

'NO IDEA WHAT IS GOING TO GO DOWN'



D.C. PREPARES FOR INAUGURATION, POSSIBLE PROTESTS

Humanities, social science professors work U.S. Capitol riot into classes

CARLY NEILSON
STAFF WRITER

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REPORTER

After rioters supporting President Donald Trump stormed the U.S. Capitol earlier this month, American studies professor Amber Musser used the event as an opportunity to talk about its role in racial tensions in the country.

She said she usually brings up current events in her courses, which include The African American Experience and COVID: Race, Gender and Uprisings, adding that discussing the riot help frame her classes “as an investigation of the present.” Musser said her class held a “robust conversation” about the insurrection, allowing students to process their feelings, questions and anxieties around the day.

Musser is one of five humanities and social science professors who said they plan to further dissect the day’s event and connect the riot with lessons in their classes. The professors said they will also spend time in

class checking in with their students and giving them an opportunity to cope with the stress of living in the District as Wednesday’s presidential inauguration brings more safety concerns.

Political scientists across the country, including 21 GW faculty, signed a letter earlier this month calling for Trump’s removal from office in light of his actions to reject a peaceful transfer of power, his efforts to pressure election officials to overturn state election results and his role in inciting the Capitol riot.

Students living in D.C. said they felt “anxious” about being in the District after the riot and planned to stock up on groceries for the week of the inauguration to avoid the potential violence on Wednesday.

Harris Mylonas, an associate professor of political science and international affairs, said he plans to discuss the riot and the reasoning behind it in his classes on patriotism and nationalism. He said the Capitol riot is hard to discuss because it is a “traumatic” event, but he plans to ask students to consider whether the riot could

be considered a patriotic act by those who participated – to which Mylonas says, based on U.S. laws and “the current constitutive story,” it was not.

“The idea would be that we find some way to have a debate about this that helps us understand better some of the concepts that we are planning to cover in this semester,” Mylonas said.

He said he plans to use the riot and the debates around it to lead into his course readings like “The Book of Exodus” and “Antigone,” which explore similar situations to the insurrection. In Antigone, the protagonist’s brother was jailed for betraying his city’s government, which Mylonas said is a similar situation to what occurred at the Capitol as rioters broke laws, which some participants could argue was necessary to accomplish their goal.

“It is true that a lot of these concepts that we’re dealing with for the semester are very much intertwined with the debate that is being had right now in the global sphere,” Mylonas said.

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Students plan for potential unrest on Inauguration Day

LAUREN SFORZA
STAFF WRITER

The day before junior Mae McGrath planned to return to D.C., she watched a mob supporting President Donald Trump storm the U.S. Capitol on TV.

McGrath said the insurrection prompted her to push back her return date and stay inside during Inauguration Day events as threats of violence and the spread of COVID-19 remain. She said living in the District the last few weeks has been “nerve-wracking,” citing an increased military presence around campus and the potential to contract the coronavirus.

“I’ve been seeing big groups of Trump supporters wandering around, and they’re always pretty threatening and not wearing masks, which just isn’t safe, obviously,” McGrath said.

In interviews, more than 10 students living in D.C. said the riot

at the Capitol left them “anxious” about being in the District and halted their plans to attend the presidential inauguration. Nine students said they will stock up on groceries for the week and remain in their residence halls or apartments come Wednesday in case any protests against President-elect Joe Biden turn violent.

“Especially after last week, I just really have no idea what is going to go down on inauguration,” McGrath said. “It could escalate to the level of the Capitol last week or potentially even worse. So that’s probably my No. 1 concern.”

Administrators announced all offices and Foggy Bottom COVID-19 testing sites will close during the inauguration out of caution. D.C. officials have made similar moves to quell residents’ anxieties through many street closures and a text hotline for public safety

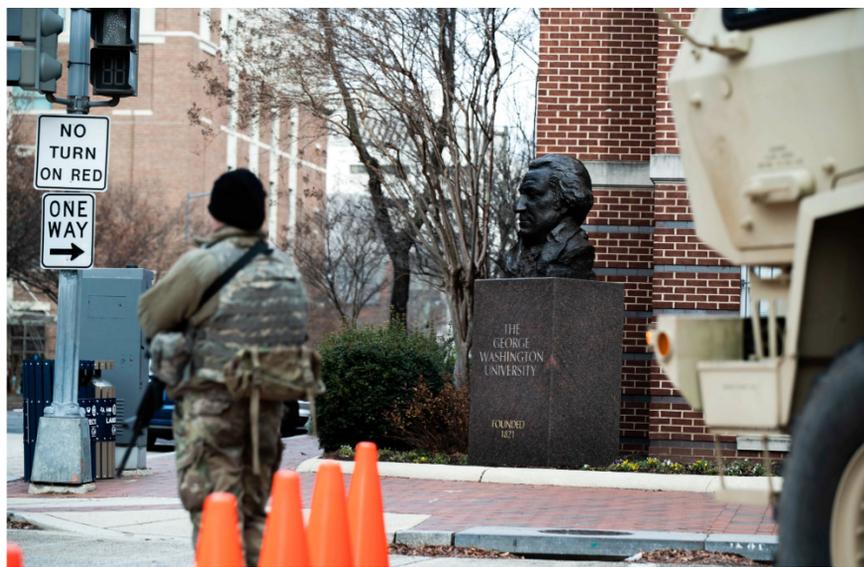
updates.

Junior Louie Kahn, the president of GW College Democrats, said the organization is planning virtual events, like a virtual inaugural ball, instead of going to in-person inauguration events Wednesday. He said he was planning to attend the inauguration but instead will be staying indoors at his apartment and off the streets in light of the Capitol attack.

Kahn said he is “disheartened” that Biden’s inauguration won’t be able to proceed like those in the past. But he added that he is more worried about Trump not facilitating a peaceful transfer of power.

“Of course, there will be more inaugurations in our lifetime, assuming that all goes well,” he said. “But for me, it’s really just the fact that this country is in the position where we can’t have this kind of event.”

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GABRIELLE RHOADS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

GW’s Foggy Bottom Campus falls adjacent to the Secret Service’s “red zone,” where roads are entirely closed to vehicles.

National Guard occupies Foggy Bottom as campus closes amid threats

JARROD WARDWELL
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

National Guard members, automatic rifles, military-style vehicles and security fencing are among the sights on campus ahead of Wednesday’s presidential inauguration.

The Foggy Bottom Campus is under D.C.’s “green

zone,” a region with traffic restricted just to residents and businesses to protect the inauguration from potential security threats resembling the mob of rioters who stormed the U.S. Capitol earlier this month. Under heightened public safety concerns, University and District officials implemented a series of security

protocols to keep the neighborhood safe amid fears of repeated violence and riots.

Here’s what you need to know about safety and security on campus before the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kama-

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DeVos’ tenure marked by controversial Title IX policies

ZACHARY BLACKBURN
REPORTER

Betsy DeVos is leaving behind a controversial legacy in higher education after nearly four years leading the U.S. Department of Education.

Since assuming the role of Secretary of Education, DeVos altered campus sexual assault policies to give more rights to assailants and accelerated the Office for Civil Rights’ process for resolving complaints. DeVos’ confirmation to the Cabinet was one of the most polarizing in American history, and Vice President Mike Pence was forced to cast the first-ever tie-breaking vote for a Cabinet nomination to secure President Donald Trump’s pick.

DeVos resigned in protest from her position in the Cabinet Jan. 7, citing the riot and insurrection at the Capitol the day before as the reason in a letter to Trump.

Liberal-leaning political figures and educational advocates often criticized DeVos’ leadership, leading public figures, like Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., to criticize her tenure on social media after she announced her resignation. When news of DeVos’ resignation broke, the American Federation of Teachers, the country’s second-largest teacher’s labor union, released a two-word statement: “Good riddance.”

Caroline Laguerre-Brown, the vice provost for diversity, equity and community engagement, said the University will lawfully implement the ED’s policies regardless of who is leading the department. “Sexual harassment policy changes necessitated by the Department of Education’s new Title IX regulations were implemented in August 2020, during a time when most of the campus was closed due to the COVID 19 pandemic,” she said in an email. “It is too early

to tell what the impact of the new regulations may have on reports or complaints of sexual harassment.”

Laguerre-Brown said students can still approach Title IX officials for support in dealing with sexual assault, even if they don’t wish to move forward with a formal complaint.

“These supportive measures include consultation with Christina Franzino, the assistant director for sexual assault prevention and response, referrals for counseling or medical care, academic support, mutual no-contact orders, housing support and referrals to community resources,” she said.

She declined to say how GW’s relationship with the education department has changed since DeVos took office. She declined to say how DeVos’ policies affected the way GW handles OCR complaints.

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News

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THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

PRINCIPLED LEADERSHIP IN TIMES OF CRISIS
 Jan. 19 • 2 p.m. EST • Free
 Former Elliott School Dean Reuben Brigety will discuss the impact of Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and experiences for students of international affairs

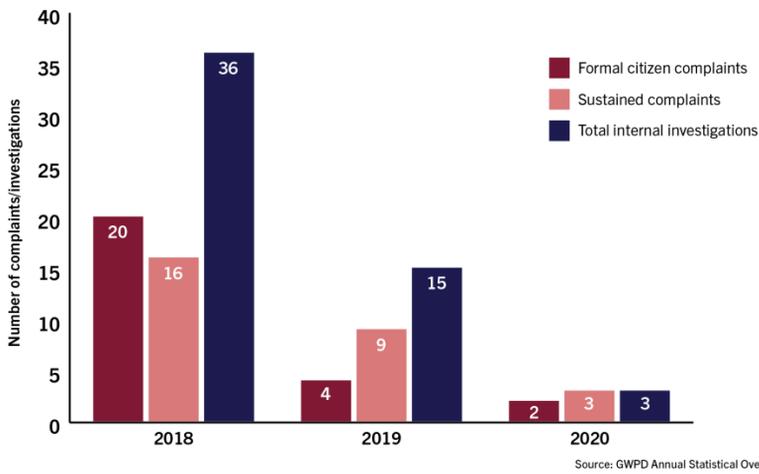
INSTITUTE OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY'S GREENING OF THE FUTURE FASHION SUPPLY CHAIN: GARMENT PRODUCTION
 Jan. 19 • 5 p.m. EST • Free
 This installation of GW's Institute of Corporate Responsibility will examine the connection between sustainable fashion and impact

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

JAN. 20, 1973

About 100,000 counterprotesters to President Richard Nixon's second inauguration demonstrated at the Washington Monument, united against the Vietnam War.

Complaints against GWPD officers from 2018 to 2020



SIDNEY LEE | GRAPHICS EDITOR

The number of complaints filed against GW Police Department officers dropped by 80 percent this year, the result of an empty campus and police reforms implemented by GWPD Chief James Tate.

First-ever GWPD report shows complaints dropped over three years

JARROD WARDWELL
 ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

For the first time ever, the GW Police Department publicly released three years of police complaint data last month, revealing a regression of citizen complaints and internal investigations that student leaders and officials said could continue to fall in the years to come.

The number of complaints and violations dropped by more than 80 percent since reaching "very high" levels in 2018, with 20 complaints falling to just two in 2020, according to the report – which documents three years of internal investigations, civilian complaints, officer violations, calls for service and arrests. Following a year highlighted by police brutality and calls for reform, GW community members said the release marks a breakthrough in enhancing transparency and mending campus police relations.

The findings show nearly every category at its highest in 2018, which yielded an above-average number of complaints, GWPD Chief

James Tate said. Tate counted 20 complaints filed by citizens, 16 officer violations and 36 investigations in 2018.

"Those numbers are very high for a police department this size," Tate said. "Typically you do not see that number of complaints being investigated in a police department that's less than 100 people. Those numbers are very high."

The complaint levels in 2018 came as GWPD faced rapid turnover when its chief resigned.

Tate attributes part of 2018's totals to a miscalculation of investigations, half of which he estimates are related to human resources matters including management or personnel issues, like coming into work late. He said the investigations were evenly split between complaints from students, faculty, staff and GWPD employees.

Since 2018, the annual figures have dropped off, the data show. In 2019, department violations shrunk to nine incidents, and investigations and civilian complaints were cut in half. In 2020, the data reports just

two civilian complaints, three investigations and three violations.

Tate said officer violations, listed as "sustained complaints" in the data, often lead to written or verbal counseling before suspension or termination.

He said an officer was terminated last year following a patrol vehicle crash involving "a significant amount of damage" but no injuries. The two other investigations in 2020 involved an officer being placed on administrative leave after appearing to push a student down a flight of stairs and a community member complaining that an officer didn't handle an issue with enough "care and concern," which led to "corrective and disciplinary action," Tate said.

The report comes as Tate has prioritized restoring community relations and building trust with students after joining GWPD last year. He has implemented body-worn cameras and training reforms, heightened training hours and scheduled the department's first-ever racial-profiling report for March.

Endowment increased by \$20 million in FY 2020: report

RYAN ANASTASIO
 REPORTER

GW's endowment increased in value during fiscal year 2020 by more than \$20 million after shrinking the previous year, according to a report officials released late last semester.

The endowment increased in value by 1.35 percent in FY 2020, which ran from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, from \$1.779 billion to \$1.803 billion. Officials said the pandemic has caused major market shifts, but they have been working to attract new donors to GW's endowment.

"In the first quarter of 2020, as countries implemented lockdowns to curb the COVID-19 pandemic, global markets declined rapidly," University spokesperson Crystal Nosal said in an email.

Nosal said GW's endowment includes a diversified set of investments, which helped prevent severe losses during the pandemic.

"The endowment's diversified portfolio helped

preserve its value amid the market losses," Nosal said. "In such unprecedented times, financial policies deployed to combat the economic impact of the virus fueled a rapid rebound across global markets and for the endowment throughout the balance of the year."

The report states officials took a \$90.9 million payout in FY 2020, about 5 percent of the endowment's total value, to support the University financially.

Starting in fiscal year 2021, which began on July 1, a payout of 4.5 percent is planned, which will reduce potential volatility in the payout, according to the report.

Officials had repeatedly said they will not use funds from the endowment to help mitigate the \$180 million budget gap for FY 2021 created by the coronavirus pandemic.

In fiscal year 2019, the endowment value decreased by 1.13 percent.

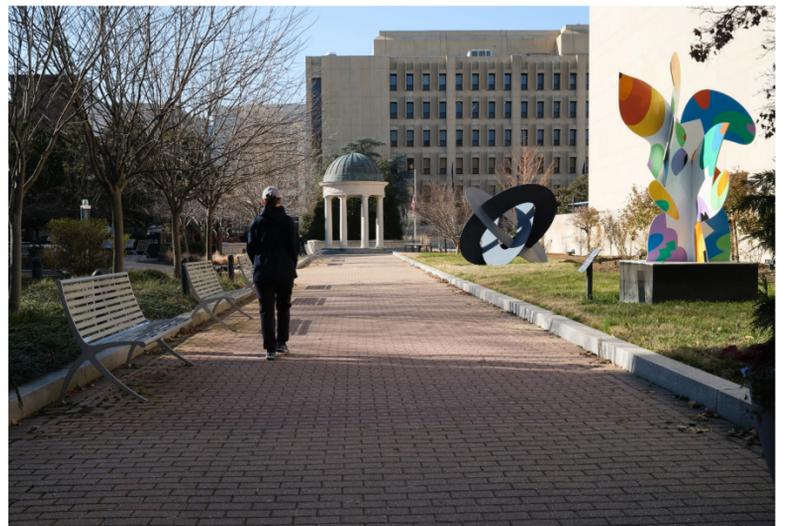
GW raised more than \$102 million in FY 2020 from more than 18,000

donors contributing, with \$18.8 million designated for the endowment, according to the report.

The University's endowment includes real estate investments and other assets. Just more than 40 percent, about \$750 million, of GW's endowment is invested in real estate, according to the report.

"The majority of donor-restricted endowment gifts are invested in the Pooled Endowment, together with some of the University's quasi endowments," the report states. "The remainder of the endowment is composed of separately managed funds and a portfolio of real estate investment properties."

"Our development team works with prospective donors to determine where their interests lie in supporting the University," Nosal said. "Individual endowments represent the legacy of benevolent donors who invest for long-term growth. These funds convey in a personal way the donor's values and ideals about the importance of education."



JACK FONSECA | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Amid downsizing across departments, administrators withdrew about \$91 million from the University's endowment to bolster GW's weak finances.

Faculty share COVID-19 expertise with media outlets to battle fake news

TESSA CONRADY
 REPORTER

As the pandemic drags on, GW's COVID-19 experts are fighting against another malady: misinformation.

Since the pandemic began, faculty from across the University have spent hours speaking with media outlets to share their expertise about science, medicine and the social sciences. In interviews, five faculty members said they feel a responsibility to share their knowledge with the public to ensure people are receiving proper guidance and hearing from a range of racially and ethnically diverse voices.

Leana Wen, a visiting professor of health policy and management and the former president of Planned Parenthood, has served as a contributing columnist for The Washington Post and an on-air medical analyst for CNN throughout the pandemic. Wen said spreading reliable information to the American public is not merely tangential to her work as a public health expert but rather a core part of her fight against the virus.

"If I'm working on one aspect of it, then media is embedded in that aspect as well," she said. "If what I'm doing is working on disparities, then I'm working on the legislative aspect, I might be informally advising local and state health departments, I might also be raising attention to this issue through the media, I might be writing papers about it, so it's all together."

Wen said her mentor, former Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., has always encouraged her to find problems that she can address with her specific skill set – advice Wen has used in her approach to COVID-19.

"I always look at, 'What are those specific needs?' and then, 'Are those specific needs met by other people at this time?' or, 'Is there a particular role that I should be trying to fill in and help at this moment?'" she said.

Researchers from the National Bureau of Economic Research discovered that COVID-19 outbreaks tended to be worse in areas where TV programming downplayed the

virus's severity. Some studies have shown that the increase in polarization across social media outlets coincides with an increase in the spread of misinformation.

Jon Andrus, an adjunct professor of global health, said he felt a similar need to help others during the pandemic and has been speaking with media outlets, like Newsweek and Healthline, about the spread of the virus and the development and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines. He said he typically gives one to two interviews per week and extensively researches the topic he'll be speaking about ahead of time.

"It's been an honor and a privilege, but it's everybody's duty to use the skill set that they have to try to make a difference in the world," Andrus said.

Andrus said he gained an understanding of disease control during his time working on the eradication of other diseases abroad with the Pan American Health Organization. He said his experience working to distribute yellow fever vaccines in Paraguay has helped him put America's COVID-19 shortcomings into perspective.

"We mobilized, through vaccine diplomacy, enough doses for the country to vaccinate, I think 3 million people in a few weeks," Andrus said. "A few weeks! So it saddens me to see what's going on in the United States with COVID. So when I was interviewed on Tuesday, I could share one of those experiences, and say, 'We just are not fit for purpose.' So I try to bring my own perspective. And I say up front, 'This is my perspective.'"

Physics professor Neil Johnson has been speaking to news outlets about his research on how vaccine misinformation spreads on social media. He said the topic might seem like a media studies or social sciences problem, but he approached his research through the lens of physics, focusing not on individual videos or conspiracies but rather on patterns within social media systems that lead to misinformation.

He said the spread of misinformation on social media is typically



Leana Wen, a visiting professor of health policy and management, has written for The Washington Post and appeared on CNN to share information related to public health.

a matter of how many contacts the people spreading misinformation have in a given amount of time.

"I know nothing about standard public health in the real world where people turn up for their appointments and this kind of thing," Johnson said. "But what I do is I'm used to thinking of abstract systems that have lots of connections between them where you don't really know where the connections are, and when you look at it, it's almost, 'Where do I even start understanding it?'"

He said he applies the methods he would use when studying physics to analyze what guides human behavior on social media.

"For example, the way I look at the online misinformation is pretty much like the way mathematical modeling people look at the actual virus passing through the population," Johnson said. "It has to do with contacts, the number of contacts per unit time and then what

communities people join and then what other communities they join? And are they passing it on?"

Carlos Rodríguez-Díaz, an associate professor of prevention and community health, has spent the last several months explaining the disproportionate toll of the pandemic on Black and Latino communities.

"COVID is unfortunately giving us the opportunity to see how our social determinants shape our ability to stay healthy," Rodríguez-Díaz said. "I am committed to have a conversation and to help others understand that this is not about the virus. This is about people. It's our social condition that increases risk for infection and disease progression. So that's the scientific work that I do."

Rodríguez-Díaz said he's shared his expertise with the Latino community by speaking with predominantly Spanish-speaking media outlets.

"There are not too many Spanish-speaking scientists who are available to speak to the media – not as many as English-speaking, definitely," Rodríguez-Díaz said. "I believe that it is very important to engage with Spanish-speaking media and media targeting Latino and Hispanic populations in the United States. Representation in media matters."

Candice Chen, an associate professor of health policy and management, said as a public health expert, she also appreciates the role that journalists play in making complex public health information more clear to the public.

"I'm always very thankful for media reporters, because I know, sometimes I speak in – and I try not to – but I speak in that academic speak, right?" Chen said. "And they take what we do, and they turn it into something that is hopefully understandable to normal people."

How LeBlanc has reshaped GW's administration nearly four years in

ZACH SCHONFELD
NEWS EDITOR

University President Thomas LeBlanc arrived in Foggy Bottom less than four years ago, but he has already made a lasting impact on GW's administration.

LeBlanc quickly identified improving institutional culture, philanthropy, the student experience, the medical enterprise and research as his five top initiatives as GW president, and he has since led major restructuring efforts in the departments overseeing each of these areas. Since his arrival in August 2017, LeBlanc has overseen the hiring of both of GW's executive vice presidents, seven of GW's nine vice presidents and seven of the University's 11 deans.

"We wanted to hire very talented leaders, and we were committed to diversity," LeBlanc said in an interview Friday. "I think the results bear that out, and I'm very proud of that. I think we'll continue along those lines as we move forward."

Seven months after arriving at GW, LeBlanc announced the hiring of Mark Diaz as GW's first Hispanic chief financial officer and executive vice president in February 2018, replacing Lou Katz. Diaz served under LeBlanc at the University of Miami in budget-related roles for a combined 12 years and has now worked with LeBlanc on implementing his top initiatives since coming to GW.

"Mark Diaz is a very, very talented academic leadership executive," LeBlanc said. "He has a broad range of experience, a broad range of skills. He is trained professionally as an accountant, but he has extensive professional experience in the health care system."

Diaz has overseen restructurings of multiple administrative units across GW, many of which were implemented in part as cost-saving measures during the pandemic.

"He's been a great addition to the leadership team," LeBlanc said of Diaz. "He has done some restructuring of his organization, and I think it's benefited the University. He had to very quickly get his hands around a complex financial enterprise."

Here's how LeBlanc's hires have shaped each of his strategic initiatives:

Institutional culture

Diaz and LeBlanc oversaw a broad overhaul of human resources as part of a push to improve GW's institutional culture.

But LeBlanc's institutional culture initiative has been met with criticism from some faculty, who raised concerns about the cost of GW's partnership with the Disney Institute as part of the initiative. Officials have repeatedly declined to provide the cost of the partnership, which concluded last fall.

"When it came time to address HR, one of the things – and this is an observation that Mark made – is people are the most important resource at any university," LeBlanc said. "And we ought to be clear that we're sending a message that we believe very strongly in the value of our people."

LeBlanc and Diaz announced the hiring of Dana Bradley, the then-associate vice president for human resources at Northwestern University, as GW's first-ever chief people officer in July 2019 to manage the overhaul. Bradley has also served as a member of the Culture Leadership Team, which oversaw the institutional culture initiative.

"We were able to recruit Dana Bradley, who has extensive experience in higher education at first-rate institutions, to come in and make sure we promulgated a value around our people," LeBlanc said.

Philanthropy

LeBlanc and Diaz have also overseen a restructuring of the Division of Development and Alumni Relations since LeBlanc hired Donna Arbide to lead the unit in late 2017. Arbide also arrived at GW after working at Miami.

"Donna came on board with a strategy to try to engage more alumni and to very much focus on, outside of the next campaign, building a structure that would have helped deliver a future campaign," LeBlanc said. "And she's worked hard to do that, I would say the first few years, including the pandemic year. We've done remarkably successfully in terms of fund-



HATCHET FILE PHOTO

Several major themes have characterized LeBlanc's leadership at GW, from a focus on the institutional and workplace culture to the reorganization of departments in charge of research and the student experience, raising despite all the challenges that we face."

GW has experienced some of its best fundraising years since LeBlanc and Arbide's arrivals while struggling to improve the University's alumni giving rate, which has historically lagged behind most peer schools.

"It really was the question of 'We've just finished this campaign, there's a certain amount of donor fatigue because we've worked very hard to tap every donor for this campaign, we still have as an institution a relatively low alumni giving rate compared to some of our schools that were more successful in the campaign and some of the others, so what do we do next?'" LeBlanc said.

Student experience

During his first year, LeBlanc integrated GW's student affairs and enrollment divisions into a unified Office of Enrollment and the Student Experience, which houses a variety of departments like the Office of Student Success and the Office of Student Systems, Services and Analytics.

LeBlanc hired Cissy Petty as GW's first dean of the student experience, who later took on more responsibilities upon be-

ing named the vice president of student affairs and dean of students in August 2019.

"With the launching of the student experience initiative that I did, I wanted to make sure that the voice of the student experience was at the leadership table and that's ultimately what caused me to promote Cissy," LeBlanc said.

In her expanded role, Petty serves as a member of the University Leadership Council, a group created by LeBlanc that includes deans, vice presidents and a few other top officials. LeBlanc said the group enables a "unified institutional leadership group" to guide high-level decision making.

Medical enterprise

Officials sought to strengthen the Medical Faculty Associates as part of the medical enterprise initiative, leading the MFA to restructure its relationship with the University and provide GW more administrative responsibilities in December 2018.

"This new structure will help the University stabilize the MFA financially and more strategically align the clinical and academic missions," LeBlanc said at the time.

Officials announced the hir-

ing of Barbara Lee Bass as the first female dean of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and vice president for health affairs in August 2019, replacing Jeffrey Akman. In her role, Bass is responsible for overseeing the MFA as chief executive officer.

Research

LeBlanc replaced former Provost Forrest Maltzman, who announced he would step down near the end of LeBlanc's second academic year, with Brian Blake, GW's first Black provost. Blake, who had served as Drexel University's provost, had worked under LeBlanc at Miami.

Since Blake's arrival in November 2019, he has worked with LeBlanc to transform how the University manages research.

Officials announced they would transition to a decentralized "pod" research model in August following an extensive review of GW's research practices. Administrators simultaneously announced at the time that Vice President for Research Robert Miller would step down to take a role in SMHS, and Blake would oversee research initiatives in the interim before a new research vice president is hired.

Fall plans will depend on speed of vaccine distribution, officials say

ZACH SCHONFELD
NEWS EDITOR

Officials said they have begun planning for the fall semester, focusing on stabilizing enrollment levels and exploring options for hybrid courses.

University President Thomas LeBlanc said he expects GW to be open in the fall to the "fullest extent possible" at a Faculty Senate meeting Friday, but he added that fall planning will be informed by the state of vaccine distribution in the coming months. Vaccine supply remains limited across the United States, but experts have predicted the vaccine could become more widely available before the fall.

"Vaccines are providing much needed hope for brighter days ahead," LeBlanc said at the meeting.

Provost Brian Blake said officials met with officials at other universities to learn best practices for potentially teaching hybrid classes this fall. Planning meetings have also been held with the deans and the registrar's office, he said.

"We've been finding out, even if they're hybrid, there's a small difference between totally online and hybrid," Blake said.

He added that spring attrition is "similar" to previous years, with a slight uptick in the number of leaves of absences. Fall application levels are on

par with last year, Blake said.

"Applications for the fall are right in line with applications for last year," he said. "It shows we're as attractive as before, maybe even more because of the uncertain times we're in."

Jay Goff, the vice provost of enrollment and student success, said administrators have seen an increase in the number of first-year applications. Domestic applications are roughly 2 percent higher than last year, but international applications dipped.

Goff said more than 25,000 undergraduate and graduate students began spring classes last week, which is about 2.1 percent below last year's levels. He said officials had reached

out to students taking a leave of absence in the fall, about half of whom are taking classes this spring.

"We are continuing to see a sizable fall in international students," Goff said. "We will be reaching out to those students so they understand what they need to do to come back to GW in the summer or the fall."

Arthur Wilson, the chair of the senate's executive committee, said the ongoing faculty-wide survey of LeBlanc's leadership will remain open until the end of January.

Faculty senators managing the survey said in an update on Jan. 7 that they would evaluate the response rate on Jan. 15 to decide if they would keep the

survey window open longer. More than 800 faculty have completed the survey, the senators said at the time.

Blake, the provost, also provided the senate with an update on the University's research endeavors, reporting that officials distributed more than \$200 million on research projects during calendar year 2020, the highest amount GW has ever allotted in one year.

The agenda for the meeting also included an update from the future enrollment planning working group, presented by faculty senator Jamie Cohen-Cole, but the senate unanimously voted to move into a closed, executive session for the presentation.

Faculty plan 'up front' conversation on Capitol riot

From Page 1

Rebekah Tromble, an associate professor of media and public affairs and the director of the Institute for Data, Democracy and Politics, said her students "dove right into" the topic, connecting the hostility of the riot to how social media companies can "incentivize" toxic and hateful content in U.S. politics. Multiple social media platforms suspended or banned Trump's account after his response to the riot, and some platforms also removed accounts or pages spreading misinformation since then.

Tromble said she plans to be "up front" about the riot during her class discussions by acknowledging the impact that the insurrection has had on those who live in the District and on those who do not.

"On an intellectual level, discussing the riot can provide students with new ideas or an additional lens through which to process and understand what we all witnessed," Tromble said.

She added that she will set aside time in the beginning of her class for students to speak freely with each other without recording the class meeting as both a check-in and a chance for them to learn how to cope with their stress. She said she used check-ins as part of her teaching last semester and found them to be "really effective," especially when major current

events occurred.

"And on a personal level, while we're so dispersed from one another, talking about the riot in class can be cathartic," Tromble said. "Our classes provide a space for students to ask questions and share their views, getting feedback and support from professors and peers."

Robert Stoker, a professor of political science, public policy and public administration, said he will not initiate discussions nor alter the curricula in his courses Poverty, Work and Welfare and Politics of Inequality in the US to include the Capitol riot. He said while he is not planning to bring it up in class himself, he understands students' desire to comment on the riot and will not stop a potential discussion if it arises.

"The classes are supposed to be about more fundamental things than current events that are in the news, and the curriculum was established and planned a long time ago and has evolved over time to reflect broader questions than current events can appropriately cover," Stoker said.

He said having an open environment where students can express their thoughts, give feedback and "react intelligently" to their peers is an "important" part of education.

"It's generally good when students are able to relate their studies to things that are going around them in the world, and that's an effort that I will support," Stoker said.

Students in D.C. stock groceries, stay inside

From Page 1

Gabriella Spina, a freshman and a Hatchet reporter, said her parents originally wanted to pick her up from her off-campus apartment before the inauguration this week after hearing reports of bombs placed near the Capitol. She said she and her parents ultimately decided she would remain in D.C. to avoid the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19, and she will stay inside on Inauguration Day.

Spina said she and her roommates will stock up on frozen food before Wednesday in case stores are shut down during the week. She said she is "worried" because the National Guard has deployed thousands of troops to the District, which brings more people to D.C. and may increase the spread of the coronavirus.

"You're going to have people there supporting the transition, people that

are not supporting the transition, and one subset of those people are known to not particularly follow COVID precautions," Spina said. "I didn't want to be in such close proximity to a place where there's going to be a ton of people. You can never guarantee that everyone's going to wear a mask."

Junior Drew Amstutz said he was "looking forward" to the inauguration prior to the riots, but instead of attending the inaugural events, he decided to go into work at his job at the Pentagon City Mall in Arlington, Virginia. He said he is "concerned" about traveling to work that day, especially since the Metro was "flooded" with crowds of people on the day of the Capitol riot, calling his commute that day the "scariest Metro experience" he ever had.

"All the trains coming from Virginia into D.C. were packed shoulder-to-shoulder with people without masks on, wearing either forms of red

or camouflage or giant flags," Amstutz said.

But while many of their classmates plan to avoid Capitol Hill on Inauguration Day, two roommates are determined to catch a glimpse of the quadrennial swearing-in ceremony.

Sophomore Ashley Lomasney said she and her roommate want to walk "as close as possible" to the National Mall to celebrate Biden's inauguration. Lomasney and her roommate said they will take safety precautions by wearing masks and following news updates and any city warnings of potential unrest in the wake of the Capitol riot.

"Being online for three semesters now is partially Donald Trump's fault because of his response and his supporters' response [to the COVID-19 pandemic]," Lomasney said. "I wanted to go to the inauguration anyway just because I felt he took in-person classes from me – they can't take the inauguration for me."

Global Bachelor's Program helped build cultural awareness, officials say

NURIA DIAZ
STAFF WRITER

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STAFF WRITER

Five years after it launched, officials said the Global Bachelor's Program has allowed students to travel to "less traditional" study abroad locations and spend more time outside the United States compared to most abroad programs.

The program, which has been on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, allows undergraduates in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Elliott School of International Affairs and the School of Business to spend three semesters abroad. Daniel Riley, the program manager for the Global Bachelor's Program, said more than 175 students have enrolled in the program since it was first launched.

He said in the past five years, officials have added an additional site for students to travel to Belfast, Northern Ireland, and have seen an increase in the number of business school and CCAS students participating in the program. Riley said the program has allowed students to obtain a broader set of experiences and skills as undergradu-

ates by exposing them to multiple cultures.

"The first years of the program saw very high preponderance of program participants from the Elliott School," Riley said in an email. "However, since 2018, numbers in both GWSB and CCAS have grown considerably, giving much more parity between the constituent colleges."

The program requires students to travel to three different abroad destinations – either Shanghai or Belfast for the first destination and their choice of two of the approved locations for the second and third destinations, the program's website states. Riley said when the program started, officials focused on encouraging students to study abroad in "less traditional destinations," like Ecuador, Russia and Tanzania.

Riley said officials' "top priority" is to resume the program for the upcoming academic year. He said officials temporarily waived the third destination requirement for the students who were unable to travel due to the pandemic, allowing them to complete it with either two semesters of study abroad or a mix of a semester studying abroad and an international internship.

"Some students have completed international internships remotely from the U.S.," Riley said. "The Global Bachelor's team has offered a great deal of flexibility, allowing students to be creative in setting up these opportunities."

Riley said officials in the program have a long-term goal to establish a STEM track for those who have more difficulty studying abroad because of the requirements of their major.

"Students in STEM fields often lack study-abroad options in general, so creating a STEM GBP track would offer a notable expansion in study abroad opportunities for these majors," Riley said.

Steve Suranovic, a professor of economics and international affairs, said he has been accompanying students in the program to Shanghai for the past five years. He said the program has allowed students to step outside their comfort zone and build character since they have the opportunity to learn how to deal with cultural differences in foreign countries.

"The initial goals were to create a really, truly global experience for students that would go beyond the norm of one-semester study abroad experience that most



FILE PHOTO BY WILLIAM STRICKLETT | PHOTOGRAPHER
One aspirational goal for the Global Bachelor's Program is to establish a STEM track to permit students in those disciplines to take advantage of the study abroad experience.

undergraduates have, to try to create something that would give them multiple opportunities to study in different places and expose them to not just one different culture or society but at least two different cultures beyond what they are already familiar with in the United States or their own countries," Suranovic said.

He said he is hopeful that the COVID-19 vaccine will be widely available

by the summer so international travel can resume and exchange programs can continue shortly. Officials announced in an email last week that study abroad programs would remain suspended for the summer, but the Office for Study Abroad is now accepting applications for the upcoming academic year.

"A lot is going to depend on COVID and how long it's going to take for interna-

tional travel to be opened up again," Suranovic said.

Suranovic said students have told him that the program helped them stand out from other applicants while looking for jobs after graduation, particularly for those applying for positions with an "international or global focus." He said exposure to more than one country or culture during a student's time in college is uncommon for most undergraduates.

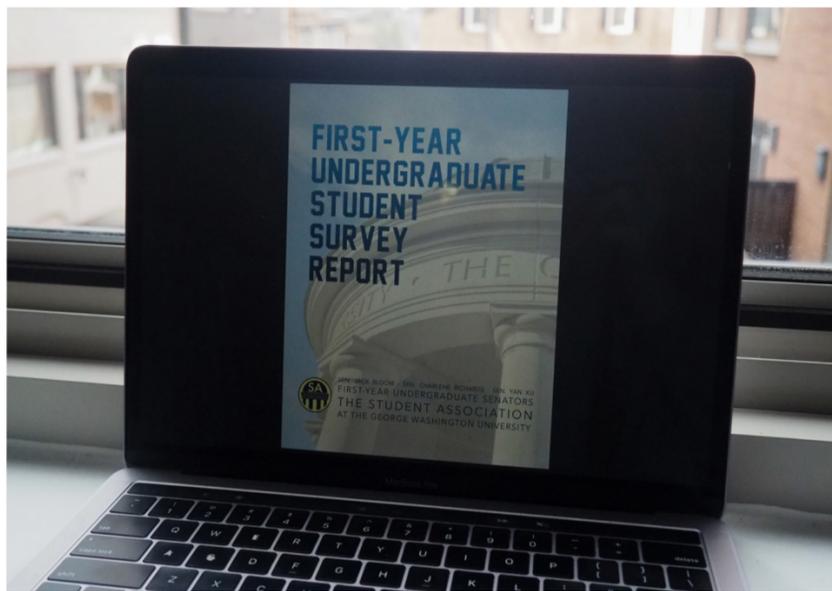


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GRACE HROMIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

About 18 percent of the survey's respondents reported feeling isolated, while 17 percent said distractions at home hindered their ability to learn.

Freshmen lacked connections in first semester: SA report

CLARA DUHON
STAFF WRITER

Student Association first-year senators presented their first report last week detailing challenges facing freshmen during online learning.

Three first-year senators released a survey in October asking the Class of 2024 about their thoughts toward online learning and how respondents want to improve their "virtual learning experience," according to the report. The survey found that freshmen feel virtual learning has weakened their academic experience and connections with professors.

SA Sen. Jack Bloom, U-at-Large, said he and his peers felt their voices were underrepresented in the SA when the SA Senate published a statement in July – a month before first-year senators could join – supporting officials' decision to move classes online last fall.

"A lot of us started in the context of darkness," he said. "We felt like we weren't being heard, and so if anything, I hope that seeing this report lets them know that we're here, we're listening, we care."

The survey asked freshmen about their adaptability to college, the pros and cons of virtual learning and if they felt prepared for virtual learning this spring. The survey, which received more than 250 responses, revealed 26 percent faced "learning and organization" challenges, 18 percent felt isolated and 17 percent experienced home distractions that affected their ability to learn, according to the report.

Bloom said freshmen reported that they are struggling to form connections with the campus community. He said living on campus during the first year of college offers experiences like meeting new people and developing relationships that can't be simulated in the same way in

an online environment.

"While returning students might have some support systems in place – great friends they met in person or professors they met in person or even just having a substantial connection to Washington, D.C., Foggy Bottom, Mount Vernon and GW – first-year students really don't have that," Bloom said. "And so that's just one more additional hurdle that we've all had to overcome."

First-year senators hosted a town hall for freshmen in October, also aimed at gathering students' concerns to compile the overall report.

"We conducted the survey and the town hall to get concrete data points to support what we already thought to be the case in an empirical way," Bloom said.

The senate passed a resolution last week calling on officials to help ease the challenges freshmen are facing by promoting student resources like academic and mental health help.

SA Sen. Charlene Richards, U-at-Large, said she plans to meet with two assistant directors from the Office of Student Life this week to encourage them to organize more freshman events that introduce the class to each other and increase promotion of Engage GW as a platform for freshmen to find student organizations.

The report recommends that student life officials promote GW Engage through newsletters with upcoming events that student organizations are hosting. The report also urges all student organizations to post all their events on Engage and reach out to freshmen with a "refresher" about how Engage operates.

Richards said she will work with officials to implement social programs to build relationships between freshmen that extend outside the realm of classes and GroupMe chats. She said she wants to organize more town

hall meetings this semester dedicated to freshmen so they have a consistent forum to voice their questions and concerns.

Richards said feedback from the survey suggests freshmen felt as though officials weren't providing students with adequate information to find and use resources, like mental health and disability support services.

"A lot of students with mental health and disability issues – they felt alienated during this whole experience," she said. "And it felt like a lot of the resources that the University already had have not been publicized."

The report recommends that administrators publish instructional videos for students to learn how to navigate University websites and resources, and the senators ask the Office of the Provost to pinpoint those outlets students can use to voice their concerns.

SA Sen. Yan Xu, U-at-Large, said he, Bloom and Richards plan to collaborate with student organizations like the International Affairs Society and First Generation United to create infographics and videos teaching students how to navigate University websites and resources.

Xu said they plan to host another town hall this semester as a place for freshmen to raise their questions and concerns directly to an administrator. He said he will invite officials like University President Thomas LeBlanc and Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students Cissy Petty to attend the meeting.

"A town hall without an administrative person who actually makes the decisions there – it's going to become just hearing the concerns, but we are not actually offering any solutions to the students," Xu said. "Bringing the administrators on board is a brilliant idea."

Virtual 'hackathon' featured projects on COVID-19 care

TIFFANY GARCIA
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

A student-led group used their annual medical solutions competition this weekend to address patient-specific and systemic issues in health care relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

George Hacks, a student-led group that hosts multiple events throughout the year for students to innovate solutions in health care, hosted its yearly hackathon event online for the first time. In light of the pandemic, students created solutions to ideas like finding an alternative to PPE or creating a user-friendly website to keep medical professionals up to date on the latest coronavirus research and guidelines.

Throughout the year, the George Hacks team connects and partners with health care organizations in and outside the District, like the Veterans Health Administration, which submit medical pitches for students to pursue at the event. The group received multiple COVID-19 pitches for students to find solutions to and construct prototypes of, like 3D-printed N95 masks, according to the George Hacks website.

Students spent the weekend designing and constructing solutions to the problems before showcasing them on Sunday to a panel of judges.

Second-year graduate student Karen Ruis, the director of George Hacks, said while participants were unable to meet in the basement of the Science and Engineering Hall this year, the group wanted to ensure students feel the same energy by hosting new workshops on programming software and a game night for teams to bond over Zoom. She said the group also sent items like George Hacks promotional materials and snack

packs for participants to enjoy during the event.

"In the years past, we've always provided food as a way for students to eat," Ruis said. "Food is there so you don't have to worry about that and can continue to work on your problem statement and feed yourself while you're doing that."

She said participants formed teams of at least two students before choosing from the available pitches in one of three tracks brand new to this year's competition – assistive technology, telemedicine and communication.

She said George Hacks decided this year to hold multiple workshops leading up to the hackathon to teach students how to navigate online programs, like computer-aided design software and technical computing, needed to build their projects. Previous inventions that have come from the competition include mobile health care applications or wheelchair prototypes, according to the group's website.

Ruis said George Hacks hosted nine judges from partner health organizations like the International Virtual Reality and Healthcare Association and the University to select the winners. Five teams were selected as winners in their categories – best overall, best demo, best pitch, best AI implementation and best video creativity.

"We have always been proud of the quality of the events that we do host and the planning that we've done for the virtual space," Ruis said. "I don't think students will lose. So going from in person to virtual is different, but I think that we are still able to provide that platform that we have in years past."

Christianne Chua, a second-year graduate student, said her role as technical director focused on

gathering the health care innovation challenges and ensuring they were feasible for students to address. She said one of the largest challenges organizing the workshops and other activities up to the hackathon during the pandemic was making each event still feel interactive for students participating.

"Since we don't have that face-to-face feedback, I feel like each one of us have had to put a lot more time with how we structure each of the workshops and the activities so that it still remains hands on but also fun and engaging and easy to follow along for students who are trying to learn these new skills," Chua said.

Junior Giavanna Corazza, a biomedical engineering major and the group's outreach director, said the event attracted nearly 50 participants from GW and other universities like Boston and George Mason as of Thursday. She said one of the benefits of holding the event online was having a greater number of international students registered from countries like India and England.

She added that the group worked to promote the event through social media and school newsletters to recruit students of different majors and experiences in engineering or computer applications. She said the group's new workshops have focused on topics like how to pitch so students don't feel "limited" by their skill set in any capacity.

"We don't want all of our participants to be rooted necessarily within the engineering school or have engineering backgrounds," Corazza said. "We highly value having people with different ideas, different mindsets, different attitudes toward different things, especially given that we focus on social impact."



FILE PHOTO BY ALEXANDER WELLING | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
This year's George Hacks leaders aimed to emulate the energy of meeting in the Science and Engineering Hall basement with workshops and game nights over Zoom.



DANIELLE TOWERS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

GW researchers are involved in more than 90 projects related to COVID-19 amid a record-high number of invention disclosures and patents filed by GW affiliates this year.

GW reaches all-time high for research expenditures in calendar year 2020

ISHA TRIVEDI
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

LIA DEGROOT
NEWS EDITOR

Officials doled out more money on research expenditures last calendar year than any other year in University history, Provost Brian Blake said at a Faculty Senate meeting Friday.

Blake said GW's researchers had a "phenomenal" year despite the pandemic and ended up spending more than \$200 million on research projects. He said GW had a "record year" of invention disclosures and patents in 2020, and the number of GW-authored documents and citations of work done by GW researchers reached a 10-year high.

"Our researchers, our faculty remain very ambitious," Blake said. "I'm using the word very hungry because they're still going after awards. They're pushing us, and I absolutely welcome that push to make this infrastructure the best it can be because I think the sky is the limit."

GW researchers are involved in more than 90

active research projects related to COVID-19, 11 COVID-19 research trials, 64 externally sponsored awards, 111 pending grant proposals and 12 projects supported by GW's COVID-19 research fund, Blake said. GW has been involved in a clinical trial for the Moderna, Inc. vaccine since last August and was named vaccine distribution site last December.

He said despite the University's strong research year, officials need to create a "forward-looking" strategy to accelerate research and implement "effective" processes before and after research funding is awarded. He said he wants to find a research strategy that works for all areas of the University's research profile and wants to avoid framing the process as a competition between "winners and losers."

"When we talk about who we want to be from a research perspective, that's not really well crafted right now," he said.

Blake also provided an update on the University's ecosystem research review, which officials have been conducting since September 2018. Officials released

phase one of the review in April 2019, which included recommendations like improvements in communication among faculty, staff and students and new training sessions on research policies.

Blake said officials have addressed 59 of the 84 recommendations included in phase one of the report. He said officials have addressed nine of the 83 recommendations from phase two of the report, which officials released last May.

Blake said he is working with faculty members to fill the position of vice provost for research, a role he is currently serving in part time. He said he held off conducting the search last fall due to the budget mitigation steps that officials had taken but is moving forward with it now since the budget is "more defined."

"I was hesitant to start that search in the fall because I knew we were mitigating – we didn't have much certainty," Blake said. "At this point, we're actually in a position where we actually have a budget more defined now. So it's a possibility to kind of move forward."

WMATA officials expect to bypass service cuts for now after stimulus

DANIEL OKAY
REPORTER

JARROD WARDWELL
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority officials plan to dodge devastating service cuts for now, thanks to the agency's \$610 million in funding from the federal COVID-19 stimulus package.

After proposing a bundle of service cuts late last year to plug a budget fall-out resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, Metro officials said they plan to resume regular service in 2021. The funding will help the agency avert cuts they planned to implement in fiscal year 2022, like eliminating weekend service and shutting down 19 stations, but local leaders said they may need to revisit the cuts in the future without more federal funding.

Metro board members said they plan to delay any potential budget cuts through 2021, but they might start scaling back service in January 2022 without any further relief from the federal government. President-elect Joe Biden's recently outlined \$1.9 trillion stimulus package allots \$20 billion for public transportation – a potential beacon for WMATA's budget outlook, DCist reported.

Local leaders said avoiding the complete elimination of rail and bus service in the future will help save commuters from losing a local transportation asset in Foggy Bottom and D.C.

Senior Yannik Omicetin, a member of the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission, said he hopes Metro officials weigh "equity" and "inequality" when deciding how to maintain service around the D.C. area, including areas with fewer Metro stops than in Ward 2.

"It just goes without saying that anyone in the community that's already vulnerable is made even more vulnerable by reductions in service," he said.

Omicetin said WMATA officials should include local ANCs in budget talks for FY 2022, even though it's unusual for the agency to factor neighborhood voices in its decision-making process, typically compounded with state and city leaders.

Metro officials reinstated the collection of Metrobus fares last month to start clawing back funds for the agency's budget deficits – a measure Omicetin said has disadvantaged low-income residents who commute as service industry employees. He said Metro officials should focus on maintaining Metrobus service to account for those employees' transit access.

Omicetin, who supports implementing a discounted student Metro pass, said while he still plans on "getting transit as close to free as possible for as many folks as possible," he's "not super optimistic" about passing the initiative in the near future given WMATA's financial fallout during the pandemic.

John George, the president of the Foggy Bottom Association, said Metrorail and Metrobus are assets to people commuting to and from the local neighborhood near campus. He said he's "thankful" for the federal stimulus package because it alleviates worry from community members who rely on public transportation.

"Metrorail and Metrobus are vital to the Foggy Bottom and West End communities," he said. "They serve a significant purpose in transporting our residents to wherever they're going, as well as members from the metropolitan area coming into Foggy Bottom."

He said officials should avoid completely eliminat-

ing any area of the agency's service and instead direct any necessary cuts to a reduction of hours – still a "distressing" measure but one that would keep weekend service, rail stops and bus routes from shutting down. Metro officials shuttered 19 stations during the first outbreak of COVID-19 in D.C. in March.

"If it needs to operate under reduced hours, I understand that," he said. "If it needs to operate under reduced frequency, I think that's an unfortunate consequence, but let's face it – I think we're all having to sacrifice some things."

WMATA spokesperson Ian Jannetta deferred an initial request for comment to Thursday's board meeting, where members discussed budget planning for FY 2022.

Transportation experts said the Metro should try limiting cuts as much as possible and execute necessary service reductions that will bear minimal weight on low-income commuters.

Nigel Wilson, a professor emeritus of civil engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said WMATA officials should use its federal aid "as a bridge" to re-vamped service standards and economic redevelopment.

"When ridership comes back, I think they really have to think of this as the federal assistance, providing a bridge to maintain service that will be needed in the medium-to-long run and avoid the pain and suffering for people who depend on public transport," he said.

Wilson, who specializes in research on urban transportation systems, said there is a "misperception" about the danger of using a transit system during the COVID-19 pandemic, and WMATA officials should try convincing local commuters of the transit system's safety.

District braces for potential violence ahead of inauguration

From Page 1

National Guard arrives on campus

The federal government authorized more than 20,000 armed National Guard troops to deploy in D.C. last Tuesday with about 7,000 currently stationed on the streets, according to a Military Times report. The troops have been seen stationed across campus with vehicles parked on G and H streets outside the Science and Engineering and Funger halls.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, which warns of armed protests across the country, started vetting and investigating National Guard members for threats of "insider attacks" this week.

The Metropolitan Police Department blocked off 20th Street on the edge of campus Tuesday with security fencing that extended from Independence Avenue up to L Street. The fencing sits one block away from the edge of the red zone on 19th Street, which restricts access to "authorized vehicles" and stretches until 3rd Street NW.

COVID-19 testing, University offices close

Administrators announced the closure of all campus offices and COVID-19 testing centers, designating Inauguration Day as a University holiday and restricting campus to residential students and on-site staff. Officials said COVID-19 testing sites are closed between Monday and Inauguration Day.

"Please be assured that, as ever, safety is

driving every action we take, and we remain in close coordination with our local, regional and federal partners," officials said in an email. "We stand ready to take any additional actions necessary to protect the safety of our campus and our University community."

The email states the Medical Faculty Associates closed its Foggy Bottom clinics Tuesday, adding to their already-planned closures on Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Inauguration Day. Campus libraries also shut down in-person services from Saturday through Wednesday.

Students receive special GWorld cards

Officials slipped special GWorld cards "with identifying information" under the door of each residential student last week. The cards indicate that students have been approved and are living in a residence hall on campus, according to a message officials issued to students.

The message states the card is "supplemental" to regular GWorld and doesn't provide tap access to buildings on campus. Officials said students should expect to see officers on campus who might request identification before allowing campus access.

"If you need to leave your room for any reason in the next week, carry your GWorld Card, your special GW Residence Hall Card and a government-issued photo ID until Jan. 21, or until the security perimeters are removed," the message states.

National Mall, Metro stations shut down

The National Park Service closed the National Mall Friday, enforcing restrictions "at least" through Thursday, according to a press release. The release states the closure includes Lafayette Park, the Ellipse, East and West Potomac parks and NPS land along Pennsylvania Avenue.

The majority of the closed space is "roughly bounded by Constitution Avenue, NW to the north; Ohio Drive, SW to the south; the Potomac River to the west; and 3rd Street to the east," according to the release.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority also shuttered 13 stations around the National Mall and U.S. Capitol Friday and planned Metrobus detours near the security perimeter close to campus. The Foggy Bottom-GWU Metro stop remains open.

Metrobus will operate on a regular weekly schedule, aside from Inauguration Day, which will adopt Saturday bus hours.

Indoor dining ban extended

Mayor Muriel Bowser extended the District's indoor dining ban two days past Inauguration Day, citing "public safety and health reasons" just before the ban was set to expire last Friday. Bowser said during a press conference that the extension would be targeted at fears of renewed riots and violence around the inauguration, according to a Washington City Paper report.

DeVos Title IX guidelines difficult to overturn: experts

From Page 1

Title IX reform

One of DeVos' central policies, as well as one of the most controversial, was Title IX sexual harassment regulations that went into effect in August of last year, narrowing the definition of sexual harassment and overhauling the sexual assault reporting process. In a letter to Congress, DeVos wrote that the rule "strengthens protections for survivors of sexual misconduct and restores due process."

Marissa Pollick, a Title IX lawyer and lecturer of sports management at the University of Michigan, said the new rule grants more rights to accused perpetrators than they were given during then-President Barack Obama's administration.

Pollick said the new regulations created a "higher standard of proof" for finding the accused responsible. She said survivor advocates are concerned that the new rule may undermine attempts to find the perpetrators of sexual harassment.

"They're concerned that those rules actually discourage victims from coming forward," Pollick said. "They make it more difficult for complainants to file and pursue claims."

Unlike the Obama-era guidelines, which did not carry the force of law, DeVos' regulations went through a "lengthy" public review process and carry the weight of the law, Pollick said. She said the administrative rulemaking process DeVos underwent could make the rule more difficult for President-elect Joe Biden's administration to potentially overturn.

"The sexual harassment and sexual assault guidance under Title IX was just that – it was simply guidance that's issued through the Office for Civil Rights,"

Pollick said. "What the DeVos and Trump administration did was actually issue formal regulations, which is a more complicated federal process and makes it more difficult to overturn them."

In a statement provided to The Hatchet, an ED spokesperson defended the rule from critics, saying it "protects" students.

"Secretary DeVos spearheaded the creation of a fair, reliable and legally-binding Title IX rule that protects all students at both the K-12 and postsecondary levels," the spokesperson said. "The Title IX rule has earned praise from both sides of the political aisle and has withstood every single legal challenge it has faced."

Federal student loan freeze

The department announced in March, as the COVID-19 pandemic reached D.C., that the federal government would freeze payments for federal student loan borrowers, which were repeatedly extended by the Trump administration until at least the end of this month.

Scott Buchanan – the executive director of the Student Loan Servicing Alliance, an association of student loan servicers – said the unpredictability and sudden arrival of the pandemic had the potential for an "unprecedented" economic impact on borrowers, making relief necessary.

"There was so much uncertainty about who might be impacted, what the level of that impact would be," Buchanan said.

Student loan debt accounts for nearly 40 percent of the debt held by Americans ages 18 to 29, and Americans currently hold nearly \$1.6 trillion in student loan debt in aggregate, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Biden's incoming admin-

istration is expected to extend the student loan payment freeze past its current end date of Jan. 31.

An ED spokesperson called DeVos' response to the COVID-19 pandemic "fast and decisive," citing the freeze of student loan payments and money allocated to schools through the CARES Act.

"She granted an administrative forbearance for federal student loans and set their interest rate to zero and made \$13 billion in CARES Act funding available to states, districts and institutions very quickly," the spokesperson said.

The spokesperson declined to say whether the current administration will recommend to the new ED leadership to extend the federal loan halt. They declined to describe the relationship between higher education administrators and the ED leadership.

Office for Civil Rights

Under DeVos' leadership, the Office for Civil Rights closed more than 1,200 civil rights investigations that it inherited from the Obama administration, without any findings of wrongdoing or corrective action. The office under DeVos was 16 percent less likely to side with the complainant when compared to decisions made under Obama.

The ED spokesperson said under DeVos' leadership, the department addressed a backlog in OCR complaints, closing 6,431 of the 7,854 cases left from the Obama administration.

"Under the secretary's leadership, the Office for Civil Rights completed its largest-ever investigation into systemic sexual assault problems in a major public school system and launched over 700 proactive investigations in two national initiatives focused on students with disabilities," they said.

The Capitol riot: Another reason to make D.C. a state

STAFF EDITORIAL

The riot at the U.S. Capitol earlier this month was a slap in the face to the country. But it meant much more to residents across the District whose lives were endangered by the mob. And unlike everyone else in the United States, they didn't have any real representation in federal government to take swift action to stop the insurrection.

The city is not made up of only the grandiose buildings that house our government – in fact, those landmarks are just a fraction of D.C. The District is home to restaurants that needed to board up because White supremacists decided to storm the city. The District is home to public modes of transportation residents rely on but became occupied by maskless rioters this month. The District is home to thousands of people who needed someone to immediately bring in the National Guard when Capitol windows were smashed in.

But D.C. could not effectively protect its city because it's not a state. Let us repeat – the District cannot effectively protect its city because it is not a state.

Had the District been a state at the time of the insurrection, the National Guard could have been called without the federal government's word. Requests for these troops were delayed by President Donald Trump – leaving D.C. residents to feel utterly unprotected by their own police. At a time of upheaval, city residents cannot wait around for the president of the United States to take action, especially when Trump has a disgusting interest in the rioters. D.C. deserves a voting

representative just like any other state so they can rapidly respond to a disaster. Mayor Muriel Bowser claims the city would have had a better grasp on the volatile situation had D.C. had a governor who could call in the National Guard right away.

Let's not forget that we're in the middle of a pandemic, and a bunch of really smart people thought it would be a good idea to storm the Capitol without wearing masks. The number of COVID-19 cases is skyrocketing across the country, and the District is likely going to see huge increases now that rioters have put other residents at risk. If D.C. was a state, its representatives

and senators could actually have a say in how the federal government handles the pandemic and responds in the face of violence. Bowser is now left to pick up the pieces of a city imperiled by domestic terrorists with no regard for one of the biggest public health crises of the century.

Ahead of Inauguration Day, as many as 25,000 National Guard troops are expected to be stationed in the city in case right-wing extremists attempt another violent attack – which is not unlikely. Considering that congressional members and staff feared for their lives after the failure to secure the Capitol last week, it is sensible

to beef up security – especially for an inauguration. But this can easily redound to D.C. residents' detriment. The brutal police response to Black Lives Matter protests this summer serves as a reminder that an expanded law enforcement presence can be a real threat to people of color in D.C. This increased security presence is the result of a lack thereof at the riot, now resulting in surging fear and anxiety from Black and Brown people across the city.

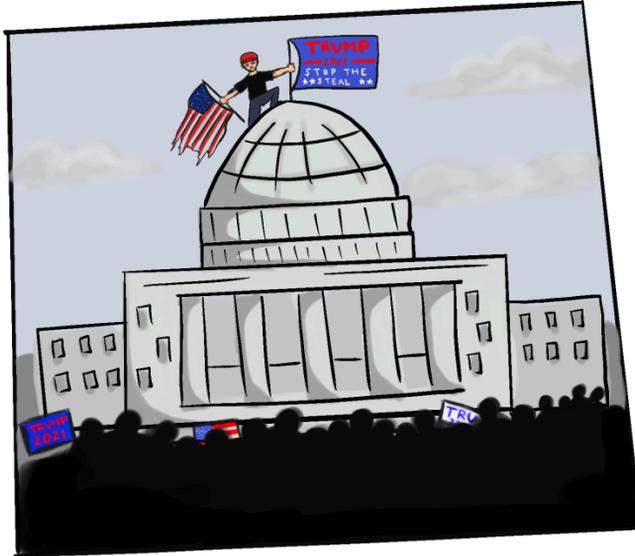
It is not a question of if a violent attack like the riot earlier this month will happen again, it is simply a matter of when. D.C. residents deserve to feel safe and

protected in their own city and not have to live in fear of what will happen the next time a group of crazed political rioters chooses to invade the city. If D.C. was a state, the city would no longer be at the mercy of federal legislators when they are in need of crucial aid.

While the riots of last week have opened the conversation for statehood once more, it is worth noting that there are more reasons for statehood than just protection from political riots. D.C. is the prime example of "taxation without representation," with no District resident getting proper representation in Congress – leaving D.C.'s residents, over half of whom are Black, without a voice in our democracy. This is despicable and wholly unacceptable.

The main reasoning behind D.C. not being a state yet, despite years of activism, is because D.C. is undoubtedly a liberal city that would put one more Democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives and two in the U.S. Senate. Representation and the ability to control our own city should not be a partisan issue. Half-baked arguments against putting one more star on the flag, the size of the District or the industries within it are ridiculous and simply hide the fact that Republicans and opponents to D.C. statehood have no problem disenfranchising thousands of Americans.

Now that Democrats are in control of both the legislative and executive branches of government, it is time for student activists and leaders to make the final push for statehood and see D.C. become the 51st state.



Cartoon by Hannah Thacker

Op-ed: Give Biden the chance to lead

Throughout the past century, sitting presidents who failed to be reelected have always risen to the occasion to call for unity among the American people. In 1980, then-President Jimmy Carter urged all of his supporters to join him "in a sincere and fruitful effort to support [his] successor when he undertakes this great responsibility." Twelve years later, then-President George H.W. Bush declared following his electoral loss that "there is important work to be done, and America must always come first. So we will get behind this new president and wish him well."

Josh Kutner & Louie Kahn
Chairman, GW College Republicans &
President, GW College Democrats

Yet in our present circumstances, President Donald Trump has not only neglected to call upon the American people to unite but, tragically, has continued to foment rancor, discord and even violence among his constituents. As a direct result of his failure to lead in this pivotal moment, it falls upon each and every one of us to work to restore the bonds of trust between one another and heal our own wounds of division.

That is why today, we write in our personal capacities as leaders of the GW College Democrats and GW College Republicans to urge all members of the GW community across the political spectrum to give President-elect Joe Biden the opportunity to lead our nation as he assumes office Wednesday afternoon.

We recognize that many of you may not have supported Biden last November. Let us be clear – we are not asking that you set aside legitimate policy concerns or simply acquiesce to the new administration. On the contrary, we seek to rekindle the spirit of civil discourse and sincere debate where those who disagree politically can openly express their beliefs and be listened to earnestly. Returning to an era where good-faith discussion wins out over scoring cheap political points is the clearest path forward to addressing our nation's present struggles.

Our country is grappling with a series of challenges and converging crises that have adversely impacted every single American. A continuation of the dysfunction and hyperpartisanship we have come accustomed to seeing from D.C. does not serve anyone's benefit, especially during a time when millions of Americans, Democrats and Republicans alike, are crying out for leadership that can only come from public servants who prioritize the needs of their constituents and their oath to the U.S. Constitution above allegiance to any one individual or

political party.

The domestic terrorists who stormed the U.S. Capitol earlier this month took the lives of brave law enforcement officers, called for the hanging of Vice President Mike Pence and put the lives of lawmakers on both sides of the aisle in grave danger as they wreaked havoc within the sacred halls of Congress. These abhorrent actions are a tragic result of public figures who irresponsibly spread baseless claims of widespread voter fraud in an effort to overturn the results of a free and fair election.

As we write this call for unity, we acknowledge that our nation cannot fully heal until those who perpetrated the Jan. 6 domestic terrorist attack on the Capitol are apprehended and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. This moment also calls for us to put our partisan allegiances aside and ensure that those who helped to incite these seditious riots face serious consequences for their actions and are held fully accountable.

It is no secret that, given our respective positions on campus, we do not agree on much politically. Yet despite our differences, we share the belief that a thriving democracy is essential to the survival of our republic. In an era many have proscribed as the "age of disinformation," it is more important now more than ever before to speak out against those who propagate conspiracy theories and act in ways that intentionally seek to corrode public trust in our institutions and the democratic process.

When former President Bill Clinton was sworn in nearly 28 years ago, he found a note from outgoing President George H.W. Bush in the Oval Office. Bush ended his letter with words of encouragement for his successor, writing, "Your success is now our country's success. I am rooting hard for you."

This encounter between two political rivals is a perfect example of the peaceful transition of power which our nation has cherished for over two centuries and embodies the spirit of bipartisan cooperation which we should strive toward today. We need our leaders to put partisan differences aside and commit to working in pursuit of the best interests of the American people as we navigate through this challenging chapter in our nation's history.

While we are sure to disagree on actions taken by the Biden administration over these next four years, we are both rooting for Biden as he takes over as the leader of the greatest country in the history of the world. We call on you to join us.

—Louie Kahn is the president of the GW College Democrats, and Josh Kutner is the chairman of the GW College Republicans.

Conservatives have a duty to restore values lost before Trump

When Donald Trump won the presidency in 2016, it may have put a Republican into the White House, but it surely did not put in a conservative.

Jack Elbaum
Writer

During his tenure as president, Trump pursued some conservative policies – on taxes and judges, for example – but he also led the Republican Party away from its conservative roots in more than one area. Republicans were no longer a party of free trade and balanced budgets, of a strong American role in the world, of personal responsibility or morality. It was with this shift that conservatism – in the words of conservative author George F. Will – became "a persuasion without a party."

Even worse than the shift on many policy preferences was the shift on the very idea of what our country is supposed to be about. The Trump presidency has featured the reversal of the belief that we must be a nation of laws, not of men, to the belief that we are the nation of Trump, and any laws which interfere with his aspirations are unjust and can be subverted.

It is that reversal that led to the events on Jan. 6.

While a Trump presidency that came and went in four years would have seriously hurt the conservative cause and the Republican Party, the events of Jan. 6 destroyed them. In the aftermath of a free and fair election, Trump stoked anger among his supporters, falsely claiming that it was a "rigged" and "stolen" election. Consequently, a terrorist mob of his most fervent supporters – draped in the stars and stripes which have represented the pinnacle of freedom to millions in the United States and around the world – committed violence

in the U.S. Capitol. They even killed a Capitol Police officer, one of those brave souls who put their life on the line so we can live safely.

These domestic terrorists were instigated by the president of the United States – a president who has not been shy about flaunting the rule of law. Except, this time, the aim of him and his supporters' lawless attitudes was our democracy.

While Trump has perverted the Republican Party – stripping it away from its conservative roots – the path forward must be one of a return to true conservatism. If the conservative movement has any chance of survival, it must return to first principles – and that starts with students like us. Some elected Republicans still cherish those values – Sens. Ben Sasse, R-Neb., and Mitt Romney, R-Utah, among them – but the truth is that they have largely been abandoned. As a result, it is the job of the future leaders of the party to change course.

While most countries around the world are defined by their history, the United States is defined by its founding creed. It is the American creed that conservatives must wish to conserve. This creed – outlined in the Declaration of Independence, realized in the Constitution and explained in the Federalist Papers – posits that the purpose of government is to secure its citizens' natural rights, among them life, liberty and property.

This government should be limited in scope. Any government that attempts social engineering or economic planning is doomed to fail because "people are not inanimate objects like chess pieces." Using them for some "grand design" isn't successful or productive.

While the Constitution is the single most liberty-ensuring document in world history, politicians now see it

entirely as an obstacle to their supposedly "superior" vision of what America should be. Limited government within a constitutional framework is not in vogue with political leaders on any side of the aisle because it is simply not in their self-interest. If government downsized, those in power would be less relevant and then there would be no incentive for the people to donate to them. As government shrinks, those within it lose influence.

Government's increased power, and role in American life, has proved most detrimental – not only for the American people but for itself as an institution. Will, the conservative author, points out that as government's role in our daily lives has increased, public trust in government has plummeted.

The only way to effectuate this new vision for America and for conservatives is for the next generation of conservative leaders and students to embrace it. We are the ones who will be given the torch to continue the conservative ideal, and it is our job to defend it. In essence, the conservative ideal must be the American ideal that has sustained us through many dark days in history.

In order to do this, we must make a concerted effort. Former President Ronald Reagan said if freedom is not continually fought for, then "one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free." In the aftermath of an insurrection, these words are more relevant than ever. Over the past four years, some Republicans have aided in the destruction of our freedom. Over the next century, it is our job to fight mercilessly to preserve it.

—Jack Elbaum, a freshman majoring in international affairs and economics, is an opinions writer.

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Culture

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THE SCENE

INTERNATIONAL SPY MUSEUM'S CURATOR'S CORNER

Jan. 21 • Free • Online registration
Join a conversation with former FBI Assistant Head of Counterintelligence Frank Figliuzzi on what's at stake for the U.S. intelligence community.

VIRTUAL ANXO SIP AND PAINT

Jan. 20 • \$60 • Online registration
Get a pack of craft ANXO cider, canvas and paint delivered to your door for this event, hosted by Art Jamz.

RELEASED THIS WEEK:

"MAGIC MIRROR" AN ALBUM BY PEARL CHARLES

Decades of presidential inaugurations

ARIELLE BADER
ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

The presidential inauguration is a hallmark event for students, but this year most of GW – let alone the entire country – won't witness the event firsthand.

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and increased military presence after a violent mob of President Donald Trump's supporters invaded the U.S. Capitol earlier this month, President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris will be inaugurated in front of a limited crowd. The University also closed all offices and COVID-19 testing sites this week as the threat of violence from rioters remains, and the Foggy Bottom Campus is marked as a "green zone" restricted to residential students and businesses.

In lieu of a typical inauguration ceremony, The Hatchet dug through nearly a century of archives documenting past

events. The earliest front page coverage of a presidential inauguration from The Hatchet was in 1929, when a former Board of Trustees member appeared on radio to discuss then-President Herbert Hoover's ceremony. Some front pages, like ones for President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941 and President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1957, aren't available in The Hatchet's online database.

GW started to incorporate its own celebratory activities over the years – in 1949, GW held a parade honoring the day, and in 1993, the University hosted 1,300 people for its first-ever Inaugural Ball. Other issues presented more tense days, like antiwar protests that took shape at then-President Richard Nixon's second inauguration, or when people demonstrated Trump's presidency in 2016.



Foggy Bottom hotels opt to remain open for Inauguration Day

ANNA BOONE
CULTURE EDITOR

At least seven hotels in Foggy Bottom have chosen to remain open this week despite concerns of a second riot by pro-Trump insurrectionists around Inauguration Day.

As the National Guard takes up D.C. streets and campus closes for the inauguration, hotels like Hotels Eaton DC and The Line DC announced plans to close, and Airbnb vowed to cancel D.C. reservations this week following guidance from city officials urging people to stay home. District residents are also trending #ShutDownDC on social media amid fears of potential violence on Inauguration Day.

But in Foggy Bottom, Hotel Hive DC, The Statesman, Courtyard by Marriott, The Watergate and several others are still accepting reservations. Representatives from those hotels did not return requests for comment.

Outside of Foggy Bottom, several hotels owned by larger corporations, like Marriott, Hilton, Holiday Inn and Hyatt, will also remain open this week.

Jessica Comley, the general manager of Residence Inn by Marriott in Foggy Bottom, which is open for business this week, said the hotel has taken steps to ensure that guests who have made reservations for this week are not arriving for politically-charged reasons, but she did not explain how the hotel has verified guests' intent for traveling. She added that COVID-19 procedures like mask wearing would be enforced.

Representatives for Hotels Eaton DC and The Line DC, which are not in

Foggy Bottom, said they announced their plans to close this week after pro-Trump rioters stormed the U.S. Capitol earlier this month. Sheldon Scott, the global head of purpose at Eaton DC hotel, said the risk of violence and spread of COVID-19 would have made operations potentially unsafe for guests and workers.

"With the threat of impending violence, and the mayor's travel ban, as well as militarized approach to securing downtown, we just don't think it's safe [to remain open], mainly for our employees," Scott said.

Eaton DC, which was also shut down during the riot on the Capitol, closed Friday and will reopen this upcoming Friday. Scott said he is confident the feedback the hotel will get for closing this week will be positive but if there is any negative feedback, that the hotel is "open to the discourse."

"I'm sure that there's some general public backlash in people who are not necessarily connected to our communities in that way," Scott said. "But you can't be a place that is focused on creating a platform for historically marginalized voices and untold stories and create an opportunity for them to be further oppressed by another group."

The Line DC, which was open during the initial Capitol riot, released a statement Thursday announcing its plans to close from Saturday to Wednesday.

But unlike Eaton DC, The Line DC is allowing a small group of existing reservations for people "well known" to the hotel, including "members of a non-profit relief organization who are long-term partners of the

hotel, a small private event for D.C. locals that was previously scheduled...and a handful of other corporate clients of LINE DC" to stay, according to its statement.

The hotel wrote in the statement guests have been "thoroughly vetted" to ensure they aren't connected to the Capitol riot or hate groups, but the statement did not specify how they were vetted.

One large company jumping on the bandwagon is Airbnb and its daughter company, HotelTonight.

The company released a statement Wednesday that it will cancel all reservations in the D.C. metro area through the week of the inauguration. Airbnb will refund guests who had made a reservation of that nature and reimburse the Airbnb hosts for the money they would have made, according to the statement.

The statement cited warnings of "various local, state and federal officials" calling Americans to steer clear of the Capitol as its main reason for canceling reservations. It also acknowledged "reports" of the presence of armed militias and known hate groups that are expected to cause violence in D.C. tomorrow.

Airbnb added that it has "identified" any active accounts of people who were associated with violence at the Capitol two weeks ago or are active members of hate groups through media and law enforcement sources and banned those people from using Airbnb or its affiliates.

"We are continuing our work to ensure hate group members are not part of the Airbnb community," Airbnb said in its statement.

'Dogs for Democracy' and 'Biden Bubbly': Inauguration food and drink specials around D.C.

ARIELLE OSTRY
REPORTER

In-person dining is closed right now, but there's a bout of takeout specials to ring in Inauguration Day.

From "Dogs for Democracy" at St. Anselm to the "Biden Bubbly" at Capo Italian deli, eateries across D.C. are offering deals and specials to mark Wednesday's historic occasion. Here's a rundown of novelty foods and drinks from around the District to spice up your Inauguration Day celebration:

'The Biden's Bobby' at Fight Club DC

Located in the heart of Eastern Market less than a mile away from the U.S. Capitol, Fight Club is bringing back "The Biden's Bobby" sandwich (\$14) through the inauguration to welcome President-elect Joe Biden. The sandwich pays homage to Biden's love for a Thanksgiving leftover sandwich and includes thickly sliced turkey, rich sausage stuffing and a dash of cranberry sauce. You can also order the "VP Melt" (\$15), a tuna melt for the country's new vice president who corrected a fellow senator's tuna melt technique last year.

Fight Club DC is also offering a themed-drink option. Pair your sandwich with a "Fix It Juice" (\$14) – a spiked cold brew with orange bitters and a spritz of lemon that's new hints

at the new administration's road ahead. *Fight Club DC. 623 Pennsylvania Ave. SE. Outdoor dining and pickup only.*

'Madam VP Heritage Bowl' at Immigrant Food

Founded and led by immigrants, Immigrant Food is just a couple blocks off campus and emphasizes a connection between cultural identity and foods.

To honor the first ever female vice president to be sworn into office, the restaurant is adding a dish to its revamped menu called the "Madam VP Heritage Bowl" (\$15). The bowl's creation was inspired by traditional Indian and Jamaican flavors, paying homage to Vice President-elect Kamala Harris' roots. It includes coconut-milk carried chicken, chickpeas, potatoes, pineapples, plantains and spicy peppers and is served over turmeric rice and baby spinach. Chef Enrique Limardo, the creative mind behind the restaurant's eclectic menu options, is known for his fusion bowls and considers them a reflection of America.

Immigrant Food. 1701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW. Fusion bowls range from \$13 to \$15. Outdoor dining, pickup and delivery options available.

'Biden Bubbly' at Capo Italian Deli

Capo Italian Deli is launching a new addi-

tion to its line of take-home drinks called the "Biden Bubbly." The bottle of champagne features patriotic artwork showcasing the soon-to-be president and his running mate holding their joint hands aloft in victory, but also masked up.

If you are interested in buying a "Biden Bubbly" or a different politically-themed cocktail package from Capo Italian Deli, such as a "Fauci Pouchy" (\$14), you can find more information and drink options on its website.

Capo Italian Deli. 715 Florida Ave. NW. Pickup and delivery through Grubhub only.

Dinner deals and 'Dogs for Democracy' at St. Anselm

St. Anselm, a restaurant near Union Market, will dish out a "Beef-steak dinner package" (\$175), which serves two and includes a 32-ounce Poterhouse steak, a jumbo shrimp cocktail, endives salad, smoked trout rilletes and two St. Anselm aprons. Its "Snack Pack" (\$85) serves two and comes stocked with meats, cheeses, spreads and charcuterie fixings. And its "Dogs for Democracy" (\$60) special serves two and comes with four pork hot dogs and brioche buns with chili, crispy bacon, pimento cheese and coleslaw.

St. Anselm. 1250 5th St. NE. Outdoor dining, pickup and delivery by Caviar.



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
vs. VCU
Jan. 20 | 4 p.m.
Women's basketball looks for its second conference win against the Rams.



MEN'S BASKETBALL
vs. Dayton
Jan. 20 | 7 p.m.
The Colonials are set for a rematch against the Flyers after falling to them Sunday.

NUMBER CRUNCH

7.5

The number of turnovers women's basketball averaged in the last four games played, down from the 17.1 turnovers averaged in the first seven games.

Freshmen on men's and women's basketball adapt to expanded team roles

ROMAN BOBEK
STAFF WRITER

Despite an unorthodox men's and women's basketball season, freshmen have become staples in both squads' lineups.

On the women's side, center Ali Brigham, forward Caranda Perea and guards Aurea Gingras and Piper Macke average a combined 21.2 points – about one-third of the team's points per game. On the men's side, guards Lincoln Ball and Tyler Brelford and center Noel Brown have stepped onto the court for a combined 33.5 minutes per game, with Ball and Brelford finding spots in the starting rotation.

After transitioning from high school to college, all six interviewed freshmen – Brigham, Perea, Gingras, Ball, Brelford and Brown – said they needed to adjust to the speed and strength of the college game.

"There's a big difference from being 18, then being 22 years old," Perea said. "The physicality of the game was definitely a big adjustment."

Perea said basketball has been one of her and her teammates' major outlets as players remain sequestered together during the COVID-19 pandemic. She said college basketball has a bigger role in her life than high school basketball did, and the pandemic has emphasized the sport in her

life even more.

"With the pandemic, you're more involved with everything, and you're around basketball more," Perea said. "You think about it more because that's the only thing that you get to do to keep us safe as well."

Perea said her will to win and her high basketball IQ have benefited the team this season. Gingras, who has played minutes at the point and averages 23.5 minutes on the court, said she brings "energy on defense," and her ability to handle the ball has provided another set of hands to run the offense.

Brigham said her 6-foot-4 frame gives the Colonials a height advantage inside and her ability to communicate on the defensive end can assist in coverage. Brigham added that she wants to continue improving on finishing her close range shots.

"Especially just finishing around the basket, there's just a lot of opportunities that I've had that should have gone in," she said. "And I think that comes with strength and just having more games under our belt."

The trio have already made an impact on the court. Brigham has been in the starting lineup seven times this season, and Gingras and Perea average more than 19 minutes a game. Against Richmond, the trio combined for more than

half of the team's points, and Brigham netted 18 as GW collected its first road win against George Mason.

The freshmen have also leaned on the upperclassmen for guidance. The trio said they look toward veteran players, like graduate student guards Jasmine Whitney and Sydney Zambrotta and redshirt junior forward Neila Luma, for basketball advice and support as they make the transition from high school ball to college.

"[Whitney] has been a really amazing mentor for me as a freshman point guard coming in," Gingras said. "She's been there every step of the way to give me support, give me confidence. We watch film together, so it's been really special having her be willing to do that for me."

On the men's team, Brown said he has looked to graduate student guard Brandon Leftwich as a more experienced teammate to talk about games, practice and the process of growing and making the right on-court decisions throughout the season.

"I'm still learning how to use my patience on the court," Brown said. "When I get the ball on the short roll in the paint, I'm making a smart decision and not rushing myself has probably been the biggest one. We work on it a lot in practice."



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GW ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT
With regular forms of contact no longer permitted under COVID-19 protocols, basketball has taken on a more important role in the lives of freshmen student athletes.

Ball, who has started five contests, said head coach Jamion Christian has big expectations of what each newcomer can achieve, but he understands that the college game is still new to the trio.

"He knows that we're trying to figure it out and learn and that we're freshmen," he said. "He expects a lot from us, but he knows that we're going to have to learn and make those mistakes to learn, and he goes about in a very encouraging way."

Brelford and Ball are averaging more than

10 minutes a game, and Brown averages six minutes a contest. Together, the freshmen average 5.1 points and 5.4 rebounds per game. Brelford recorded a career-high eight points and five rebounds in the Colonials' loss to VCU Wednesday.

The freshmen said they've made strides this season in their individual play and their ability to keep up with the pace of the game. Brelford added that he has improved his defense to boost his minutes on the court. The guard earned his first start of the season against Dayton Sunday.

"Especially as a freshman, the only thing that's really going to get you on the court is your defense, for the most part," Brelford said. "I knew for me to get on the court, I was going to keep my guy in front of me and not be a defensive liability and show the coaches that I belong on the court."

The squads will return to action Wednesday. The women's team will take on VCU at 4 p.m., while the men's team will play Dayton at 7 p.m.

—Nuria Diaz and Will Margerum contributed reporting.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GW ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT
The Colonials picked up their first Atlantic 10 win Sunday against George Mason.

Women's basketball stomps George Mason for first A-10 win

NURIA DIAZ
STAFF WRITER

Within the first minute of Sunday's matchup between women's basketball and George Mason, redshirt junior guard Gabby Nikitinaite nailed a jumper to put GW on the board. The squad would never give up its lead, catapulting it as high as 28 points.

The Colonials (3-7, 1-4 A-10) bulldozed the Patriots (3-9, 0-5 A-10) by 20 points, snapping a four-game losing skid. The 67-47 win marks the team's first Atlantic 10 victory and first win on the road.

Freshman center Ali Brigham led the floor in scoring and notched 18 points. She tacked on three rebounds and a career-high three blocks. Redshirt junior forward Neila Luma and Nikitinaite, the redshirt junior guard, followed behind.

Nikitinaite and freshman forward Caranda Perea ripped seven boards apiece, while graduate student guard Jasmine Whitney dished six assists.

Senior guard Marika Korpinen led the Patriots with 13 points on 40 percent shooting, including three of the team's five three-pointers. Sophomore guard Jordan Wakefield notched seven points and eight rebounds to lead her team on the boards.

GW shot at a 41.2 percent clip, hitting one triple in each quarter. George Mason sank 36 percent of its attempts, including a 5-of-20 clip from

the three-point line. The Colonials dominated the paint, netting 38 points and allowing their opponent to score just 20 points inside.

"Ali and Caranda did a great job in the interior, and our guards did a really good job of doubling and being able to help when necessary," Rizzotti said. "It really neutralized their post."

George Mason turned the ball over 20 times – eight of which were forced – throughout the contest, and GW capitalized with 21 points off turnovers. GW kept its ballhandling tight, turning the ball over a season-low five times and dishing out 14 assists for a 2.8 assist to turnover ratio.

Redshirt sophomore forward Mayowa Taiwo earned the start after coming off the bench in the last six games. The forward nabbed four points and four rebounds in 10 minutes, but she was helped off the court after a lower body injury in the second quarter and didn't return.

"I put her in it for the three and told her to just be aggressive rebounding the basketball, and she was in there every possession," Rizzotti said. "She was making things happen. I think when you score points off of hustle, it lifts the spirit, the energy of the team, and it allows everything else to work better as well."

The Colonials jumped out to an early 10-2 lead in the first five minutes of the first quarter with four different players scoring points in the paint. A jumper

from sophomore center Jazmyn Doster snapped the Colonials' six-point scoring streak, but GW constructed another 7-0 run capped off by a triple by Nikitinaite to boost the lead to 11 points.

"It definitely helps that Gabby [Nikitinaite] made a perimeter shot early," Rizzotti said. "Sometimes it makes everybody relax when you see that first one go in. I thought we did a very good job at mixing it up and taking shots from the two versus always taking threes."

The Patriots opened the second quarter on a 4-1 scoring tilt, but GW found its footing again and four players combined to score eight straight points. Korpinen fired back with back-to-back triples on Patriot possessions and Doster added a layup to come within four points of GW's lead.

A triple from freshman guard Aurea Gingras extended the advantage to 28 points – the highest it would reach that afternoon. The Patriots strung together an eight-point run to end the game, but it wouldn't be enough to take down the visiting team. The Colonials walked out of EagleBank Arena with a 67-47 victory.

"The biggest takeaway is that when we control what we can – which is our effort, rebounding the ball, our competitiveness, to know the scout, run our plays right, take the right shots – that we're pretty good," Rizzotti said.

The Colonials are back on the road Wednesday to take on VCU. Tipoff is set for 4 p.m.

Behind the bench: Meet the managers of women's basketball

BELLE LONG
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Normally tasked with packing for travel games and assisting with practice drills, women's basketball managers are now tested regularly for COVID-19 and sequestered to residence halls outside of team activities.

The squad's two team managers, senior Maya Lilly and junior Matab El-Hassan, said they've needed to maintain strict schedules to keep equipment sanitized and separated to help the program stay healthy throughout the season. They said despite the tight rules this season around the pandemic, they've been drawn to support the team because of their love for the sport and the tight-knit relationships they formed.

"We have to just double check the other schools, so making sure that all the sanitizing equipment is packed with us, additional masks, gloves, all that stuff," Lilly said. "The girls have their own personal masks, so it's a lot more to keep track of. I would say that comes out more in travel than anything else."

Prior to the pandemic, managers on the women's basketball team focused on organizing equipment, packing uniforms and travel necessities and tracking statistics during games. They also ensured the personal needs of

players, like hydration during practice and games, are met every day.

Lilly, who has been a manager of the team since her freshman year, said they also travel with the squad for every road game during the regular season.

But once the pandemic hit, the team's managers now have to abide by stricter sanitization and equipment policies along with their previous responsibilities. The managers said they separate all laundry and complete it on a strict schedule for student-athletes to have fresh equipment to wear for practice and games.

Lilly added that towels are traditionally provided by the hosting team. But this season, managers need to pack separate towels that are color coordinated for each athlete to prevent sharing, she said.

"The packing amount that we had before, which is already a lot if you imagine what a basketball team would need on the road, is maybe doubled, or even tripled," Lilly said.

The pandemic has also dwindled the number of managers available. Prior to the start of the season, head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said only one manager was on campus. She added that graduate assistant coaches Ariel Stephenson, Sarah Overcash and Anna Savino – who was a team manager turned player –

stepped in to fill in gaps.

"We only have one right now," Rizzotti said prior to the season. "They're really able to help us with setting up for practice and making sure that the film is ready."

Lilly said she just arrived to campus in January and was able to slot back into her managerial role with El-Hassan for her final semester at GW.

Just like the rest of the Tier 1 personnel, managers try to limit interaction with people outside the team's "bubble" and get tested regularly.

"We aren't allowed to interact with people outside of the team," El-Hassan said. "We have this bubble right now, and just not going out, just being respectful of rules in terms of the pandemic itself."

Managers are compensated financially for their work, but for El-Hassan and Lilly, the job also gives them unlimited access to a sport they've grown to love. In high school, Lilly was a four-year varsity basketball player, and she turned down multiple opportunities to play in college to come to GW.

"I get a ton of enjoyment just about being around basketball," Lilly said. "And the coaching staff does a fantastic job of trying to keep me in the action a little bit, just like feeling a part of a team. These last four years have meant a lot to me."



FILE PHOTO BY ERIC LEE
This year's women's basketball managers have more responsibilities to handle, like keeping athletic equipment and clothing separated and sanitized per COVID-19 protocols.