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COVID-19 procedures put in place Multiple students quarantined due to positive test results on campus

By Abby Epstein
News Editor

Two positive COVID-19 tests have been detected since the campus reopened and welcomed students back.

Both people with positive cases were put into isolation immediately following the school's COVID-19 procedure.

One of the positive cases was an RA in North Campus Midrise. All the RA's had to go into quarantine due to being in close contact with the positive case. It was sent out in an email from residence life to North Campus residents.

"We will be doing random testing of residential students every week, like five to 10 percent and student athletes will start being randomly tested later this semester," said Emily Rosenthal, the coordinator of the Wellness Center who is handling contact tracing.

Before coming to campus, all students who would be living on campus were required to get a COVID-19 test which had to come back negative before they could move in.

Some students were asked to come two weeks early to quarantine if they were coming from a state that was on the Connecticut

travel advisory list. The students had to have a negative COVID-19 test in order to go into quarantine.

Quarantine wasn't too bad, although I feel they could have handled it a little different, like by testing us once we got to campus, that way we wouldn't have to quarantine for so long when we were negative," said exercise science major Sam Bryant, a freshman.

For the first seven days of being on campus residential students are required to fill out the symptom tracker, which asks if a person has had close contact to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and if the person has any symptoms.

"Students who are asked to quarantine or students who are asked to isolate, they complete a different symptom monitor every day," said Rosenthal.

If any students test positive during the random testing, Griffin Health, who has partnered with Southern, will notify the student and the COVID-19 campus coordinator.

"If someone does test positive, they are required to isolate for a minimum of ten days," said Rosenthal.

Then she said she must get in contact with the person who has the positive case to do contact tracing. "Contract tracing is when



Signs around campus help educate students to the symptoms of COVID-19 and precautions to take.

PHOTO | ABBY EPSTEIN

I contact that person and I find out what they have been up to," said Rosenthal. "Basically, we want to find all their close contacts two days prior to symptom onset or two days prior to their positive test results."

Close contact is someone who has been within 6 feet of the confirmed case for 15 minutes or more.

"I contact all those people who are affiliated with Southern, so students, faculty or staff and let

them know they have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19. Then we ask that those people to quarantine for 14 days from their last exposure with the confirmed case," said Rosenthal.

The North Campus Townhouses are being used for residential students if they need to be quarantined or isolated.

"They are welcome to quarantine or isolate at home if they wish, but if

they are not able to, we provide them with a place on campus," said Rosenthal.

If someone is feeling sick or feels like they have symptoms, they can get tested at the health center on campus.

"We do ask that everyone does a daily self-screening which was sent out in an email with information about containment policy and a short video with a lot of good information also," said Rosenthal.

The email was sent out on behalf of Patrick Dilger on Aug. 28, informing students about who to reach out to about COVID-19. There is also a link that gives examples of different scenarios and what to do in each of those scenarios.

"Everyone should always be checking for symptoms," said Rosenthal. "We do not want people coming to campus if they are not feeling well."

Virus changes campus

By Abby Epstein
News Editor

Wearing masks, online classes and disinfectant wipes were changes made due to COVID-19 but are starting to become the new norm.

"Safety issues, delivery of classes and the day-to-day interactions on campus have been the three major changes on campus," said President Joe Bertolino.

A few safety issues that have been added are: students and faculty must wear a mask on campus, the number of students in

classes and having students wipe down their work area when they enter a class.

The residence halls have also been taking extra precautions to ensure the safety of their residents.

"One of the major changes is you have to wear a mask everywhere, the only place a mask doesn't have to be worn is in your dorm room," said RA Lily McCarthy, a junior.

All dorms require residents to wear masks, except for in their room, only two people are allowed in the elevator, and guests must be students

who live on campus.

"Right now, it is all about masks and social distancing," said RA Abdel Ben-Toukour a junior.

McCarthy works in Brownell Hall, where they have changed the traffic pattern of students coming in and out of the building.

"There is one-way traffic through the doors, so the entrance in the parking lot is the way in and the exit by the stairs is the way out," said McCarthy.

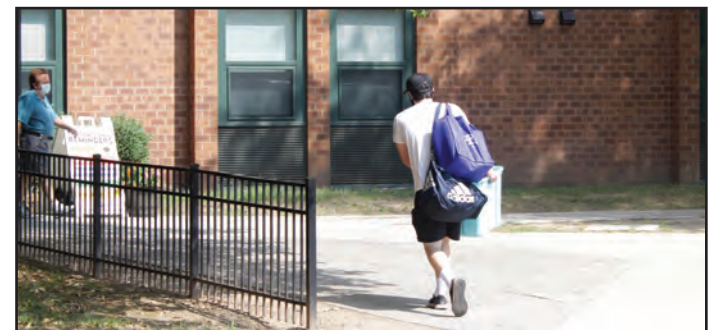
Ben-Toukour works in Chase Hall, which has community bathrooms. He said the custodians

have been sanitizing and cleaning every day and have also been sanitizing the hallways.

Not only are there new protocols the residents must follow but there are also some directed at the RA's.

"Usually at the desk there is usually a DA and an RA sitting together but now the DA can sit at the desk and then the RA has to remain in the back office or somewhere they can remain six feet apart," said Ben-Toukour.

See Changes Page 2



A student moves into North Campus-Midrise.

PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Students move into the dorms

By Sofia Rositani
Arts & Entertainment Editor

A typical move-in day is a busy and exciting day for students, but this year it looked a bit different. Due to COVID-19, move-in was staggered and socially distant.

Instead of moving in on Aug. 24, students had to move their belongings in from Aug. 17-21. So, the only things students moved in were their essentials on Aug. 24 and 25.

All residence halls have been secured with social distancing measures and sanitizing areas. A student must always wear their mask in the hall unless they are in their room. For residence halls, no guests are permitted unless they are residents themselves.

On Aug. 21, President Joe Bertolino, sent out an email

about COVID-19 cases on campus and how they are preventing the spread of the virus.

"As part of this planning, residential students were required to submit a negative COVID-19 test taken within the two weeks prior to moving on campus," said Bertolino in the email.

Communication disorders major Malisa Khamphouy, a sophomore, said she thought the university did a very good job with the safety protocols such as wearing a mask and keeping everything sanitized.

"I feel that it's going to be good for them because being able to get out of their house, especially first year students, and they will get an experience living by themselves," Khamphouy said.

See Dorms Page 2



Clear dividers put up on tables in the Student Center in order to enforce social distancing between students.

PHOTO | ABBY EPSTEIN

Professors can reserve outdoor classrooms

By Jessica Guerrucci
Editor-in-Chief

When Political Science Professor Jonathan Wharton brought up the idea of having classes outdoors, he said it was laughed off – but now looking around campus, students can see desk chairs set up outside.

“I had been frustrated for years that there was no conducive space for teaching,” said Wharton. “I taught at a variety of different universities and there was picnic tables, chairs and teachers already teaching outside.”

Before COVID-19 changed the ways colleges operate, Wharton said he often taught outdoors at his prior college, Stevens Institute of Technology in New Jersey, but when he arrived at Southern, he could not find space to do it.

“I tried on the stairs, I tried on the benches, but they’re bolted to the ground, there’s no tables that are moveable,” said Wharton. “Where can you possibly do it?”

Twenty desks chairs can now be seen set up outside of Morrill Hall and 17 between Earl Hall and the Student Center, and while it is not quite what Wharton had in mind, but he said it is a start.

“What I was kind of

hoping for was picnic tables or more Adirondack chairs,” he said, “but maybe that will be in the future.”

In Lot 1, the third outdoor classroom is situated under the solar panels, and more similar to Wharton’s vision, students bring their own chairs and it fits about 30 spaces.

According to Brad Crerar, director of the Adanti Student Center, faculty will have the ability to reserve the spaces for any amount of time from a single day to the entire semester through a reservation software on the student center website.

Like other classrooms, Crerar said everyone will still have to wear masks and practice social distancing. The chairs and the desktops are also cleaned daily.

“I always thought outdoor classes were always much more interesting,” said Crerar. “I’ve seen professors over the years do outdoor classrooms and they seem to have a better connection with the students.”

President Joe Bertolino, who is holding some of his classes outside this semester, said he thought the idea of outdoor classes was great so he had asked facilities to locate spaces on campus that would make the most sense to hold classes.

“I had assumed that folks would want to be outside as much as possible,” said

Bertolino. “We also took the time to order a bunch of picnic tables.”

On the first day back to school, Bertolino said he held his class outside in front of Earl Hall and it was a beautiful day for it.

“My class is in the late afternoon and it was perfect, and everyone was able to wear their masks and spread out and participate,” he said. “It went well.”

In the case that students do not want to go outside, Bertolino said classes still have an assigned indoor meeting space and it has to be something that the whole class agrees to doing.

On Southern’s Twitter account, a poll was posted asking students if they would be willing to participate in outdoor classes and 83 percent said yes.

Business administration major Lindsay Cull, a senior, who sat in one of the empty outdoor classrooms on her laptop, said she thinks the idea of having outdoor classes makes sense.

“For right now, yeah [it makes sense],” said Cull. “It’s enjoyable to not be confined to classrooms.”

She said the full classes would be a concern and the inability to adequately social distance in those rooms, so she said outdoor is a reasonable alternative. “I like being outdoors,”

said Cull. “So, it’s a nice change of scenery and it’s laid back and calm.”

For Business major Edward Garcia, a sophomore, he said being outdoors is better than nothing or working from home.

Accounting major William Arroyo, a sophomore, agreed, saying the biggest issue would likely come to be the weather.

“It’s a nice idea until the winter when it starts getting cold, but I think it’s a pretty

good idea cause you’re outdoors; you’re not stuck inside a classroom.”

While being indoors was not a big concern for Garcia, he said everyone reacts differently to COVID-19 and outside can be seen as a safer option.

“Some people might, not overreact, but will be more upset about [COVID-19],” he said. “It depends on how people feel.”

Despite the idea coming to life as a result of COVID-19, Bertolino said it is a possibility that students

could see more outdoor classrooms in the future.

While some professors already took their students outside in previous years, he said it opens up an opportunity and makes it more comfortable for professors who have not thought to do outdoor classes before.

“I think a lot of things that we’ve done during COVID may prove to be some that we do a little bit more of in the future,” said Bertolino. “Whether it’s online or outside.”



PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

Outside of Morrill desks have been set up six feet apart for an outdoor classroom.

Changes

Continued from Page 1

Students have been having to adapt to the new rules and regulations in the residence halls and around campus.

“All of the safety protocols have certainly had an impact on life on campus and the experience,” said Bertolino.

Following and learning all the new safety protocols are taking students and faculty time to get used too.

“The biggest adjustment has been all the new protocols we’re doing, which are obviously to keep people safe, so we’re not upset with them, but are just trying to adjust and adapt to them,” said education major Ariana Taylor, a sophomore.

Most classes were in person until COVID-19 hit, which changed the format of how professors teach with most classes this fall being online.

“The faculty and staff have done amazing work

throughout the course of the spring and summer and I think folks have really adjusted well,” said Bertolino.

With having classes online, not as many students need to come to campus. According to Bertolino, the residence hall capacity went from 2,500 to 1,500.

The university is hoping no more changes will have to be made, but Bertolino said if the university suddenly needs to go online, it is prepared to do so.

“I feel like being in the school we are in, they really are trying with all these regulations to keep us safe and we have the people here to enforce that,” said Taylor.

The main goal of the university is to keep the students and faculty safe, in hopes of staying on campus until Thanksgiving.

“All I’m asking folks to do is to follow the rules and we’re going to do our best and my hope is that we’ll get through this,” said Bertolino. “I’m really proud of this community.”

the resources on campus are still beneficial to residential students.

Marketing communications major Domonique Taylor, a senior, said that online classes are not for her.

“I am a hands-on learner,” said Taylor, “and I don’t really care for online classes so it’s kind of been a struggle for me.”

Even though there has not been a huge spike in COVID-19 cases on campus yet, Palumberi said he thinks there will be one soon.

“Depending on how well students keep to the protocols and rules of COVID life engagement, if things are well followed no, I don’t think we will get shutdown,” Palumberi said. “However, with how people tend to be with listening, we may be shut down early.”

Continued from Page 1

While Khamphouy thinks the school is doing well with these procedures she thinks the school may shut down earlier than expected due to what is happening at other universities, such as Western Connecticut State University.

Another student on campus, communications major, Leo Palumberi, a junior, thought move in day was “well organized” and very professional. He also thinks that the protocols and procedures made during the move in went well.

“I feel like changes might have needed to be made because of in light of other schools the problems they are having, but things still have been taken well care of,” Palumberi said.

While on-campus students still have online classes, Palumberi said

See Page 3 for more photos of Move-in Day

Campus switches food service

By Sam Tapper
Managing Editor

After 19 years, Chartwells, the food provider on campus, ended their contract with the school over the summer. As students return, they can find a new look and array of options for dining on-campus.

“It wasn’t really that [Chartwells] pulled out of a contract,” Vice President for Student Affairs Tracy Tyree said, “but as it was time to renew the contract, the business conditions of COVID were very difficult, and we weren’t able then to enter a new contract, in a place that we could kind of be in a business agreement that we could agree upon.”

At the beginning of August, the food service and facilities management company, Sodexo, began operating as Southern’s on-campus dining food service provider with an initial contract term of two years, replacing Chartwells, who had been in the same role at Southern since 2001.

According to Tyree, the university’s long-term contract with Chartwells had ended before last year,

and from there, the two parties were on a “year-to-year renewal.”

While Tyree said this was strictly a “business decision” for both parties, she added that COVID-19 was related to the overall circumstance.

“I do think that [calling this COVID-19-based] is fair to say,” said Tyree. “If it were ‘business as usual’ it would have been more business as usual, but it was the circumstances of the business part of the partnership that led to a difficulty then to renew.”

The process of finding a new food service provider was not necessarily difficult, as there are only two other major national food service providers in addition to Chartwells: Sodexo and Aramark.

The university looked into both companies as a replacement for Chartwells, but after review and conversation with other Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, Sodexo, who also provides food service at Western Connecticut State University and Central Connecticut State University, was deemed the best fit.

“We had done a bid five years ago, and based on that experience, Sodexo was in a better place than Aramark to be able to match our model,” Tyree said.

One of the bigger question marks in the process of this transition was the job status of the former Chartwells employees. According to Tyree as well as Sodexo’s District Manager Mike Ward, the workers from Chartwells were hired back by Sodexo, with only a handful electing not to continue their employment for reasons not directly related to the transition.

Despite the tight timeframe of when Sodexo first started to when students arrived back on campus dining services are up and running, with new stations, food options, layout and design.

While there are changes to Connecticut Hall related to COVID-19, many of the design changes come in the Adanti Student Center food court, as walls surrounding the various food stations have been repainted and remodeled to provide a more warm and inviting environment.

“When I shop, I shop with my eyes first, I’ve got to like what I see,” said Ward. “We thought that [the atmosphere] is just one piece of the image. Now, the aesthetics need to compliment the food, [aesthetic] doesn’t make the program. The quality of food and the products that we use have to be as inviting and as high-quality as the environment itself.”

Ward, who has been with Sodexo for 20 years, said overall, despite the quick turnaround, the transition has been a smooth one. Even though Sodexo is still adjusting, Ward said there are more new services coming soon to make the experience better for students while also remaining safe, such as an option to order online.

“We’ve got some work to do to get our programs to the level that we expect of them, we’ve got some new services that we intend to roll out, but technology is kind of a baseline for a couple of those things,” Ward said.

“We will have basically a mobile app where students will have an opportunity to pre-order their meals from the Student Center, in particular. If you’re coming in and you want a sandwich from Subconnection, you’ll be able to go onto an app and order that, pay for it, pick it up and away you go.”

The Student Center still offers sandwiches, rice bowls, and burgers. However, once students were able to try the food, many agreed Sodexo’s product tastes better.

“I think [the food] is good, it’s something different from last year,” said sport management major Cam Peters, a junior. “It’s better. It’s just something new, something that I’m not used to, so I like it better.”

Tyree praised the work of the Sodexo staff, from their readiness to adapt to COVID-19 protocols to their interaction with the student body so far. Ultimately, Tyree said Sodexo will be a great addition to the university and its mission as a social justice institution, to which Ward agrees.

“Social justice is one side of that, sustainability, environmental awareness, those types of things,” Ward said. “I’ve been here a month, I’ve already reached out to two departments on campus: diversity and sustainability. We’ve had some really robust conversations about how we can partner with the various organizations on campus or the various departments on campus where we can complement efforts. Our ambition is to become a part of the campus, not to be just the food service provider.”

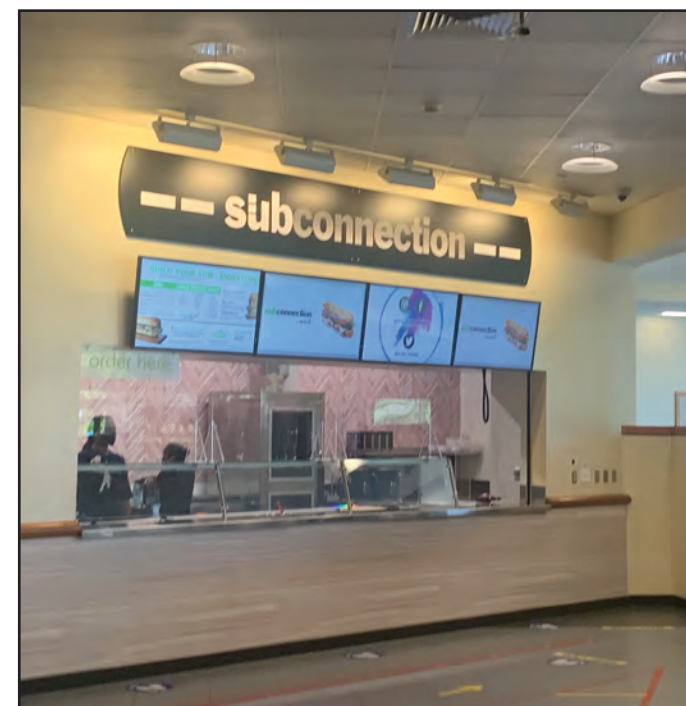


PHOTO | SAM TAPPER

Subconnection, one of new dining places in the Adanti Student Center.

PHOTO

Move-in Day: welcome back to campus



North Campus Midrise welcomes residents on Aug. 24

By Roma Rositani
Photo Editor

Students were welcomed back onto campus on Aug. 24, after a long awaited return.

Along with their arrival, they were also greeted with big changes to the Adanti Student Center, introducing an entire new look and feel.

Staff now serves students behind the protective plexiglass, and arrows on the floor to direct the proper ways to go and for a better flow of traffic to minimize contact with other students.

Along with the new look and feel, the Adanti Student Center is offering new food, there are tacos, quesadilas and rice bowls, that have been upgraded since the previous semester, for example the Tres Habaneros. And salads are offered at Bowlful. COVID-19 has brought greater precautions, the campus is plastered with signs of safety telling students to wear their masks and wash their hands.



Signs are scattered around dorms and campus as a reminder to take precautions.

See Page 1 for more about Move-in Day.



Adanti Student Center introduces Tres Habaneros and Subconnection to the new and improved cafeteria.



Bowlful, a new and healthy alternative to the other new options in the cafeteria.



The welcome sign on the foot bridge over Fitch Street bridge greets students returning to campus on Move-in Day, featuring Otus the Owl on the banner.



Residents move their belongings into North Campus.



Taking the proper precautions as they move in.



Friends moving into their dorm.

Student behavior will be catalyst for semester

By Jessica Guerrucci
Editor-in-Chief

The first day of school is usually filled with excitement and firsts. But it felt and looked quite different last week when students returned to campus.

Some will not even have to step foot on campus this semester as COVID-19 moves all their classes online. Only now, since the school shut down in March, this will not be a

feeling of complete chaos and fear, because now students expect it.

Masks have become a norm in the world and seeing them on campus is not any different. We can only hope that everyone respects the rules regarding wearing them indoors and outdoors, but unfortunately it would be unrealistic to believe everything will operate perfectly and according to plan.

In an email, President Joe Bertolino stated,

“Simply put, all of us have invested too much in the success of this new semester to see it thrown away by the actions of an uncaring and selfish few.” That is really what it comes down to.

This semester is different than the last spent online because it has been planned out for several months, but there is always going to be those “few,” and no one can say how detrimental it will be if too many people do not follow the rules.

Generally, from what I have seen the first week back at campus, students are willing to comply and follow mask rules without issue.

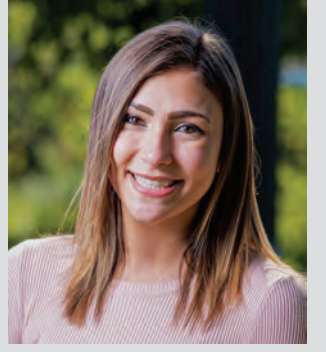
There are also issues because students are wearing masks incorrectly at times. But, at least they are trying.

Ultimately, for students, faculty and staff, everyone just has to believe that campus will be able to operate in the most “new” normal way it can and that “doing your part,” no

matter how insignificant it may seem, actually matters a lot.

Social distancing, masks and online classes are not, and never will be the dream college experience, but for now it will have to do if we ever want to get back to what it used to be.

Even if it means goodbyes to parties, wild sports games and a campus filled with students, know that everyone needs to be patient and respectful as we navigate this semester.



These are the opinions of The Southern News Editorial Staff

Class may need to pivot fully online

By Essence Boyd
Online Editor

The university needs to be ready to move back all-online in case COVID-19 takes over campus. However, the students are not ready.

After campus closed in March, students had a week to adjust before returning to class virtually.

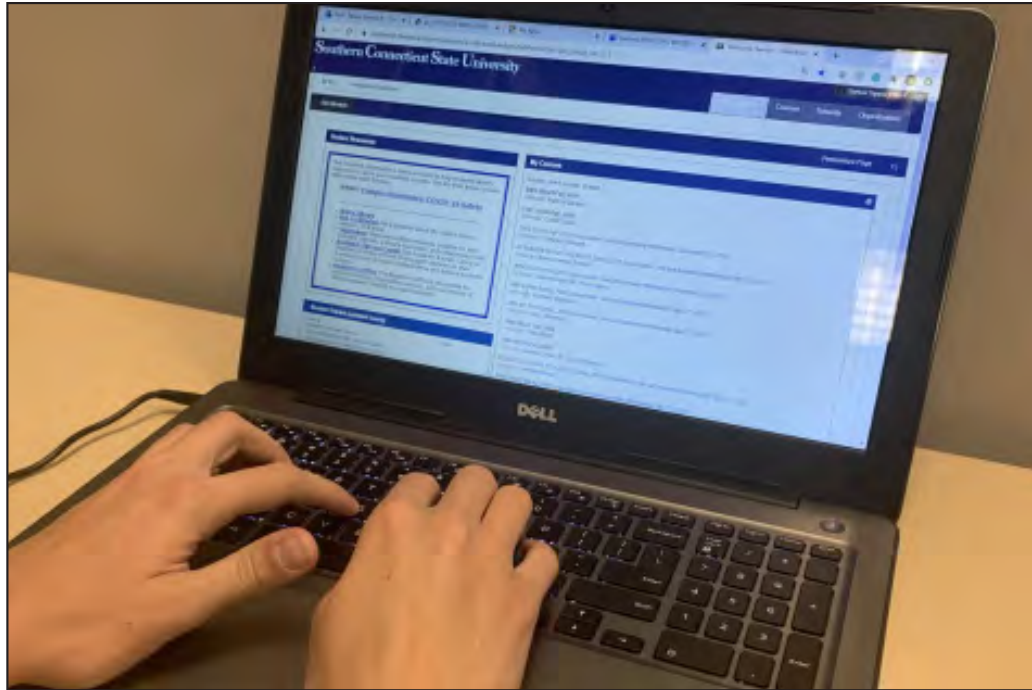
Although professors seemed understanding and willing to cooperate with students, this was not the case for most. In-person classes became remote calls and the amount of assignments due each week seemed to double just as fast as COVID-19 cases.

From being forced home and into immediate quarantine, students faced mental and financial challenges that hindered their ability to perform well in class.

As a university, I can say that Southern did the best it could with the amount of time and resources they had when it came to moving everything online; however, in many areas it was simply not enough.

Virtual learning was not only straining on students but professors as well. As we all know now, navigating virtual learning is very confusing, especially when it comes meeting face-to-face.

From classes being hacked to sessions timing out by the end of the spring semester, face-to-face classes had become a thing of the past and the struggle



A student logging onto Blackboard where online class assignments are posted.

of meeting online was eliminated by the challenge that learning class material on your own raised.

Students went from meeting with their professors every week to only seeing their professors when scheduling meetings, and in many cases once going home, they did not see them at all.

This lack of guidance was evident as it reflected in their final grades. Aware of this, the option of opting out of letter grades was proposed, introducing pass/fail grading. Although this eased the mind of many students, it was not the correct way of going about assisting them.

Students needed support and an education, but instead a way out

was presented to them. Although this option made sense to students during their time of crisis, many were not made aware of the challenges it could possibly create later down the line.

According to Inside High ED, this decision can affect a student's ability to get into graduate school, medical school or even a four-year college.

For those who were lucky enough to end the semester on a good note, they did not retain much information rather than just turn in assignments on time.

Like most, I could not have been more thrilled when the spring semester ended and the stress it brought came to an end.

However, some of that stress was replaced with fear when the university announced its plans to do a second run of online learning come Thanksgiving break.

However, like many things, the first trial is just that – a trial. As expected, there is going to be errors and setbacks and opportunity to learn from the mistakes that were made.

With the anticipation of classes being moved back online in November, one can hope that students' concerns were heard and the university came up with a plan that will not only educate, but also will support students who are learning from their homes this semester.

Fears arise over second shutdown

By Donovan Wilson
Reporter

While some college reopenings have been off to a rocky start but Southern has the resources to pull through and make it until Thanksgiving break without another shutdown.

A handful of massive parties have caused the University of North Carolina to already have major cut backs on campus resources such as housing. According to Indy Week, as these students begin to get tested, a whopping 31.3 percent of those tested have tested positive for COVID-19.

Now, while Connecticut colleges will have some college parties, we are in a much better position to handle them.

For example, University of Connecticut students threw a party, and rather than the entire school being reprimanded, it decided to just kick those specific students off campus, according to People.

Connecticut can make less drastic decisions due to our handling of the virus early on and the procedures we currently have in place to keep the spread of the virus low. There is a bit of leeway for us to try dwindling the issues rather than pulling the plug at once in a panic.

Southern has not yet had to go to the measures that UConn had to take, but it is safe to assume that they will as the semester progresses.

Lots of precautions can already be seen such as having designated quarantine areas and wipes in all the hallways for cleaning workstations at the beginning of each new class. I highly believe in UConn's actions and its ability to stop colleges from causing a massive spread of COVID-19.

Threatening students with removal from campus or expulsion singles them out a lot more and is more of a threat than continuing with business as usual. Southern's student body and the administration for that matter does have a long-standing history of standing up for social justice and standing for prominent topics in the general wellbeing of humans.

Over the summer, there was an alumni event in support of healthcare workers which really exemplifies the campus' belief in human interest and protecting our loved ones. I do see one thing that could slam the brakes on everything: New Haven being a college city.

The fact of the matter is that Southern is not the only university in this town, and if the other schools are not as compliant as we will be, then the virus will begin to spread quickly around the adjacent schools.

This semester will be a long, bumpy road full of potholes, but I feel confident that we will reach the end of this road without a flat tire.

SOUTHERN NEWS

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Students adjust to mask use on campus



Cullan Contos and Natanael Barbosa Torres stand in the quad with their masks.

By Jessica Guerrucci
Editor-in-Chief

One of many major visible changes on campus this fall is the use of masks, and for Exploratory major Natanael Barbosa Torres, a sophomore, he said he wears his mask because he does not want to get himself or others sick.

“It’s a respect thing,” said Barbosa Torres. “It’s common courtesy. It’s not going to kill you to not wear a mask.”

To promote mask use on campus, Southern has put public awareness signage throughout the campus with the statement “My Mask Protects You. Your Mask Protects Me.”

Masks are to be worn on campus, indoors and outdoors, and according to an email from President Joe Bertolino, and if a mask is forgotten, one can be found at the Buley circulation desk, Adanti Student Center information desk and Wintergreen information desk.

“If you see someone without a mask,” the email read, “offer them a gentle reminder and send them to the nearest PPE station.”

While the outside world occasionally politicizes the use of masks, Barbosa Torres said it should not be an issue.

“There’s no debate,” he said. “You should definitely wear your mask. Like where’s the argument?”

Biology major Zakia Abbe, a junior, also said masks and politics should not be grouped together.

“It’s not political,” said Abbe. “Health and politics should be separate.”

Business major Cullan Contos, a graduate student, said he thinks students should not be on campus this semester because COVID-19 cases will arise, and college parties are inevitable.

Going beyond a mask mandate in the state, Contos said there should also be a federal mandate regarding mask usage.

“The reason this virus has taken such a hold on our country, and such a hold on everything we’re doing right now, is because of the lack of leadership at the top,” he said, referring to President Donald Trump.

Communication major Taryn Bellinger, a freshman, said she has no issue with wearing a mask because she thinks they work in terms of preventing spread of the virus.

When other people choose not to wear a mask, she said it is putting other faculty and students at risk. However, she thinks Southern is doing a good job.

“I think it’s done pretty well so far,” she said. “I

think most students and adults are wearing them.”

Despite complying with the campus mask rules, political science major Diamond Jackson, a junior, said it is annoying to have on all day because it is hot.

When there is no social distancing, Jackson said wearing a mask does not make sense to her as well as some campus policies.

“Commuters can’t come to residence halls,” she said. “That makes no sense. But they can have classes with them? Either way you’re close to them.”

Healthcare studies major Stiven Jean, a junior, said he sees the importance in wearing a mask, but it is “in the way.”

“You really can’t hear what people are saying,” said Jean. “Like since I’ve been on campus, I’ve been having to ask again what people are saying.”

When on-campus, Jean said the mask rule could be enforced a bit more and the situation on campus does not feel like it has changed that much for him.

What it comes down to for business management major Alex Ward, a sophomore, and exploratory major Ryan Soules, a sophomore, is that despite the inconvenience, a mask is necessary.

“It sucks,” said Ward, “but if it’s protecting us then I’ll suck it up and do it.”



Southern’s Bronze Owl Statue promoting the wearing of masks on campus.

Back to school brings new changes for students

By Essence Boyd
Online Editor

After being abruptly sent home in March due to COVID-19, students have returned to campus five months later to a similar yet different environment.

From the abundance of plexiglass everywhere to outside classrooms, the numerous changes happening in the world and on-campus left students, especially first-years, feeling overwhelmed.

According to social work major Leeasya Lindsey, a freshman, having to complete her last year of high school online took many memories

that she can never get back. However, coming to campus gave her the opportunity to make new ones.

“Not having a senior year negatively affected my emotional balance and I thought going on-campus was needed for me,” said Lindsey.

For other students like clinical psychology major Donovan Danks, a freshman, moving on-campus has been exciting and a challenge at the same time.

“It’s definitely an interesting experience with this being my first year having to navigate around campus while having to follow these guidelines can

be very tricky,” said Danks.

For many students having to move online last semester was foreign to them as it challenged their ability to learn in new ways.

According to Danks, adjusting to online learning was difficult as school is meant to be in-person.

“It was a challenge having to completely switch online and I think for a lot of people it was kind of this weird thing that wasn’t really meant to be,” said Danks.

Although campus has reopened and students have returned to in person classes, the United States, and the world, remain in crisis. In order to make students feel safe while

on campus the university has made many changes, some more noticeable than others.

Some of these changes include the social distancing of desk, the removal of triple style dorms and the end of self-served food. For some students, these changes have made them feel safer on campus.

“I feel like [the plexiglass] helps maintain safe social distancing,” said social work major Craigrianna Goleing, a freshman.

According to exercise science major Jettke Gray, a sophomore, the changes made have left her conflicted, but she is willing to adapt to all of the new policies on campus.

“[Southern’s new appearance] is a little bit upsetting, but I understand, and I am willing to take the precautions needed,” said Gray. “It’s the norm now with this situation.”

In addition to being required to wear mask while on campus, students are also being required to complete a daily COVID-19 screening provided by health services which monitors the status of their health.

“I do feel safe, I feel that these guidelines and what everyone is doing is really great and everyone is wearing a mask,” said Banks.

Others said that the university has made the necessary adjustments

to keep its students safe and changes made were necessary.

“I feel a lot better knowing that we have to wear mask and have required COVID test because that means that we are all being safe and following protocol,” said Lindsey.

Although the university is trying to keep students safe, closing again is a possibility with the threat of COVID-19 still ongoing and this time around, students said they are prepared.

“It wouldn’t bother me,” said Gray. “The teachers are very helpful in those situations and they understand the frustration of things as well.”



Social work major Craigrianna Goleing, freshman, wearing her mask in the quad.



Exercise science major Jettke Gray, sophomore, wears a mask on her way to class.

Athletes adjust to a semester without sports COVID-19 cancels fall and winter sports throughout the Northeast 10 Conference

By Edward Rudman
Sports Writer

As many professional sports teams have already had to navigate the rough waters that is a world with COVID-19, Southern prepares to have its turn at keeping athletes safe.

Jay Moran, director of athletics, said he has multiple meetings in the coming weeks prior to the start of fall semester planning for how they were going to deal with the virus and keep the student athletes safe.

"It has been a lot of meetings, a lot of great thoughts and ideas and probably more changes than anything," said Moran. "We're going to go through three phases. In phase one, our goal is to start Sept. 14 and we will allow 'bubbles' which are 10 people including coaches, making it easier for us to track a positive case if there is one."

For the first seven days of this training period, there will be no equipment in use, but they will be permitted for the following week.

Phase two is scheduled to begin on Sept. 28 and will allow 25-30 athletes and coaches to train together, smaller than the guidelines set by the NCAA, which is allowing 50, according to Moran.

The Northeast-10 Conference's Council of Presidents voted unanimously to suspend all NE10's sponsored competition and championships through Dec. 31 on July 16, however, this does not mean that SCSU athletes cannot train during the fall semester.

If phase three is reached, which Moran called the "contact phase," it will allow for team scrimmages in a two vs two and five vs five format and involve more contact between the athletes. phase three will also require a higher rate of testing for COVID-19.

On the medical side of the situation, Lisa Dupuis, head athletic trainer is tasked with getting NCAA division two athletes back to competitive shape.

"Our student athletes are returning, and they are

young and healthy. Even during this time of COVID, many of them have at least been able to stay active, but no one has been able to train like a Division II athlete trains," said Dupuis. "The other component of these phases is about climatizing our athletes back to a competitive volume of exercise."

While the fall sports have been postponed, the spring sports are currently scheduled to take place on time. None of the fall sports have been scheduled to compete yet, but Moran is currently working on when they will be played.

"We've only touched on possibly volleyball starting in March with the spring sports at the moment and then we'll just have to plug in field hockey, soccer and football," said Moran. "It's going to be a very busy spring if it ends up being the plan that we're supposed to be doing."

Adam Cohen, head coach of the Women's soccer team, said he believes the school has done a good job at dealing with the



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Crowd at Jess Dow Field on October 2018 prior to the cancellation of sports.

pandemic and its efforts to support their athletes.

"I think right now we've kicked it into overdrive to try and provide our student athletes with the opportunity to have a good experience this year while being able to stay healthy," said Cohen.

Not only will the athletes of the university be presented with challenges caused by COVID-19, but so will all of the head coaches and assistants.

"I think before we even consider the physical health of our student athletes, we have to pay attention

to their mental health because we just don't know how they're all doing right now and what their environment at home was like over the summer," said Cohen. "We have to really prepare to deal with the psychosocial aspect during this acclamation phase."

Football faces no season in fall

By Edward Rudman
Sports Writer

The changing of the leaves and the colder weather of autumn are almost upon us, but one thing that will not be accompanying them is a college football season.

Southern's football team posted a record of 2-8 overall and 2-6 in Northeast-10 Conference play in 2019 but showed promising progression throughout the season.

Now, due to COVID-19 and the precautions the school is taking to keep its athletes safe and healthy, the football team will not be able to show their improvement this year.

"I think that a lot of us are trying to stay positive and do whatever we can to play well in the spring or whenever we will be allowed to play, that's really what we're working for," said Quarterback Jackson Ostrowsky, a sophomore. "What I'm thinking is we

have another year to get better, another year to get faster, to get stronger and to be able to work on making different throws. It's not that we don't have the chance to show how good we are, we just don't have the chance yet."

Ostrowsky was promoted to the starting job as a true freshman after the season had started and threw for 2,185 yards, 17 touchdowns and 4 interceptions, while completing 54.8 percent of his passes. At the end of the season, Ostrowsky received All-Rookie Team honors for the NE10 And Southern placed nine student-athletes on the 2019 NE10 All-Conference Team.

While not being able to compete during their regular fall season and combatting COVID-19 remains to be the biggest obstacle for the Southern football team this semester, there are still other challenges to be faced head on at the same time.

"We have a new defensive coordinator," said head coach Tom Godek. "So, do you want to bring out 30 guys at once on defense and just keep that group out there and have them go through some things? Or, would you like to create this other bubble of 15 guys in defense and 15 offensive guys out there so you could actually have a true wide receiver play against the defense instead of a safety being plugged into a receiver slot?"

This is just one of the many dilemmas Godek and the rest of the staff and athletes will have to solve and train around.

Unlike the other fall sports, the football team is much larger and has approximately 100 players and coaches in the program. With the parameters set by the school of having 25-30 people be in a 'bubble' at one time once phase two is supposed to begin on Sept. 28, the team will have to

figure out how to split up their team.

In phase one and two, eight hours of training with the team will be permitted during the week and out of those eight, six of them will be dedicated to strength and conditioning. The remaining two will be spent on predominantly walkthroughs and the mental aspect of the sport instead of normal physical practices due to COVID-19, according to Godek.

One of the things that Godek and the football team will utilize greatly is watching film, as it is easier to social distance and is still effective for the student athletes to learn their roles and responsibilities at each position.

"I've always felt like instead of having someone trek back over to the field house for a meeting," said Godek, "you could call an online meeting and watch film at 3 AM if you wanted to and everyone could be there and that'll be a huge factor there."

Cross country and track and field are ready for obstacles



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Terrell Patterson at New Englands in May 2019.

By Edward Rudman
Sports Writer

Some athletic teams will have to deal with unprecedented conditions revolving around COVID-19. When it comes to training, the track and field and cross-country teams could have a smoother adjustment.

The track and field and cross-country programs' usual training methods will not be as affected by the social distancing format other teams will have to abide by, according to Assistant Cross Country and Track and Field Coach Brian Nill.

"The way we do all of our workouts and all of our training, everyone is broken into groups based on pace, so the slowest guy isn't going to train with the

fastest guy," said Nill. "In effect, those groups sort of form their own little pods, the smallest being a group of two and the largest being a group of six, so we're within all the distancing regulations."

The regulations for training on the track are that each group must be spaced out by at least 50 meters which will not be an issue to do and can be easily accomplished, according to Nill, who said it would be "business as usual" for most of the athletes.

Runner, Terrell Patterson, a senior with his teammates were still able to train throughout the spring and summer during the period of not being on campus.

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PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Members of the football team storm Jess Dow Field vs American International in October 2018.



A step-by-step return for sports

Column by Mike Neville
Sports Editor

It seems as if right off the bat 2020 was destined to be a doomed year. The passing of Kobe Bryant on Jan. 26 set the tone for what was to come.

Just a few short months later the arrival of COVID-19 not only changed the day-to-day lives of Americans, but the world of sports including right here at Southern.

When the NEIO postponed the fall and winter sports seasons, shock and disappointment came to mind first; followed by that was anger and confusion.

Although the state of Connecticut has done an excellent job at maintaining COVID-19, Southern must continue to do its part in stopping the spread of the virus.

If Southern is to have the chance for its athletics to start back up as soon as possible, the school must take the appropriate measures so that the virus does not spread.

With sports not scheduled to start practicing until mid to end of September there are many variables that must come into play for it to happen.

First and foremost, the athletes must have face coverings and follow social distancing regulations put in place by the state of Connecticut.

The biggest concern right now for sports at Southern is football, considering it is very high contact based.

If the season is intended to start on time, then precautions should be put into place that will limit the level of contact between student athletes.

In terms of social distancing, Southern has been one of the better schools in keeping the virus contained so far.

UConn for instance, has had a spike in cases that has now exceeded well over 50 cases according to a report by NBC.

To maintain the virus, weekly COVID-19 testings are an option that could ease people's concerns.

When athletics start up again limiting the number of athletes on the field and in the weight room can prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Scheduled times for athletes to use certain facilities may also be put in place so the flow of individuals is not a high amount.

This is when things have the potential to become difficult.

The state of Connecticut has mandated a 25-person limit for inside events and a 100-person max for outside events.

With these new mandates into place, Southern would be able to participate in athletic practices

If all goes to plan, athletics will be able to return to Southern in the very near future.

Blackbear's album touches on youth culture

By Jessica Guerrucci
Editor-in-Chief

It's been a little over a year since Blackbear released "Hot Girl Bummer" and it was easily a hit – so the expectations for his album "Everything Means Nothing" were high – and it didn't disappoint.

The entire album encapsulates what it's like to be part of a generation stuck on their phones, navigating emotions and heartbreak with album promos showing Blackbear literally being "stabbed in the back" with knives, and all of that is wrapped up into an upbeat pop album that charted No. 1 in the nation upon its release.

Matthew Tyler Musto, who is known as "Blackbear," released six of the songs mid-July and the rest of the album on Aug. 21. "Hot Girl Bummer" already had become a hit and platinum certified, followed by the two other singles "Queen of Broken Hearts" and "Me & Ur Ghost" that helped set the

tone for this social media focused album.

Blackbear told Apple Music that he had made the three singles in the same three days and they were all representations of feelings and views associated with the Internet.

"I think social media breaks hearts in a way," said Blackbear to Apple Music. "We put so much emphasis on where our profiles are and where we're sitting and what our friends are doing and a fear of missing out."

This take is relatable amongst a digital generation with lines from "Me & Ur Ghost" saying, "Tell me what I'm supposed to do with all these pictures on my iPhone," resonant of a breakup and from "Queen of Broken Hearts" saying, "Block my posts and my story," something that an older generation just would not get.

The album is almost a critique on love also in the modern generation, because it touches on how social media dictates how

we navigate relationships and can even break them. In "Clown," Trevor Daniel, who is well-known for his song "Falling," sings "In my old phone, goin' through my old habits," to show how people cannot move on because social media traps them.

Part of what makes this album great are some of the collaborations, beside Daniel, for the first time Blackbear collaborated with Lauv, whose most popular song "F***, I'm Lonely" also depicts love in the age of social media.

They worked together on "If I Were You" an "easy listening" song as Blackbear described to Apple Music, it's catchy and light and fits the mood of the album, but overall, the collab makes sense.

The songs "I Feel Bad," "I Feel 2 Much" and "I Felt That" are a fun trio as well, with "I Feel Bad" having a fast-upbeat tempo, unlike "I Feel 2 Much" which is more reminiscent of Blackbear's older music. Still the song names alone are relevant to youth culture.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

Blackbear's new album "Everything Means Nothing."

The album overall is fun, upbeat and a clever commentary on social media and love in the age of technology. It's the type of music people sing too

loud in the car with the windows down not only because it is relatable, but also because Blackbear created something that is great.



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Members of the track team huddle together after a meet in May 2019.



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Terrell Patterson preparing for a meet in May 2019.

Track

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"The nice thing about us being sent home is that a lot of us live together. Under my roof, there's eight people from the team so it's easy for us to get on a run together," said Patterson. "This summer for distance athletes was just a lot of mileage, being out on the road and getting some time on the feet."

On top of having the opportunity to train with teammates in an effective way, Stephen Fengler, cross country and track and field athlete, a sophomore, said they had an advantage of being able to practice good habits when it comes to staying in shape in less than ideal conditions for an off-season.

"Most of the time it was about establishing habits like getting up early in the morning, doing a run or workout. Even when the tracks were closed, I was still able to do routes around where I live," said Fengler.

It will be a little more challenging for the track and field athletes who depend on equipment for their events such as

hurdling, javelin throwing and pole vaulting. No equipment will be permitted for use until Sept. 28, but Nill said the program's start date will more than likely be Oct. 1.

Strength and conditioning could also present the teams with challenges, as it's harder to social distance in the weight room with the number of athletes on each respective team.

The cross country and track and field teams will look to continue upon their success as a program when training, as the men's track and field team are coming off their fourth consecutive Northeast 10 Conference Indoor Championships in 2019 and the women's taking fifth place said Nill.

The men's cross country finished fifth out of 27 teams competing at the NCAA East Regional and third at the NEIO Conference Championship last season and the women finished 12th at the NCAA East Regional.

"Let's just make sure we're on point so that when we actually can get back to competing, we're ready to do it better than we did before," said Nill. "Just come out and rip some faces off and be where we need to be and where we want to be, when it matters."

Students react to the MLB and NBA boycott

By Mike Neville
Sports Editor

The shooting by Wisconsin police officers of Black man Jacob Blake has caught the attention of Major League Baseball and the National Basketball Association.

Blake who is a father of three, had his children with him in the car when the incident occurred on Aug. 23.

In a display of peaceful protest against police brutality, teams of the NBA and MLB have boycotted and refused to play, trying to make social justice statements.

"They support the black community and others around us, there has been a lot of tension and these teams want to back their players," said accounting major Cameron Litwinka, a junior.

The MLB has postponed games throughout the league, and the Mets and Marlins took a moment of silence and mutually agreed to not continue the game.

The moment of silence was for 42 seconds, in honor of Jackie Robinson who was the MLB's first black baseball player.

Jackie Robinson Day, which is when players from all 30 MLB teams wear the number 42 was played the very next day.

In the NBA bubble, teams have also postponed games, with the Clippers, Bucks

and Lakers proposing to cancel the season to get the message across.

"The Lakers and Clippers are the top teams in the West, by them canceling the season they are proposing a difference being made," said business major Brandon Kelly, a junior.

The Lakers staked with all-stars like LeBron James and Anthony Davis have been on track to be a potential team in the NBA Finals.

"The teams are doing the right thing, and with the platform they have it can be used to spread a message that enough is enough," said marketing major Sovongphanith Chhorn, a freshman.

After the season was suspended on March 11 due to COVID-19, 22 teams were brought to Florida to compete with a focus on social justice.

At the restart of the NBA season in the bubble, the NBA has displayed the slogan 'Black Lives Matter' on the court and allowed players to display messages of empowerment on their jerseys.

"It seemed like this was working at first, but other incidents happened after so in the end it didn't really work out as they hoped," said Chhorn.

The slogans and the jerseys were brought forth to show support for the Black Lives Matter movement after the death of George Floyd in May.

"The Bucks are up 3-1, they could have won but decided there is something going on that's more important than basketball," said Kelly.

The Bucks, along with Giannis Antetokounmpo were the first team to boycott in the NBA this season, what followed was a chain reaction.

Although the NBA season will continue for now, Kelly said if people want to start supporting the cause, the NBA must take action.

"There is nothing else they can do to spread the message, guys like LeBron who are getting older are taking responsibility," said Kelly. "This is an important season for LeBron but there is something way bigger than basketball that is happening."

LeBron is in his age 35 season and has been very outspoken in regard to police brutality on twitter and in the media.

The boycott only lasted for three days in the NBA but Litwinka said the boycott may happen again in the future if another incident occurs.

"The NBA is predominantly African American, and a lot of them feel as if they have no say and are not supported by the media and the players union," said Litwinka

According to ESPN, in the NBA, players of color represent 81.9 percent of the league and coaches of color make up 33.3 percent.



PHOTO | MIKE NEVILLE

Cameron Litwinka, junior (left) Brandon Kelly, junior, doing homework in the student center.

Choir performs for commencement ceremony

By Donovan Wilson
Reporter

As COVID-19 kept students apart for graduation, the choir still found a way to come together, but this time, virtually.

"It was like singing in a vacuum," said Terese Gemme, who led the choir.

Back in March, COVID-19 caused all students to go off campus and switch to an online medium. In addition to classes being online, so were all events including 2020's commencement ceremony.

To reinforce a connection between the students and their campus during this nontraditional ceremony, the student and alumni choir, led by Gemme, the choir conductor and director of the honors college, serenaded their fellow students.

They sang an uplifting combination of "You'll Never Walk Alone" from Carousel and "Climb Ev'ry Mountain" from The Sound Of Music, by Rodgers & Hammerstein.

This uplifting ceremony presentation was not without its challenges, seeing as it was the first

digital recording of the choir. There were many challenges that the conductor and the choir alike had to face in pulling this off.

This was the choir's first time performing to a pre-recorded orchestration. The choir members had to balance being on time with the track and adjusting their cameras.

Gemme said the choir is a "real community undertaking," and that connection is missing with the aspect of singing alone for the digital recording.

The choir normally all sing together when they perform but while singing alone there was no ability to bounce off each other.

This choir recording was originally recorded in July for an alumni concert that was a benefit to healthcare workers. The university then decided to include it in the 2020 commencement ceremony.

The students were given no warning of the digital choir presentation being added into the ceremony. However, they said they were happy to see the inclusion as it was an amazing exposure for Southern's choir.

"We have a great ability of blending" said Candance Naudé, a singer

in the alumni choir and performer of the national anthem.

The national anthem was also recorded for an event other than commencement.

Naudé said it was "exciting" as there would have been no concert around this time if not for this commencement performance.

English and political science major, Krista Jones, a member of the choir, said she has no connection to music at Southern besides the choir. However, she has been in different choirs her whole life and her mom is a music teacher.

"Music has always been a part of my life," said Jones, "it requires a lot of empathy."

She said she was very happy to participate in this digital choir performance due to the unifying nature of music paired with the "current state of the world."

Jones said she was also unaware of the inclusion in commencement at first but was very happy it was because it represented the "hope people needed."

Gemme said, the songs performed were selected to "hold meaning to people."



SCREENSHOT | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

Choir Singing "You'll Never Walk Alone" during commencement ceremony.



SCREENSHOT | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

Terese Gemme, director of the choir in the commencement ceremony video.

Art classes return to campus after struggle with online



PHOTO | ROMAS ROSITANI

The front of Earl Hall where art classes typically held throughout the semester.



PHOTO | SOFIA ROSITANI

Ceramics major Casey Potts, graduate student, in Earl Hall making a ceramic bowl.

By Sofia Rositani
Arts & Entertainment Editor

The switch to online in March had an impact on usually hands-on arts classes, now as students return to classes, ceramics, drawing and metal classes will return to some kind of "normal."

Like all in person classes, students at Southern will have to wear masks and sanitize their areas after each use.

Professor of ceramics, Greg Cochenet, said he had a hard time last semester during the abrupt change to online classes.

"You can't really teach ceramics online," said Cochenet. "So, when we shifted to online learning my students stopped using clay, we did some drawing projects, some found object sculpture, the shutdown was so quick I didn't know what materials my students had."

During the shutdown Cochenet had his students focus on not only drawing projects but also Haiku poetry, a form of Japanese short poetry consisting of three phrases.

Cochenet said the poems helped a lot of students relieve themselves from anger and stress that was happening during quarantine and the shutdown. He did not want his students to just work on the computer so he had them do projects such as finding various objects around their home and arrange it into a sculpture.

Due to the increased workload that came along with online classes, Cochenet said many students came to him because they were struggling to complete

their assignments.

He also said many of them were frustrated because they were not used to being online all day like they were last semester, instead they were used to working with clay or painting instead of sitting in front of a computer.

For this semester, Cochenet said he is having a challenging time with in-person classes being split up because his class enrollment stayed the same but he has to run back and forth into the class next door to help his students.

There will be an outdoor space if needed for him to get the whole class together.

Even though Cochenet said he is hopeful that the school makes it to Thanksgiving, he will still have to find a way to teach the final few weeks of class online. He said he has been thinking of a project and different assignments, that ties everything they did together with the art pieces they did in-person. for example, Cochenet was thinking for a final project his students can create a virtual gala and show off the work they did throughout the semester.

Graphic design major Dezirae Saylor, a sophomore, said she had a good experience with the online format due to not having any studio art classes.

Even though she said she had a pleasant experience, she was still scared about how the classes will end up being.

"I think now that I have taken some online classes I have a feel for the way things are supposed to work and blackboard assignments and whatnot," said Saylor. "So, I think

I am pretty prepared because I have the proper expectations going into it."

While Saylor does not have any art classes this semester, she said she is worried about how possibly next semester it will be online.

"I am a little worried because it's like math and science you can learn anywhere but art is really an in-person thing so I think it will be harder," said Saylor.

If the university must continue to do online classes next semester Saylor said it will be a bit easier, but it will cause issues for her since most art classes have to be done in person. Saylor said it could create an issue for her credit requirements and affect if she will graduate on time due to multiple classes not having online courses, such as metal working a course that has to be done in person.

Studio Art major Delena Hoang Tran, a sophomore, said she did not take any art classes last semester, but she did have a difficulty with the transition.

"I had a hard time being productive and it was difficult for me to grasp the material by myself," Tran said.

This semester, Tran is taking two hybrid art courses, and she said it should not be very difficult because the course will be both in-person and online. Tran also said that she will be better prepared if the university ends up going online.

"Two sort of core values within ceramics is touch and community," Cochenet said. "and its two things we are trying not to do right now."