

The GW Hatchet

2020 Opinions
The contributing opinions editor calls on GW to prorate tuition for online classes.
Page 6

2020 Culture
Read The Hatchet's guide to this year's online Commencement ceremony.
Pages 7-8

2020 Sports
Take a look back on one of the most unusual seasons in college athletics history.
Page 9

What's inside



GRACE HROMIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

As COVID-19 fatalities in the United States remain high, fewer admitted students than last year have submitted enrollment deposits, Provost Brian Blake said at a Faculty Senate meeting Friday.

Officials unveil on-campus, online scenarios for next academic year

ZACH SCHONFELD
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

University President Thomas LeBlanc said officials must be able to provide sufficient testing, contact tracing and places to quarantine for students to return in the fall.

LeBlanc unveiled three fall scenarios to the Faculty Senate Friday for the next academic year: on-campus instruction and residential housing, a hybrid of on-campus and online coursework or a continuation of the instructional continuity period, which would cause expected revenue shortfalls of \$100 million, \$200 million and \$300 million, respectively. Officials will announce a final decision by June 15 but might extend the decision date one week, LeBlanc said.

The revenue losses could encompass up to nearly 30 percent of GW's annual operating budget, which has hovered slightly above \$1 billion for the past few years.

"I can't tell you today what the safest mechanism is because it will depend on the condition," he said. "But our current plan is to try to be open and to have it try to have a residential experience in the fall. If facts change between now

and then, that conclusion may change."

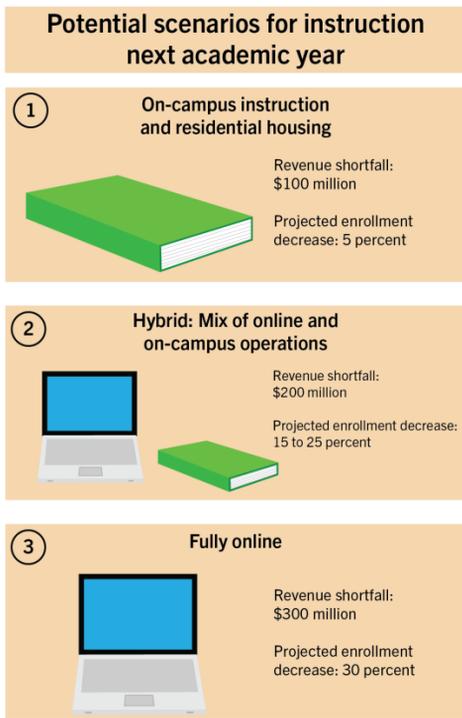
Officials have said they are planning to resume in-person classes this fall. The pandemic is expected to cause revenues to fall by \$45 million by the end of the fiscal year.

LeBlanc said the three projections for the fall include key assumptions like the student retention rate and graduate enrollment, which could shift as a result of the pandemic. LeBlanc said making a final decision in June will provide students, families and faculty enough time to prepare for the fall semester.

The scenarios capture the "range of possibilities" for the next academic year and may need to be tweaked in the coming weeks, he said.

He said officials are working with GW's medical experts to determine testing plans, but administrators may need to test students and employees when they initially return to campus, weekly during the first month of the academic year and bi-weekly thereafter. GW would need to administer about 250,000 coronavirus tests under that plan, he said.

LeBlanc said if students can return in the fall, an "optimistic" scenario,



SIDNEY LEE | GRAPHICS EDITOR

some students – including vulnerable populations, like those with certain respiratory illnesses, and international students – may be unable to return to campus or participate in classroom instruction.

Provost Brian Blake is leading an effort with the deans to explore "alternative academic options" for those students, like online classes or assignments that can be done while social distancing, LeBlanc said.

Commitment deposits fall nearly 20 percent amid enrollment cut, pandemic

ZACH SCHONFELD
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Undergraduate enrollment deposits fell by about 18 percent this year in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and efforts to reduce the undergraduate population.

Provost Brian Blake said at a Faculty Senate meeting Friday that the number of enrollment deposits fell short of officials' modeled target by 4.8 percentage points. Although the number of students who have committed to GW fell, Blake said officials anticipate the revenues they receive from the incoming class will be "slightly higher" than last year. "We're in the season now to look at transfers," Blake said. "We'll go much harder at them."

Admissions staff moved programming online and accepted a small number of students from the waitlist early to attract additional students as officials brace for potential enrollment changes because of the pandemic. Officials will also reassess a planned 20 percent cut in the undergraduate population in the wake of the pandemic's effects.

He said "diversity" fell by about 1 percent, and the num-

ber of Pell Grant recipients also declined.

Blake said he asked enrollment officials to implement a 1 percent drop in GW's discount rate – the average discount given to students through scholarships and grants off of the sticker price.

"That one point was done by strategically investing in students with high need," he said.

Ben Toll, the dean of undergraduate admissions, said 170 fewer international students committed to attend GW this year compared to last year. In fall 2019, 1,416 international undergraduate students – about 354 per class – attended the University, according to institutional data.

"Internationally, there is a lot of uncertainty in regards to whether international students will be able to secure student visas and/or whether there will be COVID-19-related travel restrictions," Toll said in an email.

He said a "bit more" than 2,350 students have submitted their enrollment deposit – including about 250 waitlisted students.

See STUDENTS Page 5

Administrators vow to not tap into endowment

ZACH SCHONFELD
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

As officials project losing tens of millions of dollars from the ongoing pandemic, they are doubling down on intentions to not tap into GW's endowment.

University President Thomas LeBlanc and Board of Trustees Chair Grace Speights said at a Faculty Senate meeting Friday that they have no plans to use the University's \$1.78 billion endowment to mitigate the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Speights said officials have a fiduciary duty to protect the University's long-term financial health despite the short-term effects of the virus.

"Tapping the endowment or reserves today would not be a prudent decision or in the best interest of GW because it will only hamper

our financial standing in the future," Speights said at the senate meeting. "We cannot sacrifice our long-term future to resolve the challenges posed by this pandemic."

LeBlanc first announced his intent to not use the endowment in a letter to the GW community April 27.

Anthony Yezer, a faculty senator and a professor of economics, said it made sense to finance revenue losses resulting from COVID-19 by taking on new debt instead of tapping into the endowment and losing out on interest accrued to the fund tax-free.

"If we can borrow through the banks at 5 percent, especially given that we don't pay any taxes on the gains in the endowment, we ought to do that," he said.

See FAT Page 5

Faculty say online classes have helped develop new teaching strategies

FALYN O'BRIEN
REPORTER

JULIA RUSSO
STAFF WRITER

As the instructional continuity period potentially comes to a close, 10 faculty members say they were able to develop new strategies for teaching future classes.

After faculty quickly altered their courses during online instruction, professors said they were optimistic but needed to adapt to the challenges of the online environment. Ten faculty members said students have been understanding of the limitations of online learning and they have discovered time-saving teaching strategies they plan to implement next semester, while others said online tools limited student engagement.

Donna Hoffman, a professor of marketing, said she used both asynchronous and synchronous learning – pre-recorded lectures for students to listen to on their own time and live discussions and lectures, respectively – in her three courses including two undergraduate courses and a graduate course on marketing strategy.

Hoffman said she plans to continue to use these methods in future semesters regardless of whether the fall semester will be held online.

She said placing lecture material online and using class time to apply the material through discussions and exercises made her teaching more efficient.

Hoffman said she will also introduce a new artificial intelligence marketing strategy course in the fall that she thinks has many opportunities for an asynchronous component.

She said she plans to have students listen to pre-recorded lectures to save class time for discussing "cases" and working on projects.

"I'm psyched about the opportunities for doing this more generally, having asynchronous components that are fun lectures," she said.

LaKeisha McClary, a professor of chemistry, said a challenging part of virtual learning was transferring in-person General Chemistry II exams to an online format while keeping the amount of cheating low because of how easily students can look up answers online during a test.

She said she made the exam "a little bit more difficult" to help minimize cheating, but this strategy did not fully mitigate it.

"There's this balance of trying to provide students the same opportunities that they would have for an in-person exam," McClary said.

McClary said she will teach general chemistry in

the summer and will not be able to implement the same tools she used during the virtual learning period like pre-recorded narrated lectures. Her summer class will meet four days a week, leaving her less time to record lectures compared to her classes this semester that met twice a week, she said.

McClary said she plans to use Blackboard Collaborate's breakout groups tool, which allows professors to put students into small groups for discussion, to build community while also engaging with her students during her summer class.

"It was nice during the semester – I knew my students before we left," McClary said. "I'm not going to know these people over the summer."

Kim Roddis, a professor of civil engineering, said she has faced problems in replicating the experience of in-person class with holding both of her classes, Structural Theory II and Design of Metal Structures, synchronously using Blackboard Collaborate.

"I feel we are all in a crisis situation, and I think that students and faculty and administration and staff did really well given the remarkable circumstances, but you know online teaching is very different than what we've been doing," she said.

Roddis said her courses

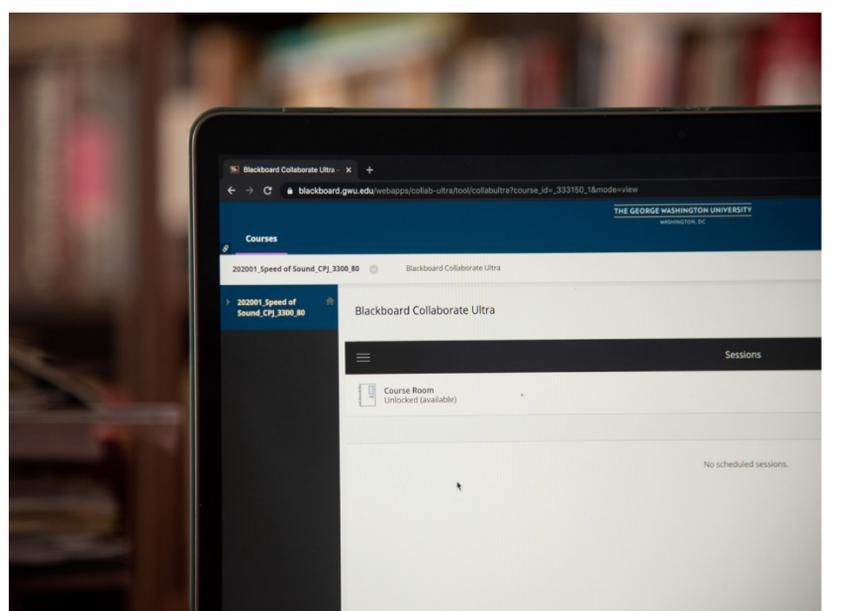


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Kim Roddis, a professor of civil engineering, said she found it difficult to replicate certain aspects of in-person engineering classes, like drawing, over Blackboard Collaborate.

require a lot of student interaction that are difficult to replicate online, like talking and drawing.

"We just have been teaching remotely because we have to," Roddis said. "Offering a course online requires very, very different preparation than offering a course in a classroom, and we did not have the opportunity or the resources to do that so we're teaching our normal class-

room courses as best we can online."

Roddis said she tries to do as much active learning as possible in her classes by alternating short lectures with quick activities where students can apply the information they just learned. But she said Blackboard Collaborate's limited capabilities in replicating the in-person class environment has made these switches hard to do and

has forced her to lecture longer than she desired.

"We're trying to provide the best learning environment we can and the best learning opportunities we can at GW, so that means that the students have to be engaged, and they have to understand that they are responsible too, and I really feel like all the students in my classes have really stepped up on that," Roddis said.

News

May 11, 2020 • Page 2

CRIME LOG

DRUG LAW VIOLATION

South Hall
4/24/2020 – 1:05 p.m.
Closed Case
GW Police Department officers responded to South Hall where an area coordinator found marijuana and drug accessories in a female student's room. The officers collected the contraband and brought the items to the Academic Center.
Referred to DSA

THEFT II/FROM MOTOR VEHICLE, UNLAWFUL ENTRY OF A MOTOR VEHICLE, DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY/VANDALISM, CREDIT CARD FRAUD

Academic Center Garage
4/27/2020 – 1:51 a.m.
Closed Case
An unknown male suspect forcibly entered a parked vehicle on the B2 level of the Academic Center garage. The subject shattered the side front window, entered the vehicle and stole a backpack and a wallet belonging to a non-GW affiliated female. The victim reported that her credit card was fraudulently charged to the Metropolitan Police Department, and officers said they would follow up with the victim after 48 hours.
No identifiable subject

DRUG LAW VIOLATION

South Hall
4/28/2020 – 11:19 a.m.
Closed Case
GWPD officers responded to South Hall where an area coordinator found a pipe with marijuana residue in a male student's room. The officers collected the pipe and brought it to the Academic Center.
Referred to DSA

4D SEXUAL ASSAULT/FORCIBLE FONDLING, HARASSMENT: E-MAIL AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA, FRAUD 1D/FRAUD

Duques Hall
Multiple – Multiple
Closed Case
A male student reported that two GW-affiliated male subjects defrauded and harassed him. The student agreed to be a part of a fraudulent company by investing money with the two subjects. The victim also reported that one of the males subjected the student to acts of fondling in Duques Hall, and both men sent him harassing text messages.
Referred to the Title IX Office

—Compiled by Kateryna Stepanenko



FILE PHOTO BY ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR
Howard Brookins and Brandon Hill, the caucus's former leaders, are the new Student Association president and executive vice president.

SA's Black Senators Caucus focuses on black representation in inaugural year

ELLA STERN
REPORTER

In the first year for the Student Association's Black Senators Caucus, members said they have worked to ensure black students are represented in SA decisions.

The caucus met for the first time in early October to outline their goals like increasing black student retention in the SA and at GW, developing strong relationships with student organizations and addressing racial incidents. Brandon Hill, the SA executive vice president who chaired the caucus during the academic year, said the members worked to serve as a liaison for black students in the SA and address racist instances like a Phi Sigma Sigma member's Snapchat post, which surfaced in September.

"I view the caucus as a security force or an emergency preparedness plan," Hill said. "Being a member of the [Black Senators Caucus], you knew that at the drop of the hat you would have to move everything in order to represent and advocate for black students."

Hill said many black senators in the SA were left out of the planning process to create the body's response when an Alpha Phi sorority member posted a racist Snapchat in spring 2018. The caucus was designed for black senators to use the group as a "mechanism" for representation in student government, he said.

He said the caucus has supported other black student groups like The Ace Magazine – a publication from the Black Student

Union – by bringing the publication's members to BSC meetings.

Hill said caucus members also collaborated with GW's National Association for the Advancement of Colored People chapter to draft a response following University President Thomas LeBlanc's comment comparing fossil fuel divestment to shooting "all black people."

BSC members issued a statement within a few hours of the video surfacing, saying LeBlanc's language was "racially insensitive" and "thoughtless."

"People wanted to know what the BSC thought, and our statement was cited all over the place by so many students and organizations on campus," Hill said.

Hill said he anticipates the BSC can continue its work next year supporting black student organizations and increasing black student SA representation through emphasizing "proactive" over "reactive" dialogue in the SA. He said caucus members are working to create a finance guide for black student organizations to secure extra money over the larger student organizations that request SA funds.

"Black students shouldn't feel the need to be treated as a protected class in a sense that they should feel free to live about just as any member of the dominant culture," Hill said.

Howard Brookins, the SA president and former caucus vice chair, said he envisioned the BSC as a place for black students to voice their opinion in SA decisions and work as a collective of black

student voices when advocating against racist instances that occur on campus, like Snapchat posted by a former Phi Sigma Sigma president.

"There hasn't been anything like the Black Senators Caucus in the SA's history because there hasn't been a set cohort of students specifically advocating for a minority goal," Brookins said.

He said the SA diversity and inclusion assembly hosted a forum for students to discuss the Snapchat which acted as a "foundational" event in the caucus' creation, informing the community the caucus is a space for students to discuss racism.

Brookins said the caucus sponsored the Code of Conduct Reform Act after LeBlanc's comments in February. The resolution called on officials to include examples of bias-related instances in the Code of Student Conduct and for "necessary repercussions" if racist instances occur.

He said the caucus also sponsored the GW Police Department Institutional Reform Act after a GW police officer allegedly pushed a female student down the F Street House stairs in a February protest. The act called on officials to release guidelines for student protests and require GWPD officers to treat all students with respect.

The officer who allegedly pushed the student was placed on administrative leave following the protest.

Brookins said the caucus also endorsed the Student Organization Outreach Act, which requires the SA president and executive vice president to hold joint meetings

with all student organization leaders once a semester to foster connections among the groups' leaders and the SA.

As the current SA president, Brookins said he will work to reinstate the BSC next academic year because the original legislation that created the group states the caucus disbanded at the end of the 2020 spring semester.

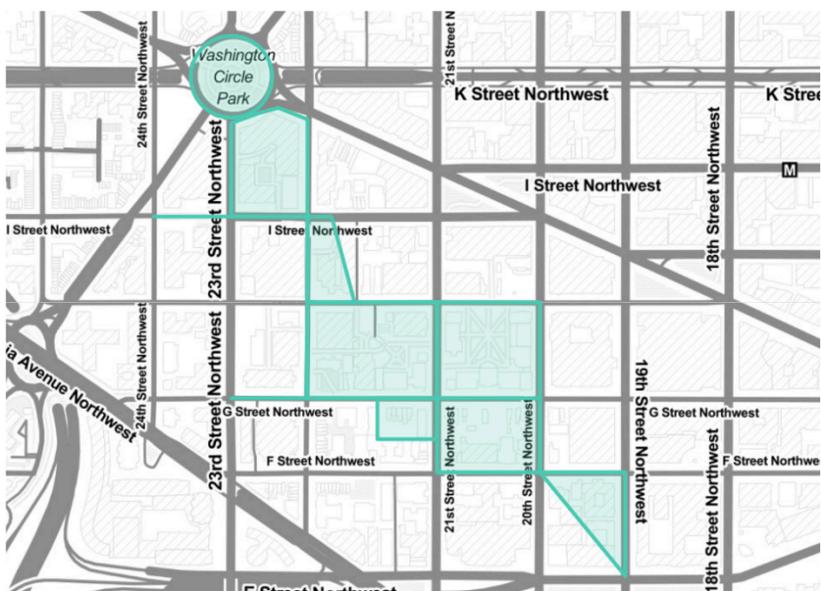
"We will definitely look to see a caucus created and look to work with senators to make sure that the caucus is alive and well and that we are offering full support to them," Brookins said.

SA Sen. Tony Peeler, ESIA-U, said the caucus hosted a member of the "Central Park Five" – five teenagers who were wrongfully accused of assaulting a woman in New York's Central Park – in February to speak about his life after prison.

Peeler said the caucus members also created a how-to guide on SA elections sent to students inquiring about running for an SA position. The document included instructions on how much money senators spent on campaigns and platform ideas used to help students who might have been confused about the logistics of leading a campaign or voting as a student, he said.

He said he will work to reintroduce the caucus, which will undergo changes in leadership roles, to the senate next year. He said now that former caucus leaders Hill and Brookins moved into higher SA positions, reinstating the caucus next year will be up to the remaining black senators.

Officials host virtual workshops on plan to improve campus accessibility



ILENA PENG | CONTRIBUTING WEB DEVELOPER
Participants at the meetings discussed several campus improvements, like constructing a diagonal walking path from the Milken Institute School of Public Health to the Elliott School of International Affairs, to link open spaces.

JARROD WARDWELL
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

MAKENA ROBERTS
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Officials creating GW's campus plan updated the community on their status via online workshops late last month with proposed changes like the return of a dining hall to campus.

The Strategic Campus

and Facilities Master Plan Committee held six workshops for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff April 29 to May 2 to gather feedback about campus updates, like adding a dining hall on the Foggy Bottom Campus and restructuring the Mount Vernon Campus quad. University spokeswoman Crystal Nosal said similar themes stretched across all seminars

like increasing "meaningful" gathering spaces, improving pedestrian pathways and enhancing buildings' accessibility and sustainability.

Nosal said Cooper Robertson – the architecture and planning firm partnering with the University to construct the plan – hosted workshops in February to learn about the campus's features before proposing facility updates. Officials announced

the potential to draft the University's new campus plan more than 20 years ago to reconfigure the mapping of campus and traffic flow.

Officials said in the recent workshops the plan now includes updated meeting spaces on the Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon campuses, highlighting pedestrian access on campus and accessibility of facilities, particularly on the Vern.

Increasing pedestrian mobility

Brian Shea, an urban design director with Cooper Robertson, said in the virtual workshops the committee intends to "reinvent" Kogan Plaza and H Street as the center of campus with less traffic and more green spaces. He said the group is proposing to remove the curb from H Street to Kogan Plaza to increase campus accessibility and pedestrian walkways.

Shea said the committee has proposed installing a walking path called "The Diagonal" that runs from the northwest to the southeastern side of campus – starting at the Milken Institute School of Public Health to the Elliott School of International Affairs. He said the path will serve as a "public spine" to link open spaces and buildings to accommodate student walking routes.

"You have this extraordinary network of smaller, intimate, more open spaces on this diagonal move along the campus," Shea said.

Reconfiguring the STEM district

Mike Aziz, the director of urban design for Cooper Robertson, said in the virtual workshops that the plan features projects to redesign the Marvin Center and Potomac Square, and the STEM and medical district will expand its facilities to include residential and dining halls.

The University's STEM district, the area around the Science and Engineering Hall, would house an "ambulatory care center" at Tompkins Hall and expand the public health school's facilities into the Medical Faculty Associates building, Aziz said. He said SEH would expand to Rome Hall, and a newly renovated School of Medicine and Health Sciences would expand beyond its current facility.

Aziz said plans include a "neighborhood model" of residence halls organized by class year with new dining and recreational facilities. He said the neighborhood would include a communal dining location similar to District House.

Aziz said officials also

plan to transform the Marvin Center into a "world-class" events center with larger venues for public speakers. He said the building's student organization offices and the Financial Aid Resources will move to a "flagship" student center featuring a dining hall and game rooms near Kogan Plaza's Engine Company 23 fire station.

Aziz said the committee has no set timeline for the developments and will be placing initiatives into higher and lower "priority groups." He said the committee could complete redesign initiatives like that of Kogan Plaza and H Street more quickly than other reconstruction projects.

Increasing Vern accessibility

Aziz said the current proposal for the Vern downsizes residence hall space, connects West Hall to the quad and expands the athletic facilities with increased parking and spectator spaces. He said the plan allows for additional athletic and aquatic facilities without decreasing the size of the competition soccer field located outside West Hall.

Officials announced in late January that the Smith Center's pool facilities in Foggy Bottom will be replaced with an additional basketball court.

GW unlikely to increase penalties for sexual assault, experts say

SHANNON MALLARD
NEWS EDITOR

Title IX experts said officials are not likely to adopt the stricter sanctions for sexual assault called for in a petition posted late last month.

Sophomore Abby Canning, the petition's author, urged officials to suspend assailants until survivors graduate and impose harsher penalties for repeat offenders or "aggravated circumstances," citing officials' handling of her own sexual assault case as evidence of lax policies. Title IX experts said officials might be hesitant to adopt the proposed sanctions because universities generally decide sexual assault penalties on a case-by-case basis rather than a consistent punitive standard.

"This is only one example of GW's pattern of using disproportionate sanctions against sexual assailants," Canning said in the petition.

The petition has garnered more than 1,000 signatures as of Sunday evening.

Bilal Bongo, Canning's assailant, received a one-semester suspension for sexually assaulting her in January 2019, according to documentation of a Title IX investigation obtained by The Hatchet. Canning

said in the petition she felt Bongo's sanction was insufficient.

Bongo said he was "wrongly" convicted of the assault and said his encounter with Canning was a "genuine hookup" that he stopped when she expressed discomfort.

Marissa Pollick, a sports management lecturer at the University of Michigan with experience in Title IX research, said universities are generally more unlikely to implement harsher penalties because of new Title IX regulations that grant more rights to the accused.

She said universities are concerned with protecting themselves legally, adding that she has seen an uptick in the past few years in the number of students filing lawsuits claiming they were wrongly accused of sexual assault under Obama-era Title IX guidelines.

U.S. Department of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos published new regulations Thursday governing Title IX proceedings that federally-funded educational institutions must implement by August. The regulations include measures like forgoing the single investigator model – which GW currently uses – in favor of multiple-person hearing boards and allowing cross-examination during case

proceedings.

Alan Sash, a partner in the litigation department at the law firm McLaughlin & Stern, said the petition may encourage officials to adopt stricter penalties for sexual assault because universities might be more likely to respond to students' firsthand accounts of their experiences.

"A lot of times the experiences that students feel on the frontlines, living at the university every day and experiencing things at the university is a good indicator of how we should evolve," Sash said.

He said suspending assailants until survivors graduate and doling out harsher penalties to repeat offenders are worthwhile policies to adopt to protect students and sufficiently punish those found guilty of sexual assault. But he said Title IX officials should focus on establishing consistent standards for how to sanction different types of sexual assault and harassment.

GW considers factors like the "nature" of the conduct at issue and the impact of the misconduct on the complainant when determining sanctions for a case, according to the Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Interpersonal Violence Policy. Potential sanctions

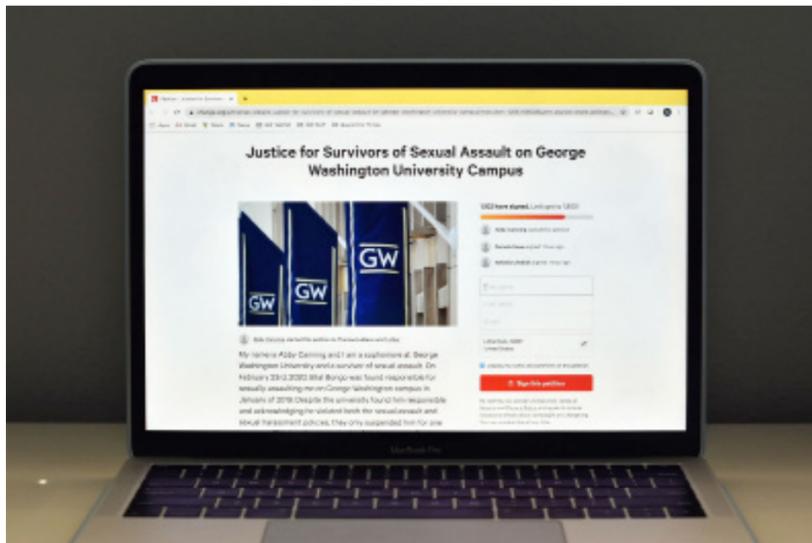


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SOPHIA YOUNG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR
Experts said new guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education granting more rights to those accused of sexual assault will likely push officials not to adopt the petition's demands.

for sexual assault include suspension, expulsion, disciplinary probation and No Contact Orders – which bar assailants from contacting survivors – according to the policy.

"That seems to be very much appropriate to have one person be suspended from the university until the victim leaves or completely dismissed or expel the person who's found responsible for sexual assault under the definition provided under the criminal law," Sash said.

Jody Shipper, the co-founder of and Title IX services practice lead at Title IX consulting firm Grand River Solutions, said harsher penalties generally do not serve as a significant deterrent to sexual assault. Instead, harsher penalties may discourage survivors from reporting their assault, especially if survivors are concerned less about getting the assailant in trouble and more concerned with requesting assistance from the university.

She added that GW should focus on implementing quality Title IX and bystander intervention training to decrease the overall incidence of sexual assault on campus.

First-year students must attend in-person sexual assault prevention training and complete online diversity training during their first semester.

"Things that we know about that do help include greatly improved bystander training," Shipper said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALEXANDER CULLEN
GW's Department of Emergency Medicine Training Center has delivered more than 1,000 CPAP adapters and 450 face shields to D.C. medical personnel since April 15.

University ships protective equipment to paramedics fighting pandemic

JARROD WARDWELL
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Students and faculty are manufacturing medical equipment for D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services as frontline workers scrape together resources to battle COVID-19.

Alexander Cullen, a training coordinator at GW's Department of Emergency Medicine Training Center – which offers educational programming in emergency life support – said the team has delivered nearly 1,500 pieces of medical equipment since April 15 consisting of face shields and breathing machine adapters that protect paramedics treating patients inflicted with the virus. Cullen said officials began working with FEMS the first week of April to prevent breathing machines hooked to patients from passing the virus to on-duty paramedics.

"When it turned out that we had a solution that we could prototype, design ourselves and print in-house and supply in quantity within a couple of days, it meant that the fire department was able to go back to using the appropriate patient care methods while remaining safe," he said.

Douglas Buchanan, the chief communications officer of FEMS, said D.C. paramedics use the small plastic adapters to connect filters to Continuous Positive Airway Pressure machines that inject oxygen and pressure into patients' lungs through a mask. The machine requires filters to capture germs carrying COVID-19 before they reach the surrounding atmosphere after patients exhale through their masks, he said.

Cullen said the team has been distributing face shields to provide masks extra protection from exposure to droplets from sneezes, coughs or any "respiratory process."

"Being unprepared because of a lack of proper equipment, whether through

oversight or a lack of ability to purchase is incredibly frustrating, especially when it's a small piece of plastic that could make you much safer," Cullen said.

The University's partnership with FEMS follows a slew of University-wide COVID-19 relief efforts, including drive-thru testing sites and housing for health care workers.

Cullen said the team has sent more than 1,000 adapters and 450 face shields to FEMS since it first began delivering equipment April 15 and has now stocked FEMS and other local fire departments like Arlington County with more than 250 percent of their original needs. The team has shifted its focus to prototyping additional viral filters for CPAP machines and manufacturing virus testing swabs from 3D printers, he said.

He said the team had to measure the amount of "dead space," or unnecessary volume, within each viral filter's ventilatory circuit that connects the patient to the ventilator so the adapters could have a tight fit on the machine.

Cullen said he works another job as a paramedic in which he must wear protective equipment like N95 masks to avoid infection. He said his experience in the job helped him understand the urgency in distributing these adapters to the fire department to keep frontline workers safe.

"As someone who's wearing an N95 and going into homeless shelters and nursing homes for my daily job, knowing that you couldn't safely use CPAP to manage these people, and that's the standard of care, was something that I don't think any of us were really OK just accepting at face value," he said.

Cullen said he has been working on the project with volunteers from the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design along with Sylvain Guiriec, an astrophysics professor who

volunteered to help manufacture the swabs.

Cullen said the Corcoran School has allowed the group to use its 3D printers and has donated 3D printing filament and "durable materials" to aid the process of printing swabs and adapters. He said he created a GoFundMe page that has raised \$5,000 as of Sunday for the team to afford more materials, he said.

"We have an astrophysics professor, an art and sculpture professor, an engineering student and a paramedic that are all working on one project cohesively for the purpose of just trying to help the community that we live in," Cullen said.

Buchanan said the adapters GW has been delivering were in short supply because of increased demand for protective machinery during the pandemic. He said GW and the local nonprofit Nova Labs, also delivering adapters to FEMS, have been able to compensate for that demand with their deliveries.

"We are now confident because of the work that GW did and their insight in realizing our need that we are now able to do everything that we're able to do to protect our members on the numerous calls they respond to each day," he said.

Buchanan said the fire department paramedics who work 24-hour shifts "are in the belly of the beast" in their fight for their patients' safety amid the pandemic. He said the fire department's partnership with the University has given first responders the protection they need to safely perform their jobs.

"What GW has been able to provide us is that sense of security for our members to ensure that they can do their jobs without also becoming infected themselves, which in thus protects their fellow team members on the fire-truck, those within the fire-house and as importantly their families back at home," he said.

GWorld vendors hope for government aid amid pandemic

LIA DEGROOT
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Jeremy Pollok, the managing partner of Tonic, said he logged on to apply for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's small business coronavirus relief program when the application opened at noon a few weeks ago.

But by 12:01 p.m., the website had crashed.

As many businesses on campus have shuttered under financial stress or in compliance with Mayor Muriel Bowser's order to close non-essential businesses, their owners were denied or haven't heard back from government coronavirus relief programs. Owners said the lack of funding for Foggy Bottom businesses has prompted closures, furloughs and a struggle to pay expenses over the past few months.

Pollok said Tonic closed March 15 after it could no longer afford to stay open with just carry-out orders. He said he applied for five public- and private-sector support programs over the past few weeks, including the D.C. Small Business Recovery Microgrants Program, which offers small amounts of money to small businesses in the District.

He said the only program that has provided him funding has been the federal government's Paycheck Protection Program. He said Tonic has met eligibility requirements for most of the programs he applied for based on location, restaurant size and number of employees.

The PPP grants small businesses and nonprofits loans for operating costs, according to the Small Business Administration's website. The government will forgive loans that the business uses toward payroll, mortgage interest rates, rent and utilities, the website states.

"Mostly it's just first come, first serve," Pollok said. "Whoever can get in line first gets in."

He said the applications he's filled out to receive funding were fairly straightforward, but the aid programs are receiving a flood of applications from struggling businesses, which makes each individual business's chances of receiving funding slim.

"Unfortunately, it's more difficult on their end because so many people applied that it's taking them a long time to sort through it," he said.

Pollok said the PPP,

which grants businesses a loan for 2.5 times payroll, has provided sufficient funding for Tonic to reopen from noon to 8 p.m. for takeout and delivery orders beginning this week.

Pollok launched a GoFundMe fundraiser last month to raise money for the nearly 80 employees that he had to furlough after closing. The fundraiser has racked up more than \$15,000 for his staff as of Sunday.

"We're taking it day-by-day and week-by-week and re-evaluating," Pollok said. "The PPP gives us some breathing room in some aspects, and it's great for the staff."

GWorld vendors like Duke's Grocery and Uptowner Cafe told The Hatchet in March their businesses closed or significantly reduced service after business plummeted and students cleared campus.

Kathryn Hartig – a spokesperson for the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning, which manages the D.C. Small Business Recovery Microgrants Program – said the office received 7,000 applications as of Friday. She said Bowser and the D.C. Council established the program on March 17 as part of emergency COVID-19 legislation.

"The D.C. Small Business Recovery Microgrants Program, which was created through the D.C. Council's COVID-19 Response Emergency Amendment Act of 2020, was created to provide flexible financial support to help D.C. businesses meet their short-term financial needs in response to COVID-19," Hartig said in an email.

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning added \$8 million to the fund April 29, according to a press release.

Hartig said the mayor has received positive feedback through phone calls and emails from businesses who have received grants thus far.

Usman Saleem, the owner of Uptowner Cafe, said he had to close the store and lay off all employees in March, when the shop is typically packed, because of the pandemic.

"Students are prepping for exams, so they're on campus a lot," he said. "We make a lot of our income during that time, especially to sustain us during the summer months."

Saleem said he applied a month ago to the PPP, the D.C. Small Business Recovery Micro-

grants Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Emergency Advance, which grants loans to agricultural and food businesses, but hasn't heard back from any. He said the government aid would allow him to relieve the financial stress many have experienced during the pandemic.

"We would be able to pay them as well so it would affect their families and their lives because they wouldn't be stressed out," he said.

Amir Mostafavi, the founder and CEO of South Block, said sales are down after its GW shop closed and other locations began offering takeout and curbside delivery. He said the business has received a PPP loan after a temporary waiting period and will use the grant for payroll, rent and utility expenses.

"It was pretty unnerving," he said in an email. "We had to sit in the dark for weeks not knowing where our application stood in the process."

University spokeswoman Crystal Nosal said officials have been in contact with GWorld businesses to confirm their operating hours and update the GW dining website for the 200 students still stuck in residence hall rooms after the University shut down campus in March.

"With regard to the dining vendors who are also tenants in GW-owned properties, the University recognizes they are a vital part of our University community," Nosal said in an email. "We look forward to working with each of them for successful re-entry to business in a post-COVID-19 world."

She said GW Dining has shared up-to-date information with vendors regarding local and federal legislation created to assist business owners and tenants. She said officials can't provide a definitive plan for relief for any of the University's retail tenants because of the "uncertain trajectory of the pandemic."

Nosal said some vendors have launched their own relief efforts for the community during the pandemic, like the meals TwentyTables has donated to the GW Hospital.

"The University will work with each individual tenant to map out a plan at the appropriate time for resuming operations when there is more certainty regarding when orders will be lifted and businesses allowed to resume operations," Nosal said.

GW for Biden collaborates with nationwide virtual campaign effort

LAUREN SFORZA
STAFF WRITER

A student organization supporting presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden is organizing virtual canvassing efforts with universities across the country.

GW for Biden – a chapter of Biden’s national campaign branch, Students for Biden – connected with five chapters from colleges like New York University and Columbia universities in March to increase support for the candidate. Executive board members said working with other schools has allowed them to mobilize with students beyond DMV Students for Biden chapters by organizing events like phone banking over Zoom and using a GroupMe to push campaign efforts as a combined, nationwide effort.

GW for Biden President Tyler Kusma said Students for Biden normally connects field members to college and high school students who wish to set up chapters. After universities across the nation closed amid the COVID-19 pandemic, national campaign officials formed the Biden National Student Leadership Council, an online community platform for executive board members from each chapter to connect each other with resources and invite each other to their virtual events like Q&As with politicians like former Governor Martin O’Malley,

D-Md. “One of the great benefits is just the people that they can bring in,” Kusma said. “Obviously, we’ve been doing pretty well in numbers ourselves, but when you get more people it really livens up the event.”

Kusma said campaign officials made the transition to an online campaign “significantly easier” by setting up the national council via GroupMe, where chapter members are connected with new event opportunities from Biden student supporters nationwide. He said GW for Biden has been promoting Biden canvassing events hosted between university chapters on social media platforms like Instagram and Twitter so students from any chapter can access all events.

He said the group did not plan to collaborate outside of the DMV with schools like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before officials announced all activities and classes would be moved online.

“It just helps to remember that this is a national campaign so there’s national support for the vice president,” Kusma said. “There are groups all across the country who are working to get this cause going.”

Kusma said he co-hosted a trivia campaign event Thursday called “Barks for Biden” with a field organizer from the national campaign during which students could share their dogs virtually

while answering trivia questions about Biden’s policies over Zoom.

Liam MacDermott, the group’s vice president, said the executive board has been holding biweekly virtual phone banks open to any Biden student campaigner to ramp up support for the former vice president.

MacDermott said the group has been contributing to the national campaign by participating in events hosted by other chapters, like Columbia University’s Pen Pals letter-writing campaign lobbying for federal government officials to approve the United States Postal Service’s request for emergency funding. After the COVID-19 pandemic prompted 29 state stay-at-home orders, the Postal Service experienced an “unprecedented” drop in mail, leading to decreased revenue.

“We hope to host events through the summer, and we recognize that we have a limited time so we want to just try to keep our momentum going,” he said.

The group plans to organize summer events like a virtual general body meeting to communicate with members about campaign updates, which he said will “hopefully” transition to in-person campaigning into the fall, allowing members to knock on people’s doors to talk about Biden’s policies.

“It would be really cool if we were able to go on a trip to go canvas in a competi-

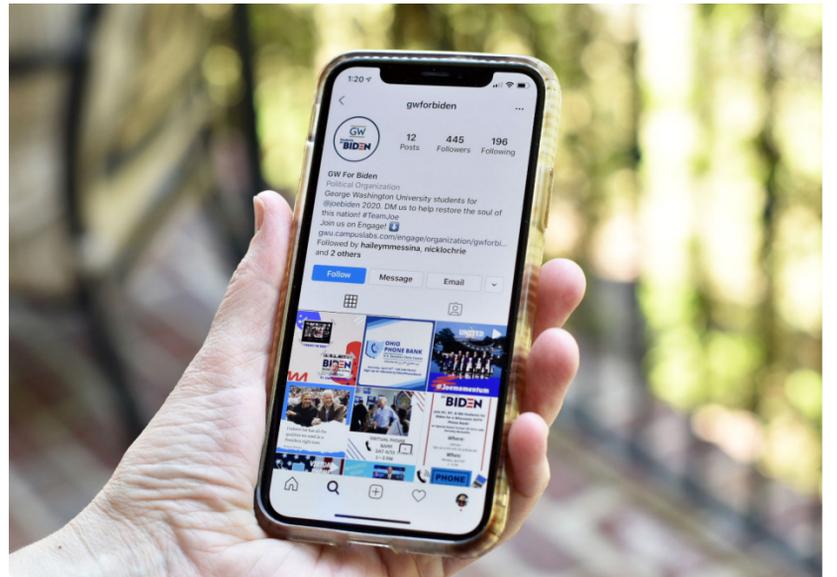


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SOPHIA YOUNG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR
The group’s leaders hope to keep members engaged over the summer with virtual general body meetings and move to in-person campaigning come fall, if the pandemic drops off.

itive state, somewhere like Virginia that still can kind of flip between red and blue, or another state close by like Pennsylvania,” MacDermott said.

Jack Connelly, the communications director of the Biden group, said social media is now the group’s main platform for campaigning during the pandemic. He said the chapter has bolstered its online presence using Instagram, Twitter and the “Biden Bulletin,” a weekly email newsletter run through the GW chapter that updates students on upcoming events each chapter

is hosting like a Q&A with former Virginia First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe.

“I anticipate it getting stronger as more people come into the campaign and as Biden becomes the only Democratic candidate heading into the general election,” Connelly said. “We’re in a fairly good place right now.”

After Senator Bernie Sanders, I-Vt, suspended his campaign in April and Biden became the presumptive Democratic nominee, the group’s social media has seen an influx of members from former campaign chapters, like GW for Pete and

GW for Warren, Connelly said. He said the group’s Instagram and Twitter followers have increased “considerably,” prompting the team to post trivia questions about Biden’s campaign policies on Instagram stories to engage followers.

“We have seen a lot of interest from people who are from different campaigns for different candidates and then also people who were not involved in the primary season and are just tuning in now that Biden is the presumptive nominee or wanting to get engaged for the general election,” Connelly said.

Trans, nonbinary student group builds community, members say

MAKENA ROBERTS
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

TIFFANY GARCIA
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

One year in, leaders of a student group dedicated to community support for transgender and nonbinary students hosted almost a dozen events in collaboration with multicultural groups on campus.

Transgender and Nonbinary Students of GW, a student organization formed last April as a supportive space for trans and nonbinary students, collaborated with more than 10 other organizations to educate students on issues important to the community like hormone replacement therapy. Executive board members said they plan to build on their first year’s efforts by keeping all of their events annual and expanding this year’s Transgender Awareness Week into a two-week LGBTQ celebration.

Junior Aedy Miller, the organization’s current director of marketing and public relations and president-elect, said TNBS members were “key” leaders in facilitating social and educational events for Transgender Awareness Week in mid-November. Miller said the group planned educational and speaker events aimed at creating an inclusionary space for students “of all identities,” like a workshop with Students Against Sexual Assault about sexual assault and survivorship in the trans community.

Trans Awareness Week this year encompassed 15 events intended to empower transgender and nonbi-

nary students and educate students about the community and issues affecting it. Student leaders said the week’s events, like a spoken word mic night celebrating trans artists, will happen again at September’s LG-BTQ celebration, which will also feature a mini-Pride event after June’s Pride festival was canceled.

“The way that we sought to build community was by thinking about those who weren’t in the rooms when we were planning meetings,” Miller said. “Always thinking about who can we work with too, like different organizations, different University departments, who can be worked with to create a welcoming and affirming space for students of all identities.”

Miller said the organization expanded its outreach into the D.C. community during Transgender Awareness week through a sticker fundraiser with the Organization of Latino American Students, which raised more than \$700 for Casa Ruby – the only D.C. organization providing direct services, like housing, for low- or no-income queer individuals.

Miller said the organization had planned a postcard campaign directed at state legislatures enacting legislation blocking transgender youth from accessing hormones or participating in sports for International Transgender Day of Visibility on March 31 before students were sent home for the semester because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

After the event was canceled amid the pandemic, TNBS members decided to use Discord, a virtual chat website similar to GroupMe, to allow students to continue communicating

with each other and to offer support to each other after moving back home.

“Within the community there are some folks who just don’t even have a home to go back to,” Miller said. “On the flip side, if folks have a place to go back to, people either have to go back in the closet, are put into toxic or even like emotionally abusive situations where they’re constantly misgendered or don’t feel affirmed in their home and just not safe in their home.”

Harvey Tate, the group’s incoming vice president, said student leaders partnered with the Multicultural Student Services Center’s LGBTQIA Resource Center to augment resources available to students, like chest binders for students transitioning, as part of their goal to advocate for greater representation of trans and nonbinary students.

Tate said members have also met with Student Association and housing officials to discuss University policies about changing one’s name and about housing that does not represent trans and nonbinary students. He said the housing department currently assigns students rooms based on sex instead of gender, creating “problematic” situations for students who identify as gender-neutral or transgender who are then forced to choose a gender or are stuck in “potentially harmful” roommate situations.

“I’d rather fix the system than keep trying to Band-Aid patch it,” Tate said. “So the end goal is to fix the system. But that’s a long-term goal that we can’t necessarily get done in our first year, because we have to build those avenues of trust and work toward them.”



FILE PHOTO BY DEAN WHITELAW | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Officials said they will reach a final decision about accepting CARES Act funding in the coming week, adding that they are concerned with strings attached to the funding’s use.

Plans to accept millions in CARES Act funding ‘in the works’: officials

ALEC RICH
STAFF WRITER

ZACH SCHONFELD
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Administrators say they are still grappling with how to use more than \$9 million in funding earmarked for GW in the multi-billion-dollar federal higher education relief package passed last month.

The funding, which totals about \$91 million, was allocated through the CARES Act based on the number of Pell Grant recipients attending GW and the University’s enrollment as part of a larger multi-trillion-dollar spending package. University President Thomas LeBlanc said at a Faculty Senate meeting Friday that officials are still determining whether or not to accept the funding.

“We’re still working through the details – there are politics associated with this,” LeBlanc said.

Officials must agree to use at least 50 percent of the funds for emergency financial aid for students and continue employing all workers and contractors to the “greatest extent practicable” to receive the funding, the bill’s text states. The relief aid disbursed to students will be nontaxable, according to an Internal Revenue Service announcement last week, which LeBlanc characterized as “good news.”

But administrators at several universities, like Princeton and Harvard universities, have said they will not accept the funding because the U.S. Department of Education has stipulated the funds cannot be used for students protected

by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. GW has long supported DACA, filing an amicus brief with the Supreme Court alongside 19 other universities last fall endorsing the policy.

“The reality is every institution is looking at the pros and cons of accepting the money,” LeBlanc said. “Half the money goes directly to our students, and to not accept it would penalize them.”

He said officials will make a final decision in the next week on accepting the funds.

“The legislation is ambiguous enough that there is a risk in accepting the money that the terms will be interpreted in a certain way, so we’re still working through that,” he said.

LeBlanc said GW advocated for \$50 billion in relief funding for higher education through consortium and lobbying groups, a far larger amount than the approximately \$14 billion allocated under the CARES Act.

Mark Diaz, the executive vice president and chief financial officer, said GW would receive the funds through a reimbursable grant from the federal government, and the money would help mitigate financial losses and provide emergency aid to students in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

GW is projected to face a \$12 million annual budget deficit this fiscal year because of the pandemic, which resulted in \$45 million in lost revenues. Officials estimate the University could lose between an additional \$100 million and \$300 million next year depending on the state of the pandemic.

To reduce expenses, administrators have suspended most capital projects and hirings, taken pay cuts ranging from 5 to 20 percent and eliminated merit salary raises for next year.

Diaz said officials’ plans to disburse any funds they accept are “evolving” based on guidance from the federal education department and ongoing circumstances.

“We obviously have to adhere to and comply with any of the rules or regulations attached to that funding,” he said. “We’re still receiving that, and that will inform how we can best get the much needed funds to the students, so it’s still in motion.”

Lynn Pasquerella, the president of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, said the funding from the CARES Act will be “critical” to alleviating some of the financial hardships students are facing by ensuring universities like GW have the capacity to address their concerns regardless of what instruction in the fall looks like.

“What we’ve seen from this crisis is the extent to which we are failing to address students’ food and shelter and security on college campuses – those are urgent needs – and also the digital divide with students who don’t have access to computers to high speed internet,” she said.

Pasquerella said the relief bill’s language has caused “confusion” for universities, because it seems to limit eligibility for funding to students who filed for financial aid before the pandemic – even though the record-high unemployment caused by the virus may be inflicting harm on others previously well-off.



FILE PHOTO BY JENNA BANKS | PHOTOGRAPHER
Aedy Miller, the organization’s president-elect, said their group expanded its outreach over the year and raised hundreds of dollars for local charities.

Trachtenberg School director focuses on preparing students for careers

ISHA TRIVEDI
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The director of the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration said she was reminded of why she belonged at GW when she saw seniors helping community members during their capstone presentations at the end of the fall semester.

Mary Tschirhart said she emphasized her commitment in the past year to preparing students to face the ongoing challenges they will encounter as public servants, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. She said she has worked to reinforce connections between community leaders in the District and members of the Trachtenberg School during her first year as director and has utilized her experience in nonprofit management to encourage members of the school to move toward "making a positive difference."

When officials announced last year that Tschirhart would become director of the Trachtenberg School, she said at the time that she wanted to use GW's location to "connect community members to life beyond the classroom," which she said she has done by taking advantage of her previous relationships with nonprofit leaders across the District.

Tschirhart said she uti-

lized the existing connections that faculty and alumni of the Trachtenberg School have to create new networking opportunities for students, including a series of new events for the fall semester on topics that are of "special interest" to leaders of nonprofit organizations.

"The connections that have been forged through the years really are very strong, and part of my job is to help maintain those while creating new ones," she said.

Tschirhart, who has worked at Ohio State, Indiana, North Carolina State and Syracuse universities teaching nonprofit management and governance, took over the position of director from Kathryn Newcomer, who has since returned to a full-time teaching position in the school after taking a sabbatical during the fall semester. She said her experience in nonprofit work has prepared her for the accountability required for her position as director of the school.

"I really see the importance of nonprofits being accountable to arranged stakeholders, and the mindset is that you're not really an owner of a nonprofit, you're a trusted steward, and I think that's true in this setting as well," she said.

Tschirhart said she is "proud" of how faculty, staff, students and alumni have stepped up to meet the de-

mands of the COVID-19 pandemic this year.

"They're working to create a better future while dealing with weird pressures facing them today," she said.

She said the Trachtenberg School will have more of a need in the upcoming academic year for external financial resources due to the pandemic, and it will be a "tough year" financially for the University.

Officials said at a Faculty Senate meeting Friday they expect GW to lose between \$100 million and \$300 million in revenue depending on University operations in the fall.

Tschirhart said many of the school's donors have recently renewed and increased their financial commitment to the school, which will be particularly necessary in the coming years due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on GW's finances.

She added that Trachtenberg School officials added a new scholarship this academic year called the Trachtenberg Scholarship for Equity and Public Service, and a fellowship for students with careers in homeland security, emergency management or national defense. She said these additions allow officials to ensure qualified students can "take advantage" of the Trachtenberg School's offerings regardless of their financial resources.



ERIC LEE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Mary Tschirhart, the director of the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration, said she will leverage her connections with nonprofit leaders in D.C. to bring new programming to the school.

Tschirhart said based on her experience in nonprofit management and governance, trust is "interwoven" with good management and governance structures, which she has encountered during her time as director of the school.

Since beginning as director of the school last year, she said she has learned through her experiences that her job is not a "one person show" but rather a community effort.

"Every place has people who are dedicated to making a positive difference, no matter their role, and that's been true at every place I've been at, and I've seen my job as encouraging them in moving in that path," she said. "While external resources are extremely important, and it's nice to have a lot of them, what's really, really important is the inner drive of the individual that gets the job done."

The school is attracting

"excellent" students, and the incoming class is projected to be as large and accomplished as current students in the Trachtenberg School, she said.

Tschirhart said based on feedback that officials have received from this year's graduates, students in the Class of 2020 will be in "rewarding careers" relating to public policy.

"We haven't heard of cancellation of jobs, internships, so that's been great," she said.

Two dozen students request admission deferrals: officials

From Page 1

Officials announced in December they planned to enroll 2,250 incoming students excluding transfers this fall. Approximately 100 students who submit enrollment deposits do not eventually attend GW historically, administrators said at the senate meeting.

Officials admitted 38.7 percent of applicants in early and regular decision rounds – the most selective incoming class since 2013.

Toll said GW's yield rate dropped this year with roughly 22.7 percent of the 10,374 accepted students

submitting enrollment deposits.

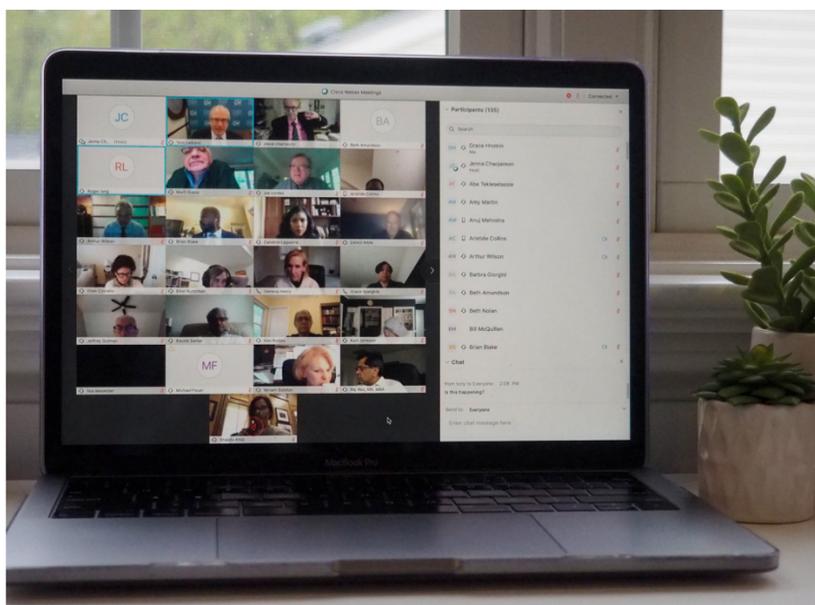
He said officials have approved more than 250 enrollment deposit extensions given the "unprecedented" economic challenges families are facing during the pandemic. Officials said in March they would maintain the May 1 commit deadline in the wake of the pandemic to accept waitlisted and transfer students in a timely manner.

"Domestically, many families are unsure of their economic situation with 33.5 million Americans filing for unemployment," Toll said. "GW has a finan-

cial aid appeals process for families whose income may have changed, and the student financial assistance team is working to best support those families."

Toll said admissions staff transitioned Inside GW, the University's accepted students programming typically held on campus, to 20 virtual Inside GW events and 45 virtual school-based events. He said officials have not offered any additional perks or benefits to attract students to the University in the fall.

He added that only 26 students have requested to defer their admission.



GRACE HROMIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Faculty senators OKed an expansion of GW's academic forgiveness policy to all undergraduates at the newly elected body's first meeting.

Faculty Senate votes to expand freshman forgiveness policy

ISHA TRIVEDI
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The Faculty Senate passed two resolutions Friday to expand the freshman forgiveness policy and to require officials to consult senators when deciding the fall semester's status.

The first resolution expands the freshman forgiveness policy to all undergraduates, and the second resolution established that the senate is prepared to meet beyond its regularly scheduled monthly meetings to help plan the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Faculty senators also discussed plans for future senate meetings in the months of May through August and the conditions necessary for students to return to campus in the fall.

Jason Zara, an associate professor of biomedical engineering and sponsor of the resolution on the undergraduate forgiveness policy, said former Student Association Executive Vice President Amy Martin and Chief of Staff Nicole Cennamo presented a "compelling" case for the resolution about increasing equity across the student body.

"Students who don't have a lot of AP credit may be taking simpler classes in their first year and then really hit the challenging classes later, whereas students who come in with 24 credit hours might take organic chemistry their first semester and be able to repeat it, so equity was also part of this," he said.

The resolution expands the freshman forgiveness policy to an undergraduate forgiveness policy that allows all undergraduate students to retake up to three courses if they received a D+ or lower. Zara said almost all of GW's peer schools have a policy

similar to this.

The senate passed a resolution in 2017 that initially implemented the freshman forgiveness policy with an amendment stating that the policy must be reviewed within three years of its implementation.

The SA Senate passed a resolution in its last meeting of the semester calling on officials to expand the first-year forgiveness policy to apply to all undergraduates.

Guillermo Orti, a professor of biology and sponsor of the second resolution, said faculty members are well-positioned to discuss potential costs to health and safety involved with officials' decision-making process in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The intent of this resolution is to send a clear signal that the senate and its committees are ready, willing and able to meet as needed during the summer to engage in planning our responses to the pandemic," he said.

University President Thomas LeBlanc said officials are considering three scenarios for the fall semester: a return to normal, a hybrid of online and in-person instruction and fully online classes. He said the campus cannot reopen without testing, contact tracing and quarantine capabilities.

The resolution requires the senate, which usually does not meet in the months of June, July and August, to schedule at least one regular monthly meeting for each month of the summer to ensure that the senate has a "robust" role in shared governance.

The resolution also states that appropriate senate committees must be consulted when officials make decisions on the status of the upcoming academic year because it involves education

and research, areas of expertise for faculty senators.

"The senate and its committees expect to participate in a significant manner in crafting procedural decisions that result from the COVID-19 emergency, especially concerning everything related to teaching and research missions carried out by faculty," Orti said.

He said the resolution does not cover the specific procedures necessary to accomplish this task, and he has begun conversations within the senate to add additional meetings of the senate's committees after the Board of Trustees meeting Friday.

"There are plans to hold several Faculty Senate and senate committee meetings during the summer in order to ensure that we have a robust role in shared governance," said Arthur Wilson, the chair of the senate's executive committee.

The senate unanimously approved the nominations of new members to senate standing committees and the election of faculty members to University committees.

LeBlanc said during the meeting that in order to return to campus in the fall, officials must be able to provide coronavirus testing, contact tracing and places for quarantining.

Board Chair Grace Speights said officials do not plan to take funding from the University's endowment to mitigate the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Tapping the endowment or reserves today would not be a prudent decision or in the best interest of GW because it will only hamper our financial standing in the future," Speights said at the senate meeting. "We cannot sacrifice our long term future to resolve the challenges posed by this pandemic."

'Lot of fat': Board chair eyes cuts as revenue declines amid pandemic

From Page 1

Officials said at the meeting and in interviews they project GW will lose \$45 million in revenue resulting from the coronavirus by June 30 but expect to save \$20 million during that time frame from cost-saving measures, like freezing most hirings and capital projects and reducing employee travel. They said the net loss of roughly \$25 million would reflect a roughly \$12 million annual deficit after eliminating the University's budgeted surplus.

Speights said there is "a lot of fat" at the University that could be cut to reduce expenses further instead of utilizing GW's savings or endowment.

"Before going into your rainy day savings, we have an obligation and a duty to look at and see where we currently stand," she said. "And if there are ways to cut and trim things to allow us to continue with the mission of educating our students in a great way, then that's where the cut should come from as opposed to leaving everything the way it is and reaching into our savings."

Francys Subiaul, a faculty senator and an associate professor of speech and hearing science, said what some people see as an area to cut is valuable to others. The process for cutting expenses should be "spelled out clearly" and the administrators making these financial decisions should be open to input, he said.

"If now is not a good time to tap into the endowment in the face of a global pandemic, where unemployment is in the double-digits and, in the chair's

words, we should expect 'significant revenue losses,' when would it be necessary to tap into the endowment?" he wrote in the WebEx meeting chat.

Sarah Wagner, a faculty senator and associate professor of anthropology, said the faculty should be involved in any conversations surrounding financial cuts.

"Our antennas are up," she said. "Why? Because Chair Speights began this discussion with an admission that she sees a lot of fat to be cut. Obviously, when we hear that and then we hear 'short- and long-term' and 'how do we mediate those,' 'how do we move from one to the other' – that's our point of anxiety. We need to understand what fat she sees."

Speights encouraged faculty to contribute their ideas on ways to mitigate the financial impact of the pandemic, adding that she is committed to finding ways for more interaction with the senate as proposals are developed.

"I assure you transparency as we move forward, and I appreciate all the words of support you have offered as we have dealt with this unprecedented crisis," she told faculty senators. "President LeBlanc will be soliciting your ideas and feedback as to how we move forward to lessen the financial impact on the University as a result of this crisis. And the Board looks forward to hearing from President LeBlanc the ideas and the feedback that you share with him."

LeBlanc said he will take a 20 percent pay cut beginning July 1 as part of an initiative to reduce salaries in order to cut GW's expenses. He said other top

officials have agreed to take a reduction of 5 percent or more.

Diaz said in an interview earlier this month that officials had not determined an exact amount for the salary reductions but have decided upon a range. He declined to say what range had been determined.

He added that the ongoing situation is "fluid" and officials could implement additional cost-saving measures, like potentially furloughing some employees.

"There's not really a playbook or even a model that we can point to in terms of, 'Hey, this is exactly how things are going to happen,'" Diaz said. "It's been consistently fluid in terms of identifying impacts and then eventually quantifying the implications of those impacts."

Officials paused the development of GW's next strategic plan in order to reassess key assumptions in the wake of the pandemic, like a nearly 20 percent decrease in the undergraduate population.

He said officials are considering ending some of the University's contracts with other companies earlier than originally planned because of the ongoing pandemic.

Diaz said officials will "definitely not" extend the University's contract with the Disney Institute, which has assisted officials in implementing LeBlanc's institutional culture initiative. The cost of the partnership, which officials have declined to comment on, has come under intense scrutiny from many faculty and was cited in a petition signed by more than 100 faculty calling on LeBlanc to resign.

Introducing The Hatchet's Volume 117 editorial board

STAFF EDITORIAL

Newspapers can be counted on for producing content about news, sports, culture and opinions. Within the opinions section, newspapers like The Hatchet also have an editorial board that discusses some of the biggest issues facing campus.

The Hatchet's editorial board takes a stance on behalf of the paper. In past years, the group has weighed in on topics ranging from the University's Colonials moniker to renaming the Marvin Center. Last volume, the editorial board has weighed in on everything from the shift to floating tuition to endorsing student calls for fossil fuel divestment and University President Thomas LeBlanc's resignation. Our work has been recognized by the Society of Professional Journalists and the Associated College Press.

We're composed of seven members who each bring different editorial backgrounds. This year's editorial board is led and pieces are written by opinions editor Hannah Thacker and contributing opinions editor Andrew Sugrue. It also includes managing director Kiran Hoeffner-Shah, managing editor Parth Kotak, sports editor Emily Maise, culture editor Anna Boone and design editor Olivia Columbus. While she is not a member of the editorial board, editor in chief Sarah Roach oversees weekly meetings and the publication of editorial board pieces

by providing context and editing content. No person on the editorial board produces news to maintain an editorial divide.

Each week, Thacker and Sugrue meet to discuss top national, campus and higher education news and determine what topic will be discussed. Once a topic is chosen, the editorial board conducts research on the issue and convenes to discuss their opinions regarding that topic. In these meetings, Thacker leads the discussion by asking questions to the group while Sugrue takes notes throughout the meeting. The meeting comes to an end when the board reaches a consensus on their opinion about the topic at hand.

We arrive at our conclusions about editorial pieces and endorsements through rigorous, well-researched debate within our editorial board. Each member of our editorial board brings to the table their own opinions, experiences and backgrounds — we have different majors, come from different places, hold different religious beliefs and espouse several political ideologies. All of these factors ensure we can produce a well-thought-out and nuanced opinion about a topic.

The editorial board's work goes beyond weekly articles about campus and the District — every year, we help make sense of the student body elections and referenda on the ballot. We meet with all candidates

for Student Association president and executive vice president then endorse a candidate for each post after hours of discussion. Our endorsement decision is made based on which candidate will best benefit students. The same holds true for referenda — we discuss among ourselves and ultimately make a decision about which initiatives would best benefit the GW community. This spring, our editorial board endorsed a call for the University to divest from fossil fuels but rejected plans to split the SA into a graduate and undergraduate body.

Just as the members of our editorial board do not think the same way about everything, we know that we do not always align with the views and opinions of every single GW student. But that is not our goal — we aim to foster a dialogue about the issues facing the University, students and the D.C. community. Editorial writing is not about imposing an opinion on people — it is about giving a nuanced perspective that makes people think. We warmly welcome those who come to a different conclusion than we do — and we encourage people who feel strongly about a certain issue to submit opinion editorials sharing their opinions and perspectives.

Volume 117's editorial board looks forward to the year to come — and we hope you look to us for thoughtful perspectives on campus and national news.

If fall classes go online, GW should explore ways to cut tuition

As an unprecedented spring semester winds down, students are anxiously looking toward fall, unsure whether we will return to in-person classes and a sense of normalcy. Officials have indicated so far that they will make a decision by June 15 about on-campus instruction next academic year. It's no question that virtual courses have been a nightmare filled with glitched technology, unprepared professors and the stresses of being home. It has not been worth the full cost of tuition.

Andrew Sugrue
Contributing Opinions
Editor

The transition to online instruction has been difficult for students and faculty alike. Instructors had mere weeks to redesign their classes once COVID-19 took hold in the United States, and many reported difficulty teaching over platforms like Blackboard Collaborate, WebEx and Zoom. Meanwhile, students have had to contend with uprooting their entire lives and moving back home, which led to obstacles ranging from poor Internet connectivity to unhealthy family dynamics. Even for students who have access to necessary academic resources and a stable home life, a professor's grainy visage cannot replicate an in-person lecture.

Still, students have had to shoulder GW's high tu-

ition cost for an unanticipated period of lower-quality instruction. If classes are moved online for the fall semester, officials should explore ways to cut tuition costs so students pay a fair rate for the education they are receiving.

There is no way to replace in-person instruction perfectly with online education, but that does not mean GW cannot charge a fair price for the courses that it can provide effectively. GW already offers a discount on its regular online course offerings — for the 2019–2020 academic year, the cost for some of these classes hovers at around \$600 per credit, a far cry from the per-credit cost for undergraduates of \$1,675. This discount reflects the fact that the quality of instruction is different between online and in-person instruction. The University could extend this pricing to any and all fall classes that have to be moved online.

The University has not signaled any intention to cut tuition — which is to be expected, given that GW is not exactly flush with cash. The pandemic is slated to cost GW \$25 million in net revenue by June 30, a figure which will only grow to at least \$100 million next fiscal year, even if campus re-opens in the fall. Administrators, including University President Thomas LeBlanc, are taking pay cuts in the realm of 5 to 20 percent, and freezes have been placed on hiring and bonuses.

But GW's dire financial straits do not justify charging

an unfair price for services provided. Other universities throughout the country which, like GW, are struggling financially, are taking steps to cut or prorate online tuition. D.C. peer American University cut tuition by 10 percent for summer courses that had been moved online. Bentley University went a step further, essentially giving students the option of taking a free, shortened fall semester online.

GW's hesitation to implement tuition changes for a potentially online fall semester — as well as the upcoming summer semester and current spring semester — has not gone unnoticed. Parents of one GW student have gone as far as to sue the University, accusing it of defrauding students by not providing a partial refund for spring tuition. More than 2,000 students added their names to a petition in March that demanded a 50 percent refund of spring tuition. The University has not addressed these complaints directly, but officials intend to announce plans for the fall semester by next month.

The University is responsible for crafting contingency plans that are as fair as possible to students. If June 15 brings an announcement that classes will be online for the fall, then students should not be expected to grossly overpay for the learning experience they are signing up for.

— Andrew Sugrue, a sophomore majoring in political communication, is the contributing opinions editor.

How I stick to a routine during the pandemic

Everyone seems to be handling quarantine differently. Some are waking up early to exercise, and others binge shows until an assignment looms closer to its deadline. No matter what your days have turned into, this lack of freedom takes a toll on our mental health. Being in the same place every day makes it hard to stay productive, even though it's said to be one of the best ways to stay sane through the pandemic.

Isabella Sorial
Writer

Quarantine has helped me learn a lot about myself and what affects my productivity. I'm not perfect — I don't leave my house most days and I wake up super late — but I still get stuff done. One of the best ways I've learned to stay motivated and stabilizing my mental health is by setting a routine and sticking to it.

While it would be easy to stay in pajamas all day, changing and getting ready for the day gives me some normalcy and purpose. I make my bed, brush my teeth, take a shower and change my clothes every day. Doing this every day gives me a sense of purpose and makes me feel good about myself. I also

avoid the urge to head back to bed, which is a plus when my bed is next to me all day.

Getting in the mood to do work is difficult. I move to a table when it's time to start. I find a space with minimal distractions, try to keep my phone away from me and have snacks nearby. Every day, I decide two or three top priorities for the day and write them down in a notebook, including which class to focus on for the day or what project I want to start. Twice a week, I have online classes. On other days, I find it easier to complete school-related projects. I try to make progress on at least one non-school related task, like planning a self-care night or baking, every day so I can feel accomplished. But if I'm having an especially hard time doing a task, I work on a completely different, easier one so I don't ever feel like I've wasted a day.

Although school is a priority, it's important to find time to unwind and maintain my social contact with people we cannot see. I am usually working until 8 p.m. and after I'm done, I have dinner. At night, I socialize a bit with friends and family via video chats and watch TV. When I have time to, I FaceTime my friends for a few hours. I find that having a designated time to be social forces me to make the most of the time I designate for doing work.

Now that we've reached the end of the semester, your time has been left up to you. You can use this time to get ahead and put more effort into your classes, or you can dedicate time to improving your mental health and keeping your family safe by picking up extra work and spending time by yourself. No one signed up to do school online this past semester and if it really isn't your thing, you won't be punished for it.

There is no excuse for filling your time with things you don't want to be doing. A pandemic might be the best excuse in history to avoid a tiring internship, so only apply for ones you really love or take this time to focus on other priorities. People who are out of work should use this time as an opportunity to network virtually and reflect on their past experiences so they can best utilize their skills in the future. Make a five-year plan. Start an art journal. Learn a new game. Poke your friends on Facebook. Start that at-home workout regimen you've been eyeing for some time.

People should see this as a time of growth. We have all the time in the world to take a break and refocus on the things that matter most. Don't let the time slip away.

— Isabella Sorial, a freshman majoring in international affairs, is an opinions writer.

Before criticizing, students should be grateful for GW's efforts to help them

It's a sight that has recently become all too familiar: angry posts from students about GW on social media. Complaints about Storage Squad, calls for divestment and campaigns to fire University President Thomas LeBlanc have become regular fixtures of student discourse. Last month, more than 2,000 students also signed a petition demanding GW refund half of last semester's tuition on top of room and board. The collective resentment has reached a point where we'd rather see GW go under financially than stomach a month of online classes.

Filip Vachuda
Writer

It seems many of us students have a vendetta of sorts against GW. At any inconvenience or University policy we oppose, we often resort to trashing GW on social media until our issue is resolved. When we are frustrated, especially now with COVID-19 derailing our lives, it can feel like we have no choice but to strike out at GW to be heard.

But before doing so, we should consider the big picture and be grateful for all that we do have here. In gaining this perspective, we will not only have a more worthwhile college experience but set ourselves up for greater happiness in any situation we find ourselves facing.

We easily forget how lucky we are that our University not only is prestigious but genuinely cares about its students, offering funds and services for almost any cause or need. GW has always been there for me when I asked: whether I

needed emergency funds for a flight home, financial support for my unpaid internships, accommodations for my disability or food assistance late in the semester. GW's counseling services helped turn my mental health around, and the health center even waived my student insurance charge because I could only afford Medicaid. Unlike several other universities, GW has also taken it upon itself to pay for and organize the storage of our belongings this summer. And this isn't even counting the top-notch academic resources and career advising we've continued to have access to during this crisis.

It's also easy to be hostile toward GW when you're stressed out, but don't take for granted all GW does to support us, students, even in resolving mistakes the University made in the first place. I once felt like ranting all day when GW messed up my financial aid or almost sent my stimulus check back to the IRS. But when I called the financial aid and mail departments and explained my dilemmas, they listened and solved things in no time. Try to bear in mind, before posting about how awful GW is, how fortunate you are that our University takes our well-being seriously, and don't be afraid to reach out for help if you need it.

Now, there will inevitably be hardships you face and policies you disagree with at GW. In addressing these, the University does its best to listen to student input. Student activism led to a free 18th credit, free printing and laundry and an overhaul to the dining program four years ago. But by the same token, there are simply times when the people qualified to run an educational institution need to make decisions

independent of students. We easily delude ourselves that, since GW does not act on our every whim, those in charge must be trying to sabotage us somehow. Officials actually work hard every year to give us the best experience possible and are doing their best in service of that goal now given the current circumstances.

Let's be more thankful and supportive toward GW's administrators, professors and employees in the future instead of just complaining about every clerical error or item the movers break. Criticize our president's analogies or endowment choices if you will, but don't negate the significant and consistent diversity and sustainability commitments we as a school have already made. When all is said and done, GW must, every year, try and balance the diverse priorities and values of 26,000 students, as well as faculty and alumni. GW will never meet our exact standards for a perfect world, and if we hold it to such a standard, we won't ever be content.

I know the current situation is aggravating for us all. I was disheartened that my study abroad and summer job were taken from me last-minute due to COVID-19, and once I got home I could do nothing but spend my time agonizing about what would come next. But I thought then about all I had — all the people, things and experiences my life has given me so far, and how it was and would always be enough even if all my worries do come to pass.

Let's start showing GW some appreciation instead of looking for reasons to fight it.

— Filip Vachuda, a sophomore majoring in international affairs and economics, is an opinions writer.

Your guide to GW's 2020 virtual Commencement



ERIC LEE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

What to expect from GW's virtual graduation celebration

CARLY NEILSON
STAFF WRITER

The Class of 2020 might not throw their caps on the National Mall until next year, but officials are preparing an online ceremony seniors will never forget.

This year's virtual Commencement celebration will take place online Sunday on GW's Facebook page beginning at 11 a.m. Eastern Time. Officials said the 20-minute long event will feature five speakers, including Board of Trustees Chair Grace Speights, University President Thomas LeBlanc and former Student Association President SJ Matthews.

"The virtual Commencement celebration will bring together our 2020 graduates, their families

and friends and the GW community currently scattered across the globe," University spokeswoman Crystal Nosal said in an email.

Nosal said the brief ceremony is pre-recorded to "ensure everyone's safety" while people are practicing social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ceremony will be posted on both GW's commencement website and on Facebook at 11 a.m. Eastern Time.

This year's celebration will not feature a Commencement speaker. In the past, GW brought in people like actress and GW alumna Kerry Washington, acclaimed chef and visiting professor José Andrés and most recently TODAY Show host Savannah Guthrie to ring in the occasion on the Mall.

Graduates are also invited to re-

turn to the Mall to celebrate at next year's Commencement ceremony. Nosal said the online celebration is not intended to replace the "traditional" ceremony on the Mall.

"We know how much this historic ceremony means to our community, which is why the Class of 2020 is invited to celebrate in person at Commencement on the Mall in May 2021," she said.

Nosal said students were encouraged to submit videos shouting out the accomplishments of their peers, sharing notable memories from the past four years or showing their appreciation to family, friends and professors who have helped them during their time at GW. The photos and videos, which are no longer than 15 seconds, will be incorporated into the online cel-

ebration, she said.

"Graduating students can use these submissions to share a favorite GW memory, 'only at GW' moment, congratulate each other, share advice or thank family, friends and professors for their support," Nosal said.

Matthews, the former SA president, said students will open the ceremony by singing the alma mater. Speights, LeBlanc and Provost Brian Blake will follow with opening remarks, she said.

Matthews said her speech will focus on "setting precedents" and advice for helping other people. Despite graduating during a pandemic, Matthews said she hopes graduates can still feel proud of what they have accomplished during their tenure at GW and what

skills they can put to use.

"I hope the Class of 2020 takes away pride in their accomplishment despite the unprecedented circumstances of commencement," she said. "I hope the Class of 2020 leaves virtual Commencement ready to go and change the world because we need leaders now more than ever."

Individual school ceremonies are also being replaced with virtual celebrations. Seniors can find information about the ceremonies being held by their respective colleges here.

At the smaller school ceremonies, students will be recognized by name, according to a GW Commencement FAQ page. Degrees will not be conferred at school ceremonies, the website states.

Seniors find new ways to throw their caps at home

RACHEL ARMANY & ZEINA MOHAMMED
STAFF WRITERS

When officials first announced in-person Commencement was canceled, many students said they felt robbed of their college ending – at least on campus.

Since the announcement, seniors said they are finding ways to mark the occasion from home. From

cooking special dinners to walking down the street to the tune of "Pomp and Circumstance," members of the Class of 2020 said they want to feel a semblance of GW signature graduation on the National Mall with at-home celebrations.

Celebratory cooking

Shanna Colyar, a business economics and policy major, said her family was just as disappointed as she was when Commencement was canceled.

But despite the hard feelings, Colyar said her family is planning to recreate her graduation weekend by cooking her favorite meal and celebrating as a family. She is planning to help her family cook her favorite meal, chicken parmesan, from scratch with homemade pasta once her finals wrap up.

"My parents are trying to recreate what I probably would be doing with my friends, making my favorite foods after finals," she said.

"I think now it's becoming a bigger deal," she said. "My family gets to acknowledge and be there for something that's a really big deal, graduating college. They don't want me to feel like I lost something."

Neighborhood parade

Guthrie Edison, a business major, said he will tune in to the virtual Commencement ceremony Sunday, followed by a parade down his neighborhood street with high school friends who are graduating from other universities. Edison said the parade will take the place of the graduates' walk across stage to accept a diploma.

"It won't be the same at home because it will be hard to make a day of it," he said. "Part of the experience is getting up, going to the ceremony, hearing your name called and walking across that stage, and you can't replicate that at home."

Edison said he and his high school friends plan to wear their caps and gowns as they parade around the neighborhood. Their families and friends are invited to watch along the sidewalk and cheer them on as they walk, he said.

Honk for graduation

Sahra Maxwell, an American studies and film studies major, wants to get the attention she deserves for graduation.

Maxwell said she will commemorate graduation by creating a sign that reads "Today is my graduation, honk to celebrate" and holding it on the sidewalk of a main street near her home. She will wear giant clown-like glasses and her cap and gown as friends and family drive by and honk in congratulations, she said.

She added that she plans to bring a mimosa or bottle of champagne to pop while she waves to passing drivers.

"Maybe I'll put [the champagne] in a brown paper bag so I don't get arrested for drinking on the street," Maxwell said.

Graduating on Zoom

You may have used Zoom for online classes or a social hour with friends, but Elisabeth Buchwald, who graduated in the fall but still planned to attend Commencement, said her family will mark the occasion on a video chat.

She said most of the Zoom party her family is planning is a surprise, but she will wear a cap and gown and her parents have hinted that they'll try to replicate an in-person ceremony as much as possible. A graduation speaker and performance of the star-spangled banner are also being prepared for this online celebration, she said.

"I don't really like being the center of attention," she said. "It's more of just giving the family something to look forward to."

Wine night

Steven Stanton, a political science major, had plans for his parents, sister and a few extended family members to visit D.C. for the graduation ceremony. But now that he's in D.C. with his roommate, he plans to celebrate the day with what they know best: wine.

"I think my situation is unique as several friends have said they aren't planning on returning for it," he said.

His roommate, Amy Shearer, is also graduating from GW this year and said he made the same decision to stay put in the District. The duo will pop champagne when their names are called during the virtual ceremony, Shearer said.

Farewell photoshoot

Before leaving campus, Ifeoluwayomi Akinmade, an international affairs major, and nine of his close friends gathered at the Washington Monument to mark the end of their senior year with a photoshoot. The group wanted to capture some of their last moments together where they would have graduated.

"We had planned a more detailed shoot but had to hurry because of time constraints," he said. "With the shoot, we showed our different personalities and used it to serve as inspiration for our achievements during college together."

Akinmade added that he is looking forward to planning a more formal celebration once the quarantine has ended.

"I'd like to celebrate with my extended family like I did at the end of my high school," he said.

Dishes and drinks to try for an at-home graduation brunch

On the menu

Chocolate orange waffles

Adding dark chocolate and zesty orange to waffles will turn a classic into a new favorite, excellent for a celebratory brunch. You can serve these with whipped cream and fresh fruit.

Gluten-free biscuits with garlic and herbs

This gluten-free version of a classic will make any gluten-free – or not – brunch attendees happy. These savory biscuits packed with garlic and a herby punch would be delicious plain or topped with any soft cheese or butter.

CHLOE KEARIN WILLEFORD REPORTER

The best part of any celebration is the food, especially when the day starts off with a celebratory brunch.

While we may not be able to gather to celebrate the Class of 2020's graduation together, we can certainly celebrate at home by watching GW's virtual Commencement Sunday with a mimosa or two by our sides. Before you sit down to watch the ceremony, prepare some brunch dishes and drinks to mark the occasion.

At the at-home bar

Mimosa mojito

This combination of two classic drinks mixes the orange juice and champagne of a mimosa with the mint and rum of a mojito to create a summery, light accompaniment to your rich brunch food.

Paloma fizz mocktail

This nonalcoholic drink combines rosemary, sparkling water and grapefruit juice to ensure non-drinkers in the group can still take part in the celebration. A shot of alcohol would be an easy addition for those who are drinking.

Seniors reflect on what they would have celebrated at Commencement

ANNA BOONE,
CLARA DUHON,
DIEGO MENDOZA &
JULIA RUSSO
CULTURE STAFF

Like most seniors, Hannah Sessler wanted her graduation to celebrate the four years at GW that helped her find a career path.

Sessler, a double major in journalism and mass communication and theater, said she was motivated by her peers and felt encouraged to pursue her passions for both theater and journalism. When she receives her diploma in the mail this summer, Sessler said it will commemorate the senior thesis, a co-directed play, she couldn't present and the show she couldn't perform in person because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I felt that everything was taken away, but by sheer will and perseverance to fix everything, we did," Sessler said. "To me, graduation means rising above and thanking everyone that helped us get here, even though it was unconventional this year."

Seniors said despite changes to their graduation plans, they are still celebrating the end of their four years and using the time before their careers begin to look back at their time on campus. They said celebrating Commencement on the National Mall with peers would have marked the years they spent navigating their careers and finding interests outside the classroom, like community service.

Julia Scott, who will graduate with a degree in political science, said she transferred to GW in the spring of her sophomore year because she wanted



Rachel Brady, a graduating senior, said she spent her time at GW planning and leading Alternative Breaks trips. SOPHIA YOUNG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

a larger school than the liberal arts college she initially attended. She said graduation would have commemorated the initiative she took to take on relatively larger lectures and adapt to more difficult courses than her original school.

"I didn't have the best time for a long time," Scott said. "And when I finally figured it out, I looked forward to being able to celebrate that achievement of sticking with it and figuring it out on my own."

Lena Scarpulla, who will graduate with a degree in marketing and event management, said she found the cancellation of commencement "frustrating" because it was an experience she had looked forward to since she committed to the University in

2016. "I could see myself being a student at GW and I wanted to spend the next four years of my life in this city, on this campus," she said in an email.

Since she arrived at GW, Scarpulla said she has grown her own confidence and discovered that she is passionate about marketing and event planning.

"GW is my home away from home. It is the place where I found myself, my best friends and my lifelong passions," she said.

Rachael Brady, a graduating senior double majoring in international affairs and Spanish, said one of the biggest accomplishments of the past four years was serving as an Alternative Break trip leader on a trip to

El Paso, Texas, in January. Brady said seeing students come together after fundraising and planning the trip, then working alongside site volunteer leaders in El Paso to advocate for immigrant and community rights was an "incredible" experience she'll commemorate when she graduates.

Brady added that as a member of GW Catholics, many of the traditions near Commencement, like a senior slideshow and a baccalaureate mass, are being held over a video call.

Emma Vollmer, who will graduate with a degree in neuroscience, said she was looking forward to starring in her first musical since freshman year and celebrating the completion of her neuroscience degree. She

stopped participating in theatre the past couple of years but re-joined as a senior, landing a lead role in the spring production of "Heathers," she said.

Vollmer said graduation was meant to celebrate moving on to the next chapter in her life. She was originally planning on moving to Orlando, Florida, to work in the Disney college program at The Magic Kingdom. Following the park's closure, the program was canceled. Vollmer now plans on staying in D.C. where she is applying to jobs as a medical assistant.

"I was doing so many things to try and make this such a good show, and I was really happy and really proud of how it was going," she said. "It was going to be my last show of schooling and there was something very different about that."

Caroline Friesen, a graduating senior double majoring in anthropology and international relations and affairs, said graduation would have marked the four years she spent as a camp counselor for GW's Camp Kesem, which provides programming for children whose loved one has battled cancer. She said senior year would have been her last as a camp counselor.

Friesen, who was president of the chapter of Pi Beta Phi Sorority in her sophomore year, said that she was looking forward to celebrating her time in Pi Beta Phi by attending all of the special senior events the sorority puts on and by wearing her sorority cord at graduation.

"There is something so powerful about being in that cap and gown and being with all of your friends as they say your name while you walk across the stage," she said.

Reflecting on the Class of 2020's four years

LIZZIE MINTZ
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Within the Class of 2020's first year on campus, now-seniors had already witnessed a presidential election and welcomed a new University president.

Graduates might not be able to say a final farewell to campus this year, but they can always remember the four unforgettable years they experienced, from meeting Kanye West to witnessing their fair share of Student Association election drama. Jog your memory from the time you stepped foot on campus to the moment you wrapped up your last semester.

Freshman year
Nico & Vinz, Bencoolen and The Mowgli's headline Fall Fest

Freshman year
Students host a vigil after Donald Trump is elected president

Sophomore year
University President Thomas LeBlanc becomes GW's 18th president

Sophomore year
Students participate in the first-ever March For Our Lives protest

Junior year
Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg speaks at Lisner Auditorium

Junior Year
Students protest Judge Brett Kavanaugh's pending nomination to the Supreme Court

Senior year
Dozens of students camp outside Lisner Auditorium to secure a ticket to see Kanye West

Senior year
Sunrise GW leads a series of demonstrations calling for divestment from fossil fuels

Senior year
Josh Peck speaks at Lisner Auditorium

Senior year
LeBlanc announces that GW will hold a virtual Commencement

HATCHET FILE PHOTOS

A pop culture, politics rundown over the years

LIA DEGROOT
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

From Lady Gaga's iconic meat dress in 2010 to a pandemic, this year's graduates have witnessed some unforgettable moments in pop culture and political history. Here are some highlights of the most memorable events of the graduates' academic careers:

First grade - 2004
Mark Zuckerberg launches Facebook

Second grade - 2005
Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston file for divorce

Fifth grade - 2008
President Barack Obama is elected to office

Seventh Grade - 2010
Lady Gaga shows up to the MTV Video Music Awards in the meat dress

Freshman year - 2012
"Gangnam Style" hits 1 billion views on YouTube

Sophomore year - 2013
Jennifer Lawrence falls up the stairs at the Oscars

Junior year - 2014
ALS Ice Bucket Challenge goes viral

Senior year - 2015
The Supreme Court rules that same-sex marriage is legal

Senior year - 2020
Trump is impeached by the House of Representatives

IMAGES COURTESY OF PEXELS.COM, UNSPLASH.COM



SOFTBALL
vs. Saint Louis
Thursday, May 12, 2016
The Colonials closed out their 2016 season with a loss to Saint Louis.



BASEBALL
vs. St. Bonaventure
Friday, May 16, 2014
Baseball's loss to the Bonnies officially cut GW from postseason contention.

'Believe in myself': Two graduating student-athletes reflect on time at GW

BELLE LONG
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Graduate student forward Alexandra Maund and redshirt senior defender Megan McCormick were fixtures on the court and field this season.

Maund led women's basketball in scoring with 11.1 points per game, and McCormick wrapped up her tenure on the women's soccer team as captain of the backline and with a trip to the Atlantic 10 Championship. The duo, who are set to graduate this year, said they felt empowered by their time as Colonials and pushed them to become leaders for underclassmen.

"Knowing that I can't just let other people have faith in me to play, I have to have faith in myself," Maund said. "I think these coaches gave that to me."

After beginning her three-year playing career at Yale sidelined with a season-ending injury, Maund transferred to GW for her final season of collegiate basketball.

Head coach Jennifer Rizzotti expected Maund to provide valuable guidance and experience to a young team. She finished the year ranking third in the A-10 with a .504 field goal percentage.

Maund improved from her time at Yale, averaging 3.7 points per game throughout her three seasons with the Bulldogs. At GW, Maund said she found the passion for the game she'd been looking for since her injury.

"Every year, I would try and get back to how I felt before my injury and focus on that year versus on playing my game, and just seeing what came out of it," Maund said. "This year a mindset shifted for

me." Maund added that Rizzotti and her coaching staff helped her find confidence and achieve her true potential on the court.

"Their belief in me showed me I have no reason to not believe in myself," Maund said. "This year meant a lot to me because I felt like I was finally playing the way I always knew I could play."

Along with her offensive production, Maund's experience and style solidified GW's defensive approach. Under her tutelage, the Colonials' post play made significant strides, scoring 57.2 percent of the team's overall points. Maund said she took pride in showing underclassmen post players the ropes and teaching them how valuable a post player can be on offense and defense.

"It can be hard as a post player to figure out how to make an impact on the court because you don't really touch the ball," Maund said. Maund's production proved invaluable after junior guard Neila Luma suffered a season-ending knee injury in late November. Despite the loss of one of the squad's top scorers and rebounders, GW ended the season with a 14-16 record, an improvement from its 10-20 showing the previous year.

Spending five seasons with the women's soccer program, McCormick had more time to build her legacy at GW. After redshirting her freshman year, she spent four years boosting GW's backline into one of the best in the A-10.

"The coaching staff that was here previously sat me down and thought that I would be a better asset to the team if I sat out and gained some experience and



FILE PHOTO BY GRACE HROMIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR
Megan McCormick, a redshirt senior defender, leaves GW with 74 starts and about 5,000 minutes of play under her belt.

technical skills and just learned a little bit more about how to be a college soccer player," McCormick said.

While she admitted the decision to redshirt was difficult, McCormick said it was key in her development as a player. Throughout the following four seasons, McCormick, a three-year captain, would log 74 starts and nearly 5,000 minutes for the Colonials.

She said observing a strong defense from the sidelines helped

set a standard she maintained over the course of her career.

"My freshman year, I got to watch a really solid backline and they were all upperclassmen and leaders so it was really cool for me to see those girls in that role and learn from afar," McCormick said.

She helped return the Colonials to the A-10 Championship game for the first time since 1997, later earning First Team All-Conference and All-Championship nods. The defender ranked fourth on the team with 10 points off 13 shots during

her final season.

Beyond her stat line, McCormick said she invested in her teammates and shared her knowledge with the rest of the backline. Under her leadership, GW ranked No. 4 in the A-10 with only 1.19 goals allowed per game in 2019.

"I remember being a freshman and the upperclassmen and seniors would kind of take me back and tell me how to do better," McCormick said. "That's something I tried to emulate."

Star players wrap up careers, leave gaps for teams to fill next season

BELLE LONG
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

As classes moved online, in-person Commencement was postponed until 2021 and spring sports were axed amid the COVID-19 pandemic, graduating student-athletes saw an unlikely end to their college careers.

The NCAA granted spring student-athletes another year of eligibility, meaning some players who were set to graduate this year are considering returning for the 2021 season and others are choosing to move on. With the 2019-20 season in the rearview mirror, here is a recap of standout senior student-athletes who wore the Buff and Blue for the final time this season:

Alexandra Maund: Women's basketball

The Colonials suffered a steep drop-off after their championship run in 2018, turning in a 10-win season the following year. Maund, a forward, was an instrumental figure in returning the squad's climb back to the top, helping the Colonials improve to a 14-16 record this season.

Maund was the most potent source of offensive production for the Colonials, scoring 278 points on the season, averaging 11.1 per game and shooting at a 50.4 percent clip. In her single season at GW, she placed in the top 25 of Atlantic 10 players in scoring and blocks.

Armel Potter: Men's basketball

Potter's career spanned a period of turnover and transition for men's basketball. Through injuries, coaching changes and rebuilding years, Potter provided consistent production and served as a key connecting piece for the overall offense.

The guard transferred to GW after spending two years at Charleston Southern. Potter spent a solid first season with the Colonials, averaging six points per game. But he blossomed under new head coach Jamion Christian, putting up 14.7 points and 5.8 assists per game. In his final season, Potter ran point, starting in 28 games, leading the team in assists (161) and joining the 1,000-point club.

Megan McCormick: Women's soccer

McCormick's defensive prowess helped create one of the most formidable backlines in the A-10. After redshirting her freshman year, McCormick started every game during the 2016 season and contributed to an A-10 best 0.77 goals allowed per game. In her redshirt sophomore season, her key defense led the Colonials to post 10 shutouts.

In her final season with the Colonials, McCormick's offensive skills further developed to match her defense. She netted a career-high five scores and secured 1.04 goals allowed per game. Her contributions helped

GW return to the A-10 Championship finals for the first time in more than two decades.

Andrew Mavis: Men's water polo

Mavis' four years in the pool for the Colonials were some of the program's most exciting. The three-time conference All-American helped secure two Mid-Atlantic Collegiate Water Polo Conference championships and two NCAA Tournament appearances.

After losing to Bucknell in the MAWPC finals during his freshman season, Mavis helped redeem GW the following year, scoring the clinching goal in a comeback win over Fordham to finally capture the conference crown.

Mavis' 279 career goals ranks No. 3 in program history and his 263 ejections drawn ranks first.

Engy Elmandouh: Women's squash

Elmandouh headlined the roster throughout her four years with the Colonials, ranking fourth in program history with 48 career victories. She tallied eight wins in her debut season in 2016, then averaged 12.6 wins over the next three years playing at the No. 2 spot on the ladder for the majority of her time at GW.

GWHATCHET.COM

H for more departing seniors leaving an impact



FILE PHOTO BY SABRINA GODIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR
Spring sports were cut short by the ongoing pandemic, but several of GW's other athletic teams made full postseason appearances this year.

The highs and lows of the 2019-20 season

EMILY MAISE
SPORTS EDITOR

Looking back at the 2019-20 season, the Colonials made 13 postseason appearances and nabbed one Atlantic 10 Championship. But the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic cut the spring season short, preventing teams from making a run for conference crowns.

Here are the highlights from the 2019-20 season:

Teams nab program bests

Women's swimming and diving captured the sole conference crown this year, winning the A-10 Championship for the first time in program history. The squad scored 608 points over the four-day competition, taking an early lead they never relinquished. In a true team effort, 19 Colonials were individual scorers, taking medals in four different events.

Women's cross country, which sported its smallest team in six seasons, took a second place finish at the A-10 Championship – its highest in program history. The squad was led by senior runner Suzanne Dannheim, who paced the team with a second place overall finish. At the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional, the team grabbed a program-high ninth and Dannheim became the second runner to qualify for the NCAA

Championship with a seventh place finish.

Women's indoor track and field secured a program-high No. 9 finish at the A-10 Championship. Dannheim led the charge, securing two gold medals in the 5,000 meter and the 3,000 meter. Her 16:20.52 5,000 meter race not only set a school record but busted the previous conference record by seven seconds.

After opening the season with a loss, women's soccer went on a 16-game winning streak. The Colonials fell to Saint Louis in their conference finale but finished the season with their best conference record in four years. As the No. 2 seed in the A-10 Tournament, the squad routed Saint Joseph's and Massachusetts to face Saint Louis again in the championship match. The team fell 1-3 but recorded its highest finish in 22 years.

Squads fall short of previous season

Men's soccer struggled to put goals in the back of the net, finishing the season at a downgraded 5-11-1 compared to last year's 5-9-3 overall record. With junior midfielder and forward Oscar Haynes Brown, who netted a team-leading 11 goals last season, injured for the season, the squad lacked scoring production and relied on a younger core. The Colonials had the

postseason within their grasp, but a two-game skid to finish the season shut the squad out for the second consecutive year.

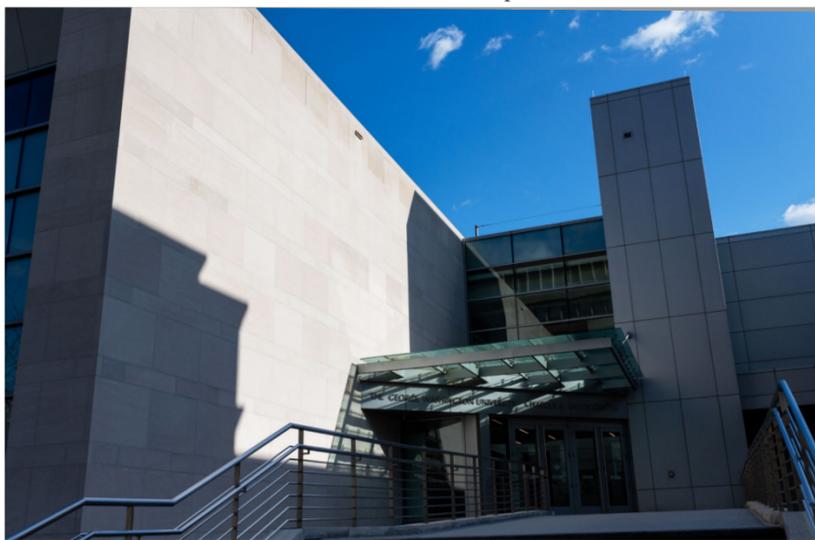
Coming off the most successful season in program history, men's water polo fell short of repeating the feat in 2019. The squad claimed two Mid-Atlantic Water Polo Conference Championships and two NCAA Tournament appearances in the past three years. But this year, GW fell to Bucknell in the 2019 Conference Championship game, recording just four goals – its lowest total in two seasons.

First-year head coaches lead programs

Jamion Christian finished his first season helming men's basketball, leading his team to a 12-20 overall record, an improvement from the 9-24 record the squad pieced together last season. Christian laid the groundwork for new offensive and defensive systems while establishing what he called a culture of love and accountability. Under Christian, freshman forward Jamison Battle was the first All-Rookie Team honoree in 11 years.

GWHATCHET.COM

H for how spring seasons started off before their cancellations



FILE PHOTO BY DONNA ARMSTRONG | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
These senior athletes will leave their teams with big shoes to fill.