stay in shape and be body-weight efficient when she is not in formal military training.

As a captain of the softball team, Tejcek said she reminds her teammates that even when they walk up to the plate alone, they are still competing for the teammates in the dugout — the same team mentality she experiences in the military.

"They call me 'Marine' at practice," Tejcek said. "They'll like say funny things like 'I don't want to be next to Riley in a workout,' but it comes from a good place because they supported me so much."

For both athletes, being a part of something bigger than themselves — both in the military and on their respective teams — is a rewarding experience. After graduation, both athletes will be commissioned into their respective branches.

"Those are the people that are going to impact me the rest of my life," Tejcek said. "Above all else is the relationships with people I've met along the way that keep me going and keep me motivated, absolutely."

Tomczyk said it is "fulfilling" knowing he can come out of college an officer in the Navy ready to contribute and serve the country.

"Knowing that it's helping me grow as a person, but that will in turn help other people too," he said.



OLIVIA ANDERSON | PHOTO EDITOR

Sophomore midfielder Alexis Williams tested positive for sickle cell trait ahead of her freshman year and now leads women's soccer in goals.