



# GW Hillel to begin construction after prolonged legal battle



GW Hillel will soon tear down its more than 30-year-old building on H Street and replace it with a four-story structure equipped with a kosher dining venue.

**DANI GRACE & RIYA GAVASKAR**  
REPORTERS

GW Hillel will soon tear down its more than 30-year-old building and replace it with a four-story structure equipped with a kosher dining venue.

After the D.C. Zoning Commission approved renovation plans for GW Hillel's building on 23rd and H streets July 30, the organization is hoping to begin construction on the new building this fall. The construction marks the official end of a nearly four-year-long legal battle with Hillel's neighbors and will give the group a permanent home for the first time since 2014.

"Having a space that we can really utilize, build a community out of and have to be a home away from home for students on campus – and to be able to use it in partnership with the wider University – is a really invaluable opportunity," Adena Kirstein, the director of Hillel, said.

Hillel's building has been vacant since 2014, when the organization first moved out of its townhouse to prepare for multimillion-dollar renovations. But St. Mary's Episcopal Church – Hillel's neighbor – and the West End Citizens Association attempted to shut down the project in 2015, arguing that renovations would damage the church and block its access to H Street.

After the D.C. Zoning Commission gave Hillel initial approval to move forward with the project in November 2015, WECA and the church filed a lawsuit in May 2016. The D.C. Court of Appeals upheld the D.C. Zoning Commission's decision in December.

But Hillel leaders are now moving forward with the project with the support of WECA and the church after modifying building plans in

April. The new proposal makes the building footprint about 20 percent smaller than the previously approved plans, according to Hillel's zoning application.

"We're all working in the spirit of good neighbors and really trying to make a project that's gonna work for us and work for them," Kirstein said. "They've been nothing but supportive and helpful over the past year."

Barbara Kahlow, the treasurer for WECA, said the organization "fully supports" the new building plan because it is farther away from the church than initially designed.

The new four-story building – which is set to open in spring 2020 – will include a full kosher dining facility in the basement and two floors specifically for Hillel. The third and fourth floor will be leased by the University and the rooftop will be available as an outdoor space for the organization, Kirstein said.

She said the kosher dining ven-

dor will be on GWorld and available to all students, but officials haven't yet determined which company will be used or what food will be offered. She said the organization is in the process of finalizing the construction company that will work on the building.

Kirstein added that Thomas LeBlanc, the University president, and Alicia Knight, the senior associate vice president of operations, supported plans for the new building.

Knight said the University provided feedback for Hillel's design plans. She said the University has not yet determined how it will utilize the top two floors of the building and will decide closer to the opening date.

"We are looking forward to seeing this new building open, as it will provide quality community space that will lend itself to helping to build and strengthen community amongst students," she said.



Mock-up of GW Hillel building after renovations  
SOURCE: D.C. ZONING COMMISSION RECORDS

# Officials explore logistics of free 18th credit

**PARTH KOTAK & REBECCA LEPPERT**  
STAFF WRITERS

Officials are taking the first steps to allow all undergraduates to take a free 18th credit.

Amid increased pressure from student leaders to expand the 17-credit cap, administrators said they're looking into the logistics of implementing a free 18th credit to make it easier for students to pursue multiple majors or graduate early. The move follows overwhelming approval for a free 18th credit during the Student Association election last academic year – about 96 percent of students said they supported the measure and 54 percent indicated they would use it if given the opportunity.

Provost Forrest Maltzman said that University President Thomas LeBlanc asked officials to evaluate the cost of upping the credit cap after SA leaders approached him about the topic last academic year.

"The reason to allow students to take 18 credits is that it will further facilitate the ability for students to pursue their academic aspirations," he said in an email.

Outside of the Honors Program and the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences – both of which offer students an exception to take more than 17 credits – Maltzman said about 200 students paid to take more than 17 credits last year.

Maltzman declined to say when it would be possible to implement the credit or how he will work with the Student Association to implement the free credit.

## Student support

SA leaders said that because officials are researching the plausibility of the 18th credit this semester, student leaders may be able to roll out a pilot program by next academic year.

Former SA leaders submitted a report to the Board of Trustees in May including recommendations to implement a free 18th hour, like a pilot program for students with a 3.6 GPA or higher to apply for the additional credit.

SA President Ashley Le said that SA leaders "heard reassurance" from officials that they would

move forward with a free 18th credit. Le said the SA will pitch ideas to administrators about how to best launch the credit program during a regular meeting this month.

"They heard loud and clear this is something that students wanted and that students should take advantage of it, should it become available for all students," Le said.

Currently, students who are taking a four-credit University Writing course or who are enrolled in the Honors Program or SEAS are allowed to take more than 17 credits without incurring the extra fee. All other students are required to pay \$1,520 per additional credit, according to the academic advising website.

The current policy also requires approval from academic advisers for students to take additional credits. But SA leaders said they wouldn't change the approval requirement to ensure that students talk with advisers about managing time or academic standing before taking on the extra commitment.

SA Chief of Cabinet Yannik Omicin, who helped draft the original proposal to the Board of Trustees last academic year, said the movement for credit expansion was propelled after last year's SA elections, when students overwhelmingly indicated that they supported a policy change.

"For us, it's an easy issue because you look at all the other schools in our market basket and just in general, and you don't see these kinds of ridiculous fees that are imposed to take more credits," Omicin said.

All of GW's 12 peer institutions offer a free 18th credit for all undergraduates.

## Exploring interests

For students, the 18th credit is an opportunity to pursue classes outside of their major or quickly check off major and minor requirements.

Junior Allegra Smart, who is graduating a year early, said she paid to take 18 credit hours during both semesters of her sophomore year. After taking 12 credit hours during both

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# More than 500 students use freshman forgiveness policy in first year

**KELLY HOOPER**  
STAFF WRITER

Three years ago, a senior sat in a calculus class, thinking that he could coast through his first-year courses without studying – just like he did in high school.

But when the work piled up, the student, who spoke on condition of anonymity to preserve his academic reputation, said he continued to slack off – and failed the class. But two years later, officials implemented a new policy allowing students to retake courses in which they received a D+ or lower during their freshman year.

The student decided to retake the course under the policy last fall – and received an A.

"The second time I took it, you can't mess up twice – that's just embarrassing," he said. "So I really put a lot of effort into it, I really just wanted to prove to myself, to my parents, to everyone that I'm not just bad at math – that it was just me being stupid freshman year."

The senior is one of more than 500 students who used the first-year forgiveness policy in its first year to retake classes in subjects like statistics and psychology – giving them a second chance in courses where they initially

slacked off.

"Since its inception, students across all class years have benefited from the policy," Deputy Provost Teresa Murphy said in an email. "The first-year forgiveness policy was designed to provide students with the opportunity to relearn fundamental materials and have a better transition to college."

Murphy said that 5 percent of undergraduates – about 550 students – retook courses in 91 different subject areas, including economics and chemistry, since the policy went into effect last academic year. At the beginning of this semester, 35 students submitted first-year forgiveness requests to academic advisers to retake classes this fall.

Murphy declined to say whether officials would make any changes to the policy this semester or next year.

The policy first went into effect last fall after the Faculty Senate approved the measure in February 2017. Widespread support for the policy followed Student Association advocacy for the plan two years ago.

Former Student Association Executive Vice President Thomas Falcigno, who led SA efforts in 2016 to enact the policy, said that since the measure has been in

place, several students who used it reached out thanking him, saying it boosted their overall GPA after retaking a course.

"Maybe you don't even know your major – you're trying to explore courses – and if you're taking a heavy course load freshman year, you could be taking classes that you might not do well in," Falcigno said.

When the policy was first passed, the Faculty Senate mandated that after three years, faculty members would analyze the number of students retaking a course. Faculty will use the data in 2020 to determine whether the policy should expand to allow students to retake more than one course from their first year.

Falcigno said he hopes that after administrators collect the three-year data, they will allow freshmen to retake two or three classes for credit rather than one – a policy offered by some of GW's peer institutions, like the University of Southern California and Boston University.

In interviews, students who have used the policy – who all spoke on condition of anonymity to their academic reputations – said that in its first official year, the measure wiped their transcript clean of a bad grade that would



More than 500 students used the first-year forgiveness policy in its first year to retake classes in subjects like statistics and psychology.

have otherwise tanked their GPA.

A junior majoring in international affairs said she used the policy to retake a political science course last fall after she failed the class her freshman year. The student said she wasn't doing well in several classes, so she devoted more time to other courses and failed the political science course. When she used the policy, the student received a

B in the class the second time around.

"I basically decided I am going to fail this class and that is OK, and I'll take it next semester and use first-year forgiveness," she said. "I did it and it worked out really, really well for me."

A junior and former student said she used the policy to clear up her transcript before applying to different universities and transferring out

of GW. The student said she failed an introductory chemistry class her freshman year after taking the same class in high school.

"In high school, I didn't study for anything," she said. "College is very different – it's a lot more personal responsibility – so I think it helped me get a chance to realize that without having to keep an F on my transcript."

## CRIME LOG

### DRUG LAW VIOLATION

Potomac House  
8/27/2018 – 2:46 p.m.  
Closed case  
GW Police Department officers responded to a smoke detector activated in Potomac House and smelled burning marijuana inside a residence hall room. Housing staff conducted an administrative search, which yielded drugs and drug paraphernalia.  
**Referred to the Office of Enrollment and the Student Experience**

### THEFT II/FROM BUILDING

Media and Public Affairs Building  
Unknown – Unknown  
Closed case  
A male faculty member reported that a computer adapter was stolen from a fourth-floor server room in the Media and Public Affairs Building.  
**No suspects or witnesses**

### STALKING

Unknown  
Multiple – Multiple  
Closed case  
GWPD received a report from a campus security authority of multiple stalking incidents. No police report was filed and there is limited information.  
**No further action**

### HARASSMENT: EMAIL AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Mitchell Hall  
Multiple – Multiple  
Closed case  
A male student reported that a female unaffiliated with the University harassed him over text and email. The Metropolitan Police Department was notified and responded to the scene. The student said in an MPD report that he spoke with the woman on his computer and phone through the website adultfriendfinder.com. He said that he was expected to pay the woman as part of the website's services, exchanged nude photos with the woman and arranged to meet with her. When the woman informed him that he owed her \$500, he refused to pay. The woman sent a text message stating that she would share his photos, according to the MPD report.  
**Referred to MPD**

### SIMPLE ASSAULT (DATING VIOLENCE)

Shenkman Hall  
8/30/2018 – 3 a.m.  
Closed case  
A female student reported that her ex-boyfriend assaulted her in her residence hall room. MPD was notified and responded to the scene. The male "forcibly" drove his right shoulder into the female's left shoulder, pushing her back, according to an MPD report. The male then collected his items and left, the report states.  
**Referred to MPD**

### THEFT II/BICYCLES

20th and E streets NW  
8/30/2018 – 1:55 p.m.  
Closed case  
A male student reported his bike was stolen from a rack in front of the Red Cross building. MPD was notified and responded to the scene.  
**Case open**

### HARASSMENT: EMAIL AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Off campus  
Unknown – Unknown  
Closed case  
A female student reported to GWPD that another female student harassed her on Instagram.  
**Referred to ESE**

—Compiled by Dani Grace & Valerie Yurk



Secretary of Defense James Mattis, Cindy McCain and White House Chief of Staff John Kelly walk past the Vietnam Veterans Memorial during a memorial service for Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. Saturday.

## Officials track student questions during Academic Commons' debut semester



OLIVIA ANDERSON | PHOTO EDITOR

Geneva Henry, the dean of libraries, said library staff will now collect questions commonly asked by students and use the information to expand Academic Commons, which opened in Gelman Library last month.

### LAUREN PELLER & MEREDITH ROATEN

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITORS

When the dean of libraries and academic innovation ventured out of her office on the seventh floor of Gelman Library to help student workers last week, she didn't expect to be hunting down A4 paper.

Where to find long, European-style paper was one of the nearly 700 academic questions students asked employees at the library's new Academic Commons last week – and Geneva Henry, the dean of libraries, said the resource center is prepared to answer all of them. Henry said library staff will now start collecting feedback from students, faculty and staff through surveys and focus groups to continue growing the center.

On the entrance floor of Gelman Library, the newly organized space, now dubbed Academic Commons with new signs and a logo, brings together many of the University's academic resources in one place, including peer tutoring and textbook rental.

Henry said during the first week of classes, she noticed students were accus-

tomed to being passed on to multiple departments if a library staff member didn't have an answer to their question. Most students were "shocked" when she would not let them leave without an answer – which illustrates the "frustrating" culture Henry said she's trying to change.

"Our whole goal is to help you and to get you to the right place, or if we can be the right place or just solve the issue right there so you're not running all over campus trying to find things out," she said.

The center – a product of Student Association advocacy – opened Aug. 1 alongside a new website offering help with 15 different topics, including peer coaching, study spaces and an online syllabus bank.

The University put ads on Blackboard to promote the space and encouraged professors to include information about the center in their syllabi.

"We're building a mindset and the culture that this is all about helping people find information," Henry said.

Henry said Academic Commons staff now tracks every question students ask at the library's front desk on

new iPads. She said officials will use the data to decide how to expand the services the center offers over the next semester and year.

She added that the library will host student focus groups and talk to faculty and staff throughout the year about how the center and website can be improved.

"It is just the variety of questions that we're getting that is helping us figure out what other stuff we need in there," she said.

With the library's limited income and staff cuts two years ago, Henry said pulling the center together in just a few months was a "killer" – but that the staff's "passion" for the student-centered project made the initiative achievable. Administrators officially announced the center would open in April.

Former Student Association President Peak Sen Chua and former Executive Vice President Sydney Nelson said they were surprised by how quickly the Academic Commons came to fruition. The pair initially proposed the center to administrators in the fall and helped develop the resource hub over the course of the year.

"They're really seeing

how can they serve students and really create the best academic experience possible, which I think a lot of other areas in GW could learn from them when it comes to advocacy work and the student experience," Nelson said.

Administrators from academic resource centers at other universities said that to ensure the long-term success of the center, officials need to receive feedback from students and maintain fluid communication with any divisions involved in the center.

Sue Bierman, the director of the Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center at Southern Methodist University, said faculty members have been her best resource to get students to take advantage of the center because they could talk to students directly. She said having faculty workshops on how to teach material better could also help connect professors with the academic mission of the center.

"The faculty who've been there for a while may not realize things have changed and things are located different places," Bierman said.

Rachel Rimmel, the assistant dean and executive director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at the University of Rochester, said putting an academic resource center in a campus library will encourage students to use the center because they are familiar with the space.

"If you're going to have a one-stop-shop, you really do need it to be in a building that everybody knows about and they're using all the time," she said.

Jody Caldwell, an associate librarian at the Academic Commons at Drew University, said keeping in constant communication with officials and staff helped integrate departments that were working with each other for the first time at her university.

"It would be nice if there were some programs that showed us working together for the students, so the students could also see us as one-stop shopping," she said.

## Free 18th credit could level economic disparities, experts say

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semesters of her freshman year, Smart said she needed to up her course load during her second year to ensure she could graduate early.

"It added money that I owe to the school, but at the same time, I didn't really have a choice because I can't afford to stay for a fourth year," Smart said.

But for students in the Honors or SEAS programs – who can take up to 18 credits in their first four semesters or up to 19 credits per semester, respectively – another credit gives them an opportunity to explore major and minor interests they otherwise wouldn't have.

Sophomore Nicky Cacchione, an honors student majoring in business, said the higher credit cap allowed him to explore classes in philosophy that he couldn't with a 17-credit cap.

With an 18th credit, Cacchione said he could choose to take electives, like Spanish, instead of only taking required courses.

"I'm not behind – I don't have to be a fifth-year senior – and it technically saves me money in the long run," Cacchione said.

Sophomore Nick Jin, a SEAS student, took 19 credits both semesters of his first year, which he said allowed him to take a cello and chamber music course

on top of his computer-focused requirements.

"If people don't want to put that load on themselves, that should be their own choice to make; but, for example, if you did want to take something

**"It added money that I owe to the school, but at the same time, I didn't really have a choice because I can't afford to stay for a fourth year."**

ALLEGRA SMART  
JUNIOR WHO TOOK 18TH CREDIT

like cello or a one-credit class on top of everything, I think it would be really nice," Jin said.

### Leveling disparities

Higher education experts said the move would

level out tuition disparities among honors, SEAS and all other undergraduates under the same fixed tuition by allowing every student to take the same number of credit hours.

David Holman, a re-

search associate at the Center of College Affordability and Productivity who conducted a study on tuition models at public colleges, said more students could graduate on time with an additional credit every se-

mester. At Case Western University – which has no cap on the number of credits – nearly 25 percent of students are enrolled in more than 17 credits, he said.

"Students do react if they're given the opportunity to take more credit hours," he said.

But Pradeep Rau, a professor of marketing at GW, said that while an 18th credit may appear free, if students are overwhelmed by their course load and drop a class, the financial advantage of the credit disappears.

"If you make this 18 credits rule a blanket rule, it may actually encourage some students to overstretch in the spirit of try-

ing to get three more credits for free after 15," he said.

Richard Vedder, an economics expert at Ohio University, said an 18th credit could have "moderately noticeable short-term financial effects" for the University, depending on the number of students who take advantage of a new policy. If 100 students take advantage of an 18th credit, the University could lose about \$200,000, he said.

"With a budget of 700 million, maybe a billion – it's not any big deal," he said. "But if you're talking 500 students, or 1,000 students, or 2,000 students, it starts to make some difference."

# Petty takes over CHC as officials search for permanent leader

LAUREN PELLER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

In the past year, the Colonial Health Center has seen three different leaders.

First, it was Glenn Egelman, the first permanent director of the CHC after the center opened in 2015. When Egelman abruptly resigned from his post last September after serving just six months in the role, Danielle Lico, the former associate dean of students for administrative services, took the helm of the center – but her position was eliminated during an administrative shuffle this summer.

Now, the center is led by M.L. “Cissy” Petty, the inaugural dean of the student experience, who is overseeing the center while officials search for a new permanent director. Administrators said Petty is the right choice to supervise the center because of her background in counseling and understanding of student affairs.

Petty said that since she arrived on campus, she has spoken to student leaders and officials in the CHC about how health care is integrated into the student experience. She said she has heard students’ concerns about cost, quality, transparency and accessibility for students, and plans to “take a deep dive” into the center’s issues in its mental and physical health units.

“What I want to research and think through with students and the data is what will work best,” she said. “I think the space is fine, it’s great to have two services, maybe it’s that we are trying to push them together too much. Maybe there’s a model we haven’t thought of yet with more counselors.”

Petty said she wants to



M.L. “Cissy” Petty, the dean of the student experience, will lead the Colonial Health Center as officials search for a permanent leader.

transition the health center to a “wellness” model, which incorporates physical, mental and spiritual health.

“I see wellness as holistic and focus on the positive aspects of a student’s well-being – both their physical and mental health and their ability to manage stress and be resilient in times of struggle and in times of success and achievement,” Petty said.

Petty added that she will continue to meet with University leaders on a regular basis to discuss how the center could improve “while we determine the best fit for a new central leader.”

The CHC has long been

a turbulent office. Three staffers – including the former head of Mental Health Services – were found to be unlicensed to practice in the District in 2015. In recent years, students have also alleged quality issues within the center, and last spring, the former director of the CHC claimed the center was not transparent about billing with students and did not regularly re-evaluate health care methods.

But officials have aimed to address some of the center’s issues in recent months by creating a student health insurance mandate, moving health records to an electronic

records-keeping system and increasing the number of free mental health sessions available to students.

Petty added that she plans to meet with the Student Health Advisory Council, a student health care advocacy group, to have “robust conversations” about the CHC – but she didn’t say what the discussions would include. She declined to say how often she will meet with the council.

Last month, Petty said she plans to look into the CHC’s weekend hours and potentially expand them beyond the current 9 a.m. to noon schedule on Saturdays for ur-

gent care only.

Laurie Koehler, the senior vice provost of enrollment and the student experience, said Petty is qualified to take on the role of CHC director because of her counseling background – she served as a postdoctoral fellow in counseling at the University of North Carolina Greensboro from 1996 to 1998, according to her LinkedIn profile. Petty also supervised student health and counseling services at Loyola University New Orleans.

Koehler also said Petty’s position as dean of the student experience makes her fit to oversee the CHC, because

health services are an important component of student life.

“We believe health and wellness are critical components to an integrated, holistic approach to a student’s experience,” Koehler said.

Koehler declined to say how leadership turnover has affected staff at the CHC or if it has affected morale or service. But she said the changes in leadership “may require my staff members to adjust to management styles.”

Lico, the center’s former director who departed in July, did not return multiple requests for comment.

Egelman, the center’s first director who resigned last fall, said the person leading the CHC should have knowledge of health care management, health care quality, and safety and integration of health and counseling.

He said it’s not likely that a person with a background in student affairs would have expertise in all those areas – and so when the University hires a permanent director for the CHC, that person should have a background in medicine.

“I think that the person overseeing the unit needs to work with people who have the strengths where they are weak,” he said.

Egelman said that leadership turnover in the CHC could impact staff morale depending on the way staffers react to the change in leadership.

“Two things could happen – the individual units in the center could silo themselves and you get territoriality,” he said. “Or they could work together, learn each others’ functionality and integrate with each other in a seamless fashion, putting the students first.”

## Judaic Studies course offerings sustain program despite few majors, minors

LAUREN PELLER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Just three students are currently majoring in Judaic Studies – but faculty said popular course offerings help sustain the small program.

Over the past decade, the Judaic Studies program has had fewer than six majors each academic year and even endured a four-year period with no majors, according to institutional data. Faculty said despite the low enrollment, the program is not in danger because its course selections on popular topics, like the Holocaust and Israel, attract students across majors.

Paul Wahlbeck, the interim dean for the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, said the department has more than 150 students enrolled in the program’s seven courses this semester.

He added that the program draws faculty from departments in social sciences and humanities, with eight faculty members who regularly teach classes and two faculty members who have endowed professorships.

“While Judaic Studies has always been a small-sized program, we believe it offers critical learning opportunities for students interested in the study of Jewish history, culture, religion

and politics,” Wahlbeck said in an email.

He said the campus community also benefits from monthly guest lectures and film screenings organized by the program.

Daniel Schwartz, the director of the Judaic Studies program and an associate professor of history, said the program, which launched more than a decade ago, exposes students to the “whole spectrum” of the Jewish experience, with courses related to religion and history.

He said the program has always been relatively small, with three majors this year and one during the last academic year. Between 2008 and 2012, the program had between two and five majors each year, but had no majors between 2013 and 2016, according to institutional data.

But Schwartz said that even as enrollment remains stagnant, the department added two courses this semester – Banned Books of the Bible and the History of Zionism.

“We have existed for not just students who want to concentrate in Judaic Studies, but for students who want to take courses,” he said.

Schwartz added that one of his goals over the next few years is to increase interest in the program’s minor by “boosting awareness” around campus and hosting

more programs for students. He said two students are currently minoring in Judaic Studies, and four students graduated with the minor last spring.

Jeffrey Richter, a history and Judaic Studies professor, said he noticed a decline in majors over the past decade but has seen increased interest in the program’s courses recently.

Richter has taught a course on the Holocaust since 2005 and said it has always “done well,” enrolling roughly 35 students each semester.

“There’s always an abiding interest in the Holocaust, and that course enrollment has increased over time,” he said. “I think GW’s proximity from the Holocaust Museum means that it’s a good institution to come to if students are interested in the Holocaust.”

Anyu Silverman, a senior and a Judaic Studies major, said that majoring in a small department does not impact her studies because it’s a “hyper-specific discipline” that may not have widespread interest around campus.

“I don’t feel slighted. I am comfortable in this niche,” Silverman said. “I don’t have a problem with the size of the department now, I just don’t know who will be in my senior seminar class.”



Eduardo Sotomayor, the director of the GW Cancer Center, is seeking a highly coveted grant from the National Cancer Institute.

## Cancer Center increases collaborative research in pursuit of prestigious grant

JARED GANS &  
LEAH POTTER  
STAFF WRITERS

Almost two years after opening, the GW Cancer Center is working to establish itself among the top specialized research centers in the country.

The center receives some federal funds, but top researchers in the center said they are seeking a highly coveted grant from the National Cancer Institute that could set the group apart as a nationally recognized research hub. If they succeed and receive the grant, the center can pursue more costly and advanced projects in specialized areas of cancer treatment, researchers said.

Eduardo Sotomayor, the director of the center, said the center has brought in more than 100 researchers who specialize in different types of cancer, giving researchers the chance to collaborate with other scholars with whom they wouldn’t have typically interacted. He said more interdisciplinary projects made possible by the varied researchers in the center are part of what will help the center secure the NCI grant.

“That’s the beauty of our University, that you can create collaboration with different departments and dif-

ferent schools,” Sotomayor said. “It’s more exciting to be working with people who see the cancer problem from a different outlook.”

He said that when the center launched in December 2016, officials first aimed to bring together faculty and staff to jointly create and promote cancer research. Now, with more than 100 researchers at the center, Sotomayor said the center can shift its focus to larger goals, including the NCI grant.

Sotomayor said the center currently obtains most of its funds through the federal government, which is limiting because only 10 to 15 percent of applications will actually receive funding. He said working toward obtaining the NCI grant can take up to a decade because at least 10 percent of a center’s research must be “high impact” to be eligible.

“High impact” research generally refers to findings that have not been explored before, include several citations and are published in an established journal.

He added that the researchers in the center met with an advisory board in June to determine what changes need to be made so the Cancer Center is more qualified for the distinction. He said the board recommended having more

interdisciplinary projects that bring multiple schools and departments together for collaboration, working with more experts in specific types of cancer and publishing more often in prestigious academic journals – all of which are current focuses of the center.

The NCI looks for researchers and centers that align with the organization’s mission, which emphasizes collaborative and highly specialized research endeavors.

Sotomayor said the center’s senior leadership team meets once a week to discuss what improvements can be made to the center’s research projects to cultivate the NCI grant. He said currently only 70 cancer centers in the country are NCI-designated, like the Stanford Cancer Institute and Yale Cancer Center.

Sotomayor said the center currently supports 130 researchers across six colleges and 30 departments. He said faculty from the medical school make up more than half of the researchers, and faculty from the Milken Institute School of Public Health make up almost 20 percent.

GWHATCHET.COM

for more on the  
Cancer Center’s  
research projects



Phillips Hall houses the Judaic Studies program, which currently has just three majors.

DONNA ARMSTRONG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

"It may not seem like much, but students who are tight on funds may opt to skip a large-scale event that they could have attended in a previous year."

—RENEE PINEDA, OPINIONS EDITOR published Aug. 30

### STAFF EDITORIAL

# University must address growing number of students and limited resources

Campus is getting cramped and it hasn't gone unnoticed. The Class of 2022 is the largest in recent history with about 2,800 freshmen, and the effects of the large class can be seen across campus.

While more students can be spun as a good thing with more participation in student organizations and more money for the University from tuition, this increase in class size only exacerbates existing issues on campus. Many of the problems that students face, like cramped residence halls and long lines to meet with advisers, are linked to having too many students on campus. Despite adding class sections and making room for students in residence halls, the University has not properly prepared for a significant increase in class size for the Class of 2022. While 300 more freshmen than usual may not seem like a lot now, if this pattern continues, the way of living for new and current students will increasingly become less sustainable and enjoyable.

While the University cannot guarantee the number of students who decide to come to GW as this year's class occurred when an unexpected number of freshmen committed to GW, administrators need to recognize the strain that



Cartoon by Jeanne Franchesca Dela Cruz

current students already feel on campus.

Housing is one example of a limited resource on campus. About 150 freshmen have been placed in Fulbright Hall, which is traditionally an upper-classman residence hall. In some cases, four freshmen have been assigned to each room, even though in previous years the rooms were originally intended for three students.

The reality that these students face is likely a far cry from the expectations they had while preparing

for their first year at GW over the summer and although the University has made attempts to mitigate these large issues, this isn't a sustainable future for students.

Housing is just one issue that students will face due to the unexpected increase in the size of the student body. While it is only a minor inconvenience now to spend a few extra minutes in line for food around campus at places like District House, if the number of students continues to increase, food

insecurity could become a larger problem because it is already difficult for students to find quick and affordable options on campus, especially without a traditional dining hall.

There are also many student resources that already seem to be overworked and understaffed. Bringing more students to campus without addressing this issue is irresponsible, especially because long wait times to see health professionals and advisers have larger effects to students' health and academic expe-

rience. GW should plan to hire a substantial amount of additional staffers in its student advising, health services and financial aid offices to accommodate the influx of students. Students shouldn't have to wait hours for basic services because the University has more students than it can handle.

The University has attempted to combat some of these problems. A few outdoor spaces were expanded last week, but this doesn't solve the problem during the colder seasons or on rainy days. The issue with finding somewhere to sit isn't just about eating and socializing, it's also a problem when it comes to studying. It's already hard enough to find somewhere to sit in Gelman Library, especially during finals and midterms. But, major buildings on campus — like Duques Hall, Corcoran Hall and the Elliott School of International Affairs — are not open late into the night or are closed on weekends. It may cost the University more to keep these buildings open later, but it would be worth it to improve the student experience by providing more places to study so students don't have to rush to find a seat.

GW began planning to build a new residence hall on campus and make ren-

ovations to Thurston Hall in the spring. But, those renovations and new spaces will take time and won't benefit current students.

These problems cannot be pushed off. While University President Thomas LeBlanc has prioritized the student experience, that focus must also translate to issues that seem smaller because these are the problems that affect students on a daily basis.

While it's important that student voices are heard, it shouldn't be on students to fix these problems. It is the responsibility of the University, to make students time here worthwhile.

Officials need to take immediate action in creating more space on our already overcrowded campus and provide more resources for students. While a few hundred more freshmen may not seem like much, if the number continues to grow, it will be more and more noticeable for all students on campus. The University is responsible not only for education, but also for ensuring that all students have an enjoyable college experience. The overcrowding of dorms, shared spaces and academic services is detrimental to that goal, and the University should take decisive action sooner rather than later.

## Students do not need to go abroad to help communities in need

The window of opportunity to travel abroad, aided by extra time in the summer months, has come to an end. Whether it is about experiencing a new place, visiting family or studying abroad, an estimated 88 million Americans leave the country during the summer. Included in those trips is a growing number of students who go abroad to volunteer.

'Voluntourism,' the act of volunteering abroad, has become a rapidly growing market and one that affects the countries visited in a surprisingly negative way. Rather than helping, the trope of the American savior who comes from a first-world country and wants to extend a helping hand is one that ultimately prioritizes the needs of the volunteer rather than the needs of the affected community.

Alejandra Velazquez  
Columnist

At GW, students advocate for a wide variety of causes. As students advocate for social issues around the world, we must consider how we can help solve the problems we face in the United States, rather than ignoring them for those abroad.

There are more than 50 registered student organizations at GW that focus on volunteer work. Some organizations, like Alternative Breaks, complete service projects both in D.C. and around the world, however, many of these organizations are focused on international issues. GW does offer ways to help our local communities including SmartDC, a literacy program that works at schools around the District, and students should take advantage of these opportunities rather than pay for costly trips abroad to volunteer.

The work that organizations with international focuses do is

needed. But at the same time, students are ignoring the issues within the United States, and even right in our own backyard. A report from the United Nations suggests that poverty in the United States is striking for a developed country, with an estimated 41 million Americans experiencing food insecurity.

Here in D.C., homelessness is a large issue linked to the rising cost of housing. While the percentage of homeless people has decreased between 2017 and 2018, the city's biggest homeless shelter recently closed. At the same time, food insecurity is extremely prominent in D.C., with one in seven households experiencing food insecurity in the District. Food insecurity is especially high in Wards 7 and 8 of the city, known as "food deserts" — communities with minimal access to fresh produce.

With manpower from students, many of these issues around D.C. could be improved. It might not be as glamorous as traveling abroad, but helping the community you are a part of can be more rewarding.

Volunteering locally also means you can dedicate more time to the area without travel and other costs getting in the way. Rather than having a weeklong trip abroad, helping one's local community is readily accessible, and travel costs are reduced. When you don't have to spend time and money to volunteer, you can make more of an impact and can continue a project over time to really see the effects your work has.

While traveling abroad has its perks, there is no denying that our own local communities also need our help. Even if students can opt to pay for a trip abroad, they should plan to first look at their own backyard and find ways to give back to their community.

—Alejandra Velazquez, a sophomore majoring in political science, is a Hatchet columnist.

## It's OK if you aren't interested in politics



Pro-this and anti-that. It seems wherever you turn at GW, students are spouting their political thoughts, and conversations in class — and even at parties — often quickly turn to politics. There is nothing wrong with having and expressing political beliefs and these conversations can even help us grow by providing multiple perspectives.

However, the pressure to be constantly political at GW forces students to blindly take a stance on every issue and furthers the partisanship on campus that is already all too prevalent. Even after the University fell off the Princeton Review's list of colleges with the most politically active students this year, politics is still a top conversation on campus.

Even though I study international affairs and watch politics closely, I recognize that not everyone at GW may feel the same and it is important to not be judgmental toward students who are apathetic to politics. Rather than push political conversations on all students, it is important to encourage healthy conversations about politics because college is a time for students to form their opinions.

In my international affairs classes, it is immensely frustrating to see students who claim to know every detail about every political issue. Professors contribute to this overwhelming focus on politics, too. I have been in several 300-person lectures where students are only half-listening as professors drone on about their personal political beliefs, expecting students to automatically agree with them or

have a well-formulated response if they disagree and making many students feel uncomfortable. This does a disservice to students who are not tuned in to politics. Although many professors at GW have a background in politics and these conversations do relate to class material, professors need to keep in mind that not all students have a deep knowledge of political issues and explain the background of political topics instead of assuming all students know what they are talking about.

Students and faculty have a right to be passionate about contested political, social and economic issues. But, with politics as a near constant conversation, it pressures students to take a stance in the moment and further divides people on issues that they are not fully educated about. Nothing one student or professor says in passing will pressure someone to change their opinion so those conversations are not productive.

Colette Bruder  
Writer

When students don't feign interest in politics, professors and students react negatively. I have seen students make faces or whisper under their breath when their peers are unfamiliar with current events. In some of my classes, both in and outside of my major, professors assume students watch CNN or read The Washington Post prior to the beginning of every class, and don't provide background information about the subject matter.

Even as an international affairs major who watches the news daily, I still feel judged by peers for not knowing minute details about crises occurring around the world. While this may spur some students to stay on top of the news, this can discourage many students from speaking up in fear of public embarrassment and eventually push students away from being

involved in the class.

The constant pressure to know everything about every topic means that students will inevitably be lacking information on a political issue. When this occurs, far too often, students feel pressured to pick a side rather than ask for details on the event or just admit they don't have an informed opinion. Admitting you don't have an opinion on a social or political topic at GW is often seen as worse than having an uninformed opinion, but that should not be the case.

At a time when partisanship is at an all-time high and judgement about students who aren't invested in politics creates division when it could build bridges, understanding when people don't have an opinion on each individual issue is a better approach to addressing political division. While many people enjoy being up-to-date on current events and political issues, it is important to remember that this is not a requirement for all students.

College is supposed to be the time when students establish their political beliefs. However, if students and faculty judge each other for not having established opinions and not being able to hotly debate controversial issues, it will lead students to fear speaking out and asking questions. Political apathy doesn't correlate with laziness, and it's time we acknowledge that.

College is supposed to be the time when students establish the majority of their formative political beliefs. However, if students and faculty judge each other for not having established opinions and not being able to hotly debate controversial issues, it makes sense that some of us are less likely to want to share our thoughts and opinions or even be politically active. Political apathy doesn't always have to correlate with laziness and harsh judgment, and it's time, as students and faculty, that we acknowledge that.

—Colette Bruder, a sophomore majoring in international affairs, is a Hatchet opinions writer.

**MIGUEL**  
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## Inside the revamped dining hall at Pelham Commons

MARGOT DYNES  
CULTURE EDITOR

At GW's on-campus dining halls, students used to lay down hot plates and pay per pound of food they planned to consume. Now on the Mount Vernon Campus, the University is offering residents a buffet at a set price.

Pelham Commons, the dining hall in the basement of West Hall, switched to an all-you-can-eat buffet, with rotating hot plates, beverages, desserts, and a salad and sandwich bar, for the fall semester. GW closed J Street, the Foggy Bottom Campus' only dining hall, in 2016 and switched to an open dining plan in which students can spend meal plan money at area restaurants and eateries. Pelham Commons remained open, but is now run by SAGE Dining Services and operates with a new format.

Two years following the meal plan changes, students and parents complained that costly dining options led to skipped meals and limited diets — especially for freshmen, who are new to buying food themselves.

But, students can now pay an all-you-can-eat price of \$8 for lunch, \$10 for dinner and \$12 for Sunday brunch — the closest GW has come to a traditional dining hall in recent history.

Lunch and brunch are served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and dinner lasts from 5 to 9 p.m. every day. Vernies looking for a nighttime snack can take advantage of the dining hall's late-night grill hours on

weekdays 9 p.m. to midnight.

If you haven't taken the Vern Express ride to try the new dining hall, the interior of the space has hardly changed, but students now pay at a cash register before picking up food and must carry a receipt in hand when going for seconds.

As far as dining hall food goes, the new service is a step up from previous offerings. Along with rotating entrees, you can stock up on sodas, hot beverages, cereal and more at no extra cost.

Walter Ellerbe, a former executive chef who now works at SAGE Dining Services, said there was a conscious effort from GW to include more sustainable food practices and locally grown ingredients.

Striving for fresher food, Ellerbe said the dining hall now offers options like deli meat roasted in-house and produce chosen from local farms within 150 miles of the University, mostly within Maryland and Virginia.

New technology has been added, so students can see each dish's ingredients and emblems denoting vegetarian dishes and possible allergens on computer screens. The dining hall also uses an app called Touch of SAGE so students can see the menu up to 16 weeks in advance.

The food stations still feature staples like a deli bar with meats and cheese on standby and a soup of the day, but also adds meals that are a step up from what you would expect to find in a dining hall.

At the main food station, Friday's lunch offerings included string beans, risotto, chicken enchiladas and fettuccine — what Ellerbe called a "potpourri" of cuisines. Another syllabus week menu included vegetable napoleons of marinated portobello mushrooms and vine ripe tomatoes.

With a slapdash plate of halibut, greasy queso and steamed veggies, my lunch left me stuffed without feeling pressure to restock my plate. But it was difficult to resist a dessert of churros and hot coffee knowing I could go for seconds, though I should've skipped out on the too-chewy chocolate-dipped pretzels.

At brunch, a bagel selection with a variety of spreads and trays of french toast and bacon offered options to easily grab, while diners could also make their own waffle or wait as a chef prepared omelets that are made to order.

In addition to its regular offerings, the dining hall will diversify its meal options and take on different country's cuisines on select days. This week featured a take on Korean entrees and a menu consisting of Italian food, which Ellerbe said feature recipes that remain true to their roots.

Pelham Commons' new dining plan reinvigorates dining on the Mount Vernon Campus, whether you are looking for a quick plate to stave off hunger between class or a shortcut to gaining the freshman 15.



GREAME SLOAN | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

Pelham Commons, the dining hall in the basement of West Hall, switched to an all-you-can-eat buffet.

## Former student campaigns to become Florida's first disabled elected official

KATE MCCARTHY  
STAFF WRITER

Olivia Babis joked that she became an advocate at 3 years old when she accompanied her grandmother to a school board meeting in Lakeland, Fla. At the meeting, Babis' family argued for her right to learn outside of a special education classroom.

Parents at the meeting said they did not want "those kids" — referring to students with disabilities — going to school with nondisabled children in the public school system. She would have no problem keeping up with class material, but Babis was born without arms.

"I knew that anger was directed at me," Babis said. "That was wrong, and I wasn't going to stand for it, even at 3 years old."

Babis, who spent much of her undergraduate ca-

reer until 2003 at GW before graduating from the University of Memphis, is vying for the District 23 seat in the Florida state Senate, which represents Sarasota County and part of Charlotte County. Channeling frustration for how she and other people with disabilities are treated, Babis now advocates for improving the public school system, transportation services and affordable housing.

She said those with disabilities deal with a lack of political representation despite being financially supported by federal taxes and are an underserved population within the United States.

Florida has been ranked among the worst in the nation for accessibility — an issue Babis, a Democrat, and her team set out to tackle when she filed her paperwork in April to run for the

open seat, which was vacated by Greg Steube earlier this year.

While Sarasota ranks as one of the oldest congressional districts in Florida, with the average age at 55, Babis said the county remains inaccessible to senior citizens and people with disabilities.

**"There are people behind me that are counting on me to continue doing this. And if I'm not doing it, then I don't know who else is going to."**

OLIVIA BABIS  
FORMER STUDENT, FLORIDA STATE SENATE CANDIDATE

"Our elder population and people in the disability community have a lot of things in common," Babis said. "We share a lot of interest in issues so we thought with the makeup of the population — the age of the district — that would give me maybe a stronger likelihood of being able to win this seat."

Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., who received her master's degree from GW in 1992, became the first person with a physical disability to be elected to the U.S. Senate in 2012. If Babis wins the seat, she will be the first person with a visible disability ever to be elected to

Florida legislature — a representation that is long-awaited in District 23, Babis said.

"There are people behind me that are counting on me to continue doing this," Babis said. "And if I'm not doing it, then I don't know who else is going to."

As a vocal advocate for the disabled community, Babis is on the Citizens with

Disabilities Advisory Board for Sarasota, where she works to improve accessibility and fair wages for people with disabilities.

Among the issues Babis hopes to tackle if elected to the state legislature is health care for disabled people. Babis said the state's current policy places people with disabilities on lengthy waitlists for programs and other services, like a personal care attendant, if they choose to move to another state.

Babis wants to push back and shed light on the "regressive" ways Florida handles issues regarding disability, she said. In Florida's school system — even in the years since Babis attended — there is a lack of funding for disability services, and students with disabilities must apply through the McKay Scholarship to be placed in for-profit charter schools.

"It's kind of segregating

disabled students again, the way they were back in the 1970s," Babis said.

As the election draws closer, Babis juggles work and local advocacy projects while also making phone calls to constituents, participating in candidate forums and canvassing. She is taking a semester off from the City University of New York's online Master of Arts in Disability Studies Program while she campaigns.

But Babis said her hectic schedule is worth it because the residents in her district "deserve better representation" than what they currently have — a fight she's faced since she was a toddler.

"It's always said, 'if you're not invited to the table, bring your own chair,'" Babis said. "That's what I'm trying to do for the disability community to make sure they're included in all conversations."

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## GAMES OF THE WEEK



**VOLLEYBALL**  
at Brooklyn, N.Y.  
Friday and Saturday  
Coming off of a 2-1 weekend at the CEFCU Invitational, the Colonials will take on USF, Holy Cross and LIU Brooklyn at the Blackbird Invitational.



**WOMEN'S SOCCER**  
at Maryland  
College Park, Md. • Sunday  
GW will face off against the Terrapins to close out a two-game road trip.

**NUMBER CRUNCH** **68.2%**

Women's soccer's shots on goal percentage through five games, 14.2 percentage points higher than last year through the same span.

## Men's water polo works out kinks, starts winning record at Navy Open

**BARBARA ALBERTS**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Men's water polo picked up four-straight wins at the Navy Open Saturday and Sunday in Annapolis, Md. to kick off the 2018 season.

The Colonials dropped Wagner 15-14 in a rematch of last year's Mid-Atlantic Water Polo Conference final to open the weekend before cruising past Salem International 22-9 Saturday at Lejune Hall.

GW returned to the action Sunday morning and conceded just three goals to La Salle in the team's 22-3 victory, which saw 11 different Colonials contribute to the score at Scott Natatorium before returning to Lejune Hall, where the team took on Iona College to close out the tournament with an 18-7 victory.

Head coach Barry King said the weekend's games served as a litmus test for what the team needs to work on heading into the rest of the season.

"I think we've got a lot of good things from a lot of people," King said. "Now it's just a matter of refining it, making sure that it translates as the competition gets tougher."

Heading into the tournament, the Colonials' main focus in the pool centered around playing team offense and keeping composure and stability on the defensive end.

The Colonials collected 77 total goals on the weekend and had already eclipsed the total number of goals they scored at the tournament last season after just three games.

King said he was looking for his team to play with energy and utilize their speed in the water.

"We're faster than we've been," he said. "We've got some first



ETHAN STOLER | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

Junior utility player Atakan Destici looks to pass the ball in a game against La Salle at the Navy Open Sunday.

years that are maybe some of the fastest guys who've ever been part of this, and so looking for those places where we're utilizing that and we're putting pressure on people down the pool on the offensive end."

King said the team's counterattack was "relentless" from the third quarter of the Wagner game onward, but also highlighted the need for players to decide when to use the fast offense and when to slow down the tempo in the pool.

GW was down by two goals heading into the final frame before rallying in the fourth with five unanswered goals to pull out the win. Last season, GW defeated the Seahawks 8-5 to capture the program's first conference title.

"It's both good and concerning to a point where we seem to rush

some parts of it to try to finish out of the counter-attack instead of maybe using that to set up an advantage in more of a half-court situation," he said.

With the Colonials grabbing comfortable early leads in most of their weekend games, King took the opportunity to

**"Whether it's through scoring, whether it's through passing – when we play as a unit, it's completely great."**

**ANDREW MAVIS**  
JUNIOR CENTER

test different lineups and combinations of players in the pool.

The move helped strengthen the play of the goal-scoring trio of utility players junior Atakan Destici and sophomore Andras Levai and junior center Andrew Mavis.

The three combined for 33 of the team's 77 total goals over the weekend.

Mavis said the team has a lot of people to incorporate who can score and have been using the offseason to practice playing as a unit.

"Whether it's through scoring, whether it's

through passing, including attacker Finn Lillis and utility player Nick Schroeder, who both found themselves in the team's starting lineup. Attack Josh Yardley also saw extended minutes in the pool and collected nine goals to pace the rookies.

On the defensive end, new interpretations added this season for how fouls are being called was "frustrating" for the team to adjust to at the beginning of the weekend, King said.

"It was difficult to find some rhythm," King said after Saturday's games. "It's clear that we've got to change some things in our practice and our tactics, but we're not alone – it's pretty much everybody out here is seeing this stuff for the first time."

The Colonials made changes on the fly and

workshopped their defensive structure to guard space rather than individuals to help adjust to the new officiating rules later on in the weekend, King said.

Senior goalkeeper Austin Pynch minded the net for the Colonials through all four games and made 43 saves on the weekend.

Pynch's solid presence in the goal helped lessen the consequences of mistakes for the Colonials when they were trying out the new style of play on defense, King said.

"Being stable and being composed in the water, physically and emotionally," Pynch said. "Not getting out what when somebody grabs at you or pulls on you."

As defending conference champions, the Colonials will need to fight and make sure last season was not a "fluke," King said. But, he said the pressure is "fully expected and wanted and desired."

"It's better than being the team that nobody thinks can do anything," King said. "So our challenge is accepting now being the target instead of the hunter."

Utility player Jack Kerwin – one of five seniors on the team – said the older players are ready to build off the foundation of last year's experience of winning the conference and making an appearance for the first time in program history at the NCAA tournament.

"We're ready to take on the lead and get another conference championship and pass the torch to these guys and establish a true winning culture," Kerwin said.

The Colonials return to action at the Princeton Invitational in Princeton, N.J. Their first game is slated for 12:15 p.m. Friday against California Baptist University.

## IN BRIEF

### Cross country snags top spots at Mount St. Mary's Duals

Men's and women's cross country took first and second, respectively, at the Mount St. Mary's Duals Friday to open the 2018 season.

On the men's side, the team earned 44 points to come in first out of five competitors. Senior Andrew Weber captured the individual title for the meet, crossing the finish line in 15:44.80 to pace the field. He is the first Colonial to cross the finish line first in a cross country meet since 2014, the program's first year.

The Colonials had four runners – including Weber – place in the top 10. Sophomore Jackson Cronin and junior Colin Wills finished within 76 one-hundredths of a second of each other to end in fourth and fifth place, respectively, with times of 15:53.21 and 15:53.97. Junior Jon Dooling's finishing time of 16:07.93 was good for 10th place.

The women's team ended the meet in second place with 33 total points out of six teams. The Colonials were paced by junior Suzanne Dannheim, who crossed the finish line in second place with a time of 18:25.95. Senior Madison Yerke's time of 18:35.46 made her the third runner to finish the meet. Seniors Halley Brown (18:59.90) and Brigid Prial (19:11.06) took seventh and ninth places.

Both teams return to action Sept. 14 when they hit the road to compete at the Adidas XC Challenge in North Carolina.

—Barbara Alberts

## Offense drives early season success for men's soccer

**KERRI CORCORAN**  
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

In the first two games of this season, men's soccer played with a thriving offense that carried the team to two decisive victories.

But a face-off against a tough Lehigh defense Saturday had the offense hitting a wall and exposed the work that still needs to be done on the attack for the Colonials to end the season atop the Atlantic 10.

In the team's opening games against Stony Brook and American, sophomore forward Oscar Haynes Brown powered the offense, tallying seven goals and one assist. Against Lehigh, Haynes Brown got off a team-high five shots, but none of them found the net.

"We were pressing really well as a team," Haynes Brown said of the offense's performance in last Monday's match against American.

Head coach Craig Jones said his team had nothing to be ashamed of after playing 90 minutes of gritty soccer Saturday against Lehigh, but the glaring bottom line was that the team failed to score even as the offense stormed the net.

"I think it just prepares us better now for when they do get to the A-10s," Jones said. "We're going to have those close games, those one-goal games that we've already been in."

Jones said after coming off two solid wins, the team's first loss of the season exposed areas that need improvement before conference play. As tougher competition looms, the team must sharpen up inconsistencies in play so they can break down the opponent's defense, he said, something the team wasn't able to do against Lehigh.

"We've got a good offensive group, we just have to have more quality in the final third and be a little more clinical and take some more chances," Jones said. The squad still has five more



AARON SCHWARTZ | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sophomore forward Oscar Haynes Brown takes a shot on goal during a game against Lehigh Saturday.

contests leading up to its conference opener at Davidson on Sept. 29, and the statistics so far tell the story of a team that may be poised to make waves in the A-10 despite the recent loss.

Through the first three games, GW has totaled nine goals, 49 shots and 23 shots on goal.

The Colonials' offense is on an upward trend compared to their performance at the same time last year. After three games in 2017, the team was 1-2-0 and had scored only two goals.

Out of nine teams in the A-10 that have played three contests, the Colonials lead the pack in goals scored with nine.

GW's 49 shots put it behind only Duquesne and Dayton, which totaled 53 and 51 shots, respectively, through their first three games. The Colonials' 23 shots on goal are good for second in the league behind Dayton with 25.

In the conference preseason poll, the Colonials were ranked in the bottom half of the field, fall-

ing at No. 7 out of 13 contenders in the A-10. Fordham, currently ranked No. 15 nationally in the United Soccer Coaches' top-25 poll, holds the leading spot.

When conference games begin, the Colonials will face significant obstacles against A-10 teams with high-caliber defenses.

Both the Stony Brook and Lehigh defenses have let up four goals through three games this season and American has allowed 12 goals through the same span. But, of the other six A-10 teams that have also played three games, five of them have allowed three or fewer goals, including Rhode Island who has allowed zero.

Junior defender Reese Moore said the team has been focusing on making key offensive adjustments that will allow it to break down tougher opponents.

"Every day in practice, Jones has just been having us do crossing and finishing for probably 30 minutes each day, and we're hoping that leads into games," Moore

said. The squad's statistics through the first three games show GW has pieced together an explosive offense and will just need to fine tune its strides to find the net in conference play.

Last year, the Colonials were ranked No. 6 when the season began, and a 6-2-0 league record propelled them to the No. 3 spot heading into the postseason. In all nine non-conference contests in 2017, the team scored 10 goals.

With offensive production that is on track to surpass last year's performance, the future appears bright for GW, even in the face of the season's first stinging defeat.

"I think a setback like this is probably better for you going forward than a win," junior defender Gabriel Seemungal said. "We were on cloud nine and this brings us back down to reality that we have to do the basics well, defend well, tackle well, play hard football."