

THE CHARGER BULLETIN

The student news source of the University of New Haven.



A NOT-SO-NEW YEAR

STUDENTS REACT TO THIS SEMESTER



Photo courtesy of Lismarie Pabon, Photography Editor

Story on pg. 6



The Charger Bulletin



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THE CHARGER BULLETIN

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NEWS

The spring semester is here, and The Charger Bulletin is back

BY KAYLA MUTCHLER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Dear members of the University of New Haven community,

For those of you who do not know me, my name is Kayla Mutchler, and I am the editor-in-chief of The Charger Bulletin. What a pleasure it is to be here for another semester -- and, we're back in print! We have a lot planned for this semester, so make sure to pick up every edition from one of our blue boxes around campus. Also make sure to check out Charger Bulletin News, our news broadcast which comes out every week.

If you're interested in joining The Charger Bulletin, make sure to reach out to chargerbulletin@newhaven.edu. We have positions for writers, editors, social media managers, videographers, graphic designers, photographers, advertisement managers, and more!

I am tremendously proud of what our staff -- both new and returning -- accomplished last semester. No matter what 2021 brings, The Charger Bulletin will be here to report about it. Here's to a new semester.



Kayla Mutchler
Editor-in-Chief

Academic policies change as spring semester begins

BY ISABELLE HAJEK
STAFF WRITER

Because of a shift to online learning and other issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the University of New Haven has enacted new academic policies, including ones outlined by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE).

Following the campus closure in March 2020, the university instituted a new grading policy, where students could change a course to a pass/fail grading system, in which the course would not affect their grade point average (GPA). Additionally, students could take an incomplete on their course in order to complete the work later, without the decision impacting their GPA.

That same semester, the university did not implement an on-camera policy, lasting through the fall, acknowledging that students may not feel comfortable showing themselves on camera. While professors could

encourage students to keep their cameras on during class, they could not mandate it nor could they enforce repercussions for students who did not have their cameras on during class.

In a Jan. 7 Facebook town hall meeting, administrators said that students must have their cameras on in Zoom classes in order to promote academic integrity

Photo courtesy of Lismarie Pabon



and ensure that students are engaging in classes. Furthermore, this policy was identified as necessary to maintain university program accreditation. Students can be exempted from this mandatory on camera policy through the University Accessibility Resources Center (ARC) if the concern is regarding accessibility or through the Dean of Students Offices for other

extenuating circumstances via a form located on all syllabi.

Beginning in the spring 2021 semester, students can no longer utilize the pass/fail option for all courses.

However, many of the academic policies implemented because of COVID-19 remain. In order to continue to follow COVID-19 guidelines, the university is still offering a number of courses in a virtual capacity including asynchronous, synchronous, flex, and hybrid courses. Students are still able to withdraw from classes up until the day before finals.

The university will continue to have Re-Charge Days, an initiative that began in the fall 2020 semester that gives students the day off from classes and class work to compensate for the dissolution of longer breaks such as Spring Break. There will be approximately one Re-Charge Day per month starting in February. For the Feb. 18 and April 19 Re-Charge Days, some classes will still have to meet because of specific program accreditation requirements. These courses are indicated in the University Academic Calendar.

In the town meeting, Provost Mario Gaboury said that the option was revoked to maintain program accreditation at the university. However, students can still claim an incomplete in their courses.

Upon hearing about the changes, students voiced their opinions in the comment section of the town hall.

Junior, national security major, Daphne Schroeder wrote, "All of my classes except for one are still completely online, how can you take away pass/fail when students are still experiencing the same things that they have been for the last two semesters?"

Assistant Provost Glenn McGee wrote in response, "the University of New Haven was among the very last in the world to roll back that policy... the effect of having it [pass/fail option] is that students' end up with insufficient grades to have a viable GPA."

Additional information regarding current COVID-19 related academic policies can be found on the Academic Policy Changes and FAQ's section on MyCharger.

Carrie Robinson joins university as new director of The Myatt Center for Diversity and Inclusion

BY KAYLA MUTCHLER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

2020: the year of a pandemic, Black Lives Matter protests, a presidential election and a riot has finally come to a close. As 2021 begins a new chapter, so is the University of New Haven, with the recent hire of Carrie Robinson as head of the Myatt Center for Diversity and Inclusion.

In a Jan. 20 email to the university community, Lorenzo Boyd, vice president for diversity and inclusion and chief diversity officer, announced Robinson as the new director. “Carrie brings over a decade of progressive work experience and strategic leadership in student affairs in higher education to the University,” he said.

Robinson attended Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU), earning a bachelor’s

degree in health and physical education, and a Master of Science in counseling in student development and higher education from Central Connecticut State University (CCSU).

Robinson joins the Charger community with a well-developed resume, previously working as a residence hall director and part-time employee at ECSU’s pride center. Then, at Fairfield University, she was a residence hall director for their social justice living and learning community, and the assistant director – and, later, associate director – for their student diversity office. Most recently, she worked at Trinity College as director of LGBTQ+ Life in their Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Robinson said to The Charger Bulletin that she was interested in this position because she wanted to work in diversity and inclusion on a larger scale.

“The direction that New Haven is going in as far as diversity and inclusion work really intrigued me,” Robinson said. “It really seems to be an investment

from everyone in the conversations that I’ve had... that’s just an environment that I want to be a part of.”

Robinson says that her main goal in her first few weeks is to listen to students, faculty and staff, find out their needs and develop an action plan based on that.

“I want to make sure that the Myatt Center is still a place that students feel safe, feel like they have a home in,” Robinson said. “I think it’s important that students of all backgrounds feel that they have a place at the Myatt Center -- feel like they can walk through the doors and kind of let those masks down or let those identities down and just be authentic in that space.”

Robinson hopes that through her position, students will be able to gain knowledge about

people’s various identities, awareness of personal identities and how it interacts with other people and prepare them for the possibility of difficult situations outside of college.

Robinson also said that she is excited to work with students as well as other community members, including Boyd and Zanaiya Leon, senior coordinator for leadership and diversity and inclusion.

Leon said she is happy about Robinson’s hire and that it came at the right time. “Being an office of one is a challenge. Being an office of one during a pandemic and an era of racial unrest across the country is really something.”

Boyd said that Robinson stood out from other applicants. “She was ready to come in on day 1 and immediately con-

tribute to the students who are served most often by the Myatt Center.”

Boyd and Leon said that they would be working with Robinson. Boyd said that he plans to collaborate with Carrie in all aspects of diversity, equity and inclusion in regard to student affairs while Leon said they’ll be creating plans for Women’s History Month and Black History Month.

“I’m just excited to join the Charger community; I’m excited to do the work,” said Robinson.

The Myatt Center for Diversity and Inclusion will be hosting events for Black History Month and others throughout the year. Email CDI@newhaven.edu for more information.

The Myatt Center

Photo courtesy of Lismarie Pabon

Robinson and her family

Photo courtesy of Carrie Robinson



SPORTS

NE-10 announces fall sports will not play in spring

BY DAVIN ROY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Northeast-10 has ended all the “what-ifs” of the fall 2020 season, deciding, meaning football, soccer, volleyball, field hockey or cross country will not play. The announcement was made official on Jan. 13. The spring semester will be very similar to sports last semester. Depending on state guidelines, teams will be able to have weight room sessions along with small group practice sessions.

This decision follows an announcement from the conference on Dec. 15 on the decision to cancel the winter sports season which includes men’s and women’s basketball, and men’s and women’s indoor track and field. With the latest announcement from the NE10, 11 of the 18 varsity programs

at New Haven will go an entire academic year without intercollegiate competition.

Upon the decision to uphold the official canceling of 2020 fall sports, University president Steven H. Kaplan said, “This was a very difficult decision to make, as we know the important role that athletics plays in the lives of each of our student-athletes. Above all, though, our priority is protecting their health and well-being. We remain committed to ensuring that all of our student-athletes have opportunities to safely interact with their coaches and teammates, as they had throughout the fall semester, and I am confident they will continue to excel in the classroom, in their training, and as ambassadors for the University.”

Freshman soccer player Emily Bogdanowicz said, “I feel that it was the right call to cancel the season but still allow athletes to practice. It was safer for everyone to not have gameplay. Without playing actual games,

I am still glad to practice with the team and be able to interact with collegiate soccer as much as possible.”

All-conference center for New Haven football and graduate student Mike Zecchin said, “I wasn’t really surprised by what’s been happening this year. When the fall season was cancelled during the summer, we knew that it was an uphill battle to play the season in the spring with how limited we were during our workouts last semester and with winter sports being cancelled the writing on the wall for the decision about a spring season. Although I am very upset that we aren’t playing football right now, I’m optimistic for the season next fall.”

The university has been aware of the athletes’ struggle and have confidence that they will bounce back. Athletic director Sheahon Zenger said, “Our student-athletes showed great perseverance in dealing with a

unique fall semester. While I know it will be challenging, I’m confident their resilience will be even stronger this spring... Our priority continues to be fostering the personal and professional development of each of our student-athletes and ensuring they are prepared for a lifetime of success on and off the field.”

The NE10 has not yet made a decision regarding whether spring sports will be given the green light for 2021. Sports

at New Haven that would be included are baseball, softball, women’s lacrosse, women’s tennis and men’s and women’s outdoor track and field. With more people receiving the vaccine, and all sports taking place outdoors, leaves some optimism for sports to return on campus for the first time since Mar. 9, 2020 when women’s softball hosted its last home game.

Women’s soccer

Photo courtesy of New Haven Athletics



Spring sports prepare for season amid pandemic

BY TYLER WELLS
STAFF WRITER

While the COVID-19 pandemic continues, spring varsity sports at the University of New Haven are confident that teams will see competition in the coming months. With students returning to campus, the athletic department is looking toward a Feb. 1 start date for practices.

“We are all really excited for it,” junior softball player Mia Iodice said. “Everyone is itching to start back up and get playing again after having a year taken from us.”

Athletes have faced many un-

certainties with the season over winter break. With COVID-19 numbers surging across the country, many doubted the chances of playing this spring. On top of this, the Northeast-10’s decision to cancel winter sports was a source of concern.

Regardless, coaches have

Softball practices in the snow
Photos courtesy of athletic’s Instagram



remained optimistic to keep players prepared for the possible season.

“From everything we’ve seen, we are expecting to play,” Iodice said.

The conference voiced their support for spring sports, with all schools unanimously supporting a return to play during the spring semester, according to their Jan. 13 press release.



Some teams have tried keeping their players close together, even through a screen. Some teams have tried keeping their players close together even through a screen. Junior track and field athlete Ericka McDermott said that their team has conducted workouts over Zoom.

“The workouts on Zoom haven’t been great but they’re as good as we could get,” McDermott said. “It keeps our team together and it has been great to still see everyone.”

For some athletes, finding a workout space has been challenging. Even though gyms have remained open in Connecticut, they are closed elsewhere in the country. For example, gyms in Pennsylvania shut down in December and

remained closed until the first week of January.

Now, as February approaches, the season is becoming clearer. Players are entering the final week before in-person classes and are excited for the start of their seasons, even if it will just consist of practice.

However, these practices will look different than normal. For the first couple of weeks, teams will be limited in the number of players practicing together. It will look similar to the teams’ practices last fall.

“It is at the point where we have already gone through all of the precautions,” McDermott said. “Knowing this, we can just focus on being smart and getting to stay on the field. We all just want to start competing again.”

STUDENT LIFE

Are you excited about the semester? We asked. You answered.

BY ELISA D'EGIDIO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After adjusting to life on campus during the fall semester, students at the University of New Haven had mixed emotions on returning for the spring semester. With increased tuition, no change in the Campus Visitor Policy, more online classes and the removal of spring break, students looked for a platform to express their thoughts.

A survey on chargerbulletin.com asked students to rate how excited they were for the start of the spring semester on a scale of one to 10, one being not excited and 10 being most excited.

As of Feb. 5, 29 students answered, leaving the rating of one as the most with 21% of the votes.

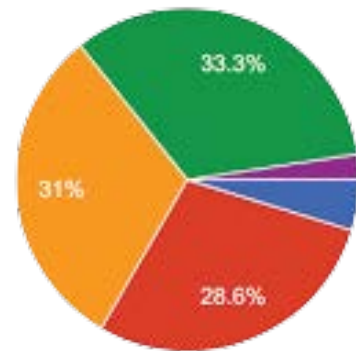
Students also participated in a Google Forum. One question asked "Which of the below statements most relates to how you feel about this semester?" Of the 42 participants, 61.9% felt neutral about the spring semester.

When asked "Which of these statements most relates to how you feel with communication between school administration and students for this semester, specifically during the winter break?", 33.3% felt communication was bad.

Senior national security major Morgan McCarty said in the form that she thinks that there are a lot of mental health issues circulating on campus.

"Although I wish the school could do more," said McCarty, "there is a lot of adversity that they must face in order to keep us safe."

However, junior criminal jus-



- Communication was very good
- Communication was good
- Communication was neutral
- Communication was bad
- Communication was very bad

tice major Brett Deri said that he is "excited to be closer towards graduation, seeing friends, being able to adapt, and return to a sense of normality."

Amanda Bello, a senior majoring in marine biology, said that hosting more in-person events are important to a student's social life. "We already are online most of the day and have a larger workload than previous years so I think having more events while still following covid procedures, could aid students in creating a better social life as well and meeting new students and making new friends."

Rudibeth Martinez, a senior criminal justice major, said that she was not pleased with how the school is handling COVID-19. She said the school is withholding important information from the students and should be more transparent.

"If a student tests positive in our building and/or on our hall, we should have the right to know such information. No names are necessary but just knowing would make me feel better and take better precautions," said Martinez. "Also, the numbers put on the covid dashboard on our school web-

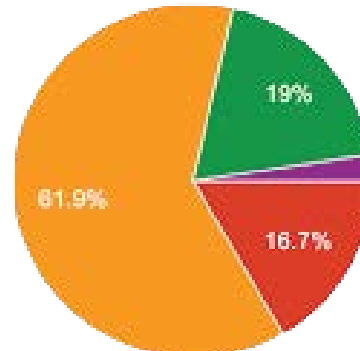
site seemed very inaccurate last semester."

Martinez also said that upon testing positive for COVID-19, she encountered rude people and a lot of her questions regarding her situation were left unanswered. She said she came to the realization that the COVID-19 dashboard displays incorrect numbers as there were not enough beds for her to quarantine during that time.

"On top of this I had 2 incidents where someone walked into the apartment unannounced, no knock or anything," Martinez said. "They just used a key and walked in without my knowledge. This was honestly scary because I was in an apartment by myself on [R]uden [S]t. I brought the issue up to res life and they did nothing. This was by far the worst experience I have dealt with at this school."

Forensic technology graduate student Katerina Athaide said that she is thankful that, in comparison to other universities, the University of New Haven is still providing some normalcy to its students.

"The way UNH has been handling COVID has allowed students to live in the dorms,



- I am very satisfied with this semester
- I am satisfied with this semester
- I am neutral about this semester
- I am unsatisfied with this semester
- I am very unsatisfied with this semester

attend in-person classes, and use facilities such as the Beckerman Recreation Center," said Athaide. "Some of my friends from home were completely online for last semester so I am just happy to be able to attend in-person classes with the way UNH is handling everything."

Athaide also said that it is challenging for faculty to interact with students and that it is difficult for her to interact with her peers as a student and biochemistry teaching assistant.

Freshman forensic science major Jennifer Tucci said it has

been difficult to adapt to college life because of the new guidelines. She was not assigned a roommate and says she and other students in the same predicament felt lonely during the fall semester.

"I know many people who do not have friends on campus and have considered transferring due to the loneliness and boredom," said Tucci. "The guidelines do not foster growth for students, instead they stifle freedom and the social aspect we look for from college."

Tucci said, "I am nervous and feel uneasy about the semester. I feel that student's concerns from last semester weren't addressed, so it feels like we aren't being heard."

The Charger Bulletin also received submissions via an Instagram poll asking students to submit their overall thoughts about this semester.

Instagram user @theonlyel-dricks said, "Whether it's a class or a club, safety should always be a priority."

Instagram user @angvolino said, "It's definitely different and challenging but as a community, we push through it all."

Photo courtesy of Hobbes Parisen



STUDENT LIFE

Goodbye spring break, hello ReCharge days

BY BETH BEAUDRY
STUDENT LIFE EDITOR

Before the spring 2021 term began, the University of New Haven made the decision to cancel spring break to prevent students from traveling and possibly returning to campus with a COVID-19 exposure. The university instead implemented four ReCharge days throughout the semester, which are days where students will not have classes.

The ReCharge days are scheduled for Feb. 18, March 9, March 31, and April 19. However, not all students get to enjoy these days off. On the 2021 academic calendar, there are links to classes that are excluded from re-charge days. On Feb. 18 and April 19, over 50 classes are still required to meet.

“For those who have labs that day, tell yourself that two and a half hour lab is going to be the only thing you do that day, and then after you’re going to take your ReCharge day,” said Helena Cole, director of the Center for Student Success (CSS).

Cole said that the decision to implement re-charge days rather than spring break, “was made for health and safety reasons, rather than academic ones, [so] I don’t think it make[s] sense to compare the two option from an academic perspective.”

Senior criminal justice major Gabby Morris feels that the re-charge days are an unfair substitute, as some students are not given the break they are supposed to.

“Last time they did recharge days professors still had homework assigned and due for that day even though we weren’t supposed to,” said Morris. “So there isn’t a point in having the days off if there is work to be

done anyway.”

Morris was not the only student to claim that four ReCharge days is not enough. Not only are students not getting a consecutive break, but spring break typically ran Sunday to Sunday, meaning they are getting half of the break they used to.

“I’d rather have recharge days than nothing but a few days off in a row is a necessary break for everyone,” said Matt Ryan, a junior engineering major.

Instagram user @dcat_820 said, “They’re not an actual replacement. I would rather have a full week off.”

“I don’t think it was a good decision because the students’ mental health is going to suffer,” said junior Rachael Fortier. “I feel that people are gonna be more likely to skip classes when spring break would be so that they can have a break.”

Cole told The Charger Bulletin that she understands if students are upset about the spring

break cancellation as many students look at the long break as a time to have fun or rejuvenate, more so than during fall break. However, the university is following CDC guidelines and recommendations, and that giving students the opportunity to possibly travel during spring break would have been irresponsible.

“For students, I say look at your syllabi, look at your schedule. Figure out what you need to do, and schedule your fun,” she said. “I know it is hard because you can not go anywhere or see anyone, but think of your pod. Maybe have a Netflix watch party. There is still a lot that you can do online.”

As for those who may be concerned about how not having a spring break may impact their mental health, Cole said that students should take advantage of COVID-19 hotlines and faculty as everyone is going through this together.

“Use your resources, we have many at the university,” said Cole. “If students are stressed they can come to our office and work with us on stress management, and if we feel that the issue is bigger we can refer them.”

Graphic courtesy of Christopher Colquhoun



University faculty help students find internships during COVID-19

BY BETH BEAUDRY
STUDENT LIFE EDITOR

As the pandemic hit and internship opportunities grew scarce, panic rose among students required to complete an internship before graduation. Luckily, by summer 2020, faculty at the University of New Haven had created a plan to help their students gain the experience and credit they needed.

Executive director of the Career Development Center (CDC) Matt Caporale said that since the beginning of the pandemic, internships among University of New Haven students are down

about 40%.

“We have also been pounding the phones to our employer partners trying to drum up as many remote internship opportunities as possible,” said Caporale, “and have begun partnering with virtual internship providers to connect students with opportunities.”

Caporale said that the university recognizes the impact that the pandemic has had on internship opportunities, and created new COVID internship guidelines to help students stay on track to graduate.

These new guidelines encourage students to seek remote internships, or suggest that students postpone their internship. Caporale said, however,

that postponing internships only works for those who have “ample time remaining in their studies,” rather than those about to graduate.

If a student is not able to find or postpone an internship or a remote internship, faculty were able to create alternate assignments to help students fulfill their internship requirements.

“These assignments are varied but have included career related assignments such as resume/cover letter writing, career assessments, attending

The seal

Photo courtesy of The Charger Bulletin



Career Development workshops, conducting informational interviews, as well as career and academic research projects,” said Caporale.

This option is also available to students who were already approved for an in-person internship. Caporale says that if those students would feel more comfortable switching to a virtual or alternate assignment because of the pandemic, they will not be penalized.

Along with the CDC creating new programs for students, academic departments had to design new, alternate assignments for their students.

Adam Caress, music industry internship coordinator and Patrick Rivers, music industry

program coordinator worked together to create alternate assignments for those in the music. Caress said they worked under the direction of Division of Performing Arts Chair Erica Haskell to create alternate assignments that provided students with a similar experience of an internship.

“We are confident that the solution we have devised will provide our students with a hands-on experience and tangible accomplishment that will be valuable to them in their future Music Industry careers,” said Caress.

Caress said that students are creating a hands-on project

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Internships

Continued from pg. 7

related to the field they want to go into, which ranges from “recording, marketing, research, etc.” Students will give a progress report during midterms and a final presentation to a panel of music industry faculty.

Similarly, the criminal justice department has created an alternate internship program called the “second track option.” The assistant chair of criminal justice Martin O’Connor said that the second track program consists of three parts and that students work with a faculty member and a graduate assistant throughout the process. The first component is that students must conduct at least five interviews with a professional in the field they want to go into and the second requirement is that students work with the CDC in a self-assessment program, and lastly, they have to work on a “comprehensive career plan” to get into the field they want.

“In the fall semester, we had about 23 students participate in this program. And for the spring, it’s about 62 students,” said O’Connor.

Senior Inari Wimberley is one criminal justice student who struggled to find an internship after COVID-19 hit. She worked with O’Connor during the fall 2020 semester to receive her internship credit.

“It was a great alternative for students like me, who wanted to graduate on time and who had trouble finding internships due to the pandemic,” said Wimberley.

Although the value of a traditional internship is undeniable, University of New Haven faculty has been working to adapt their programs so that their students can still get the experience and connections they need.

New Kenan Thompson show, “Kenan” premieres this month on NBC

BY TIARA STARKS
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Longtime Saturday Night Live (SNL) cast member Kenan Thompson is getting his own prime time show on NBC.

In the upcoming single-camera sitcom “Kenan,” Thompson portrays a high-profile morning radio show host who recently became the widowed father of two daughters. He enlists the help of his overbearing father-in-law and goofy but well-meaning brother played by SNL castmate, Chris Redd -- two members of his family who aren’t afraid to give the single dad some advice on how he should navigate his newfound lifestyle.

Thompson has been a part of the famed late night sketch comedy show since 2003, deeming him the longest running cast member so far in SNL history. He contributed his talents to

multiple eras of ensembles with his portrayals of famous figures such as Al Sharpton, Steve Harvey and David Ortiz.

The Atlanta-born comedic actor came to prominence after being an ensemble member of the Nickelodeon children’s sketch comedy show, “All That,” followed by a co-starring role in his own show with actor Kel Mitchell in Nickelodeon’s “Kenan and Kel.”

NBC held virtual press tour sessions for Thompson where he spoke about him and Redd both planning to remain cast members on “Saturday Night Live.” The duo will be traveling between filming “Kenan” in Los Angeles and Saturday Night Live in New York.

“There used to be a time when people would leave the show and go into their careers,” said Thompson. “But I’m of the mindset where I think you can kind of do both as long as you can and then, you know, if the departure comes in a natural sort of way then so be it.”



Kenan Thompson

Photo courtesy of Creative Commons

This isn’t the first time a cast member has been able to juggle the responsibilities of the sketch show and deal with contract renewal speculations. Both Aidy Bryant and Cecily Strong have taken time off to tape their own respective television shows. Bryant’s show, “Shrill” can be found currently streaming on Hulu and has been renewed for its third and final season while Strong has been in and out of production for her upcoming Apple TV musical comedy

series.

“Kenan” will be executive produced by SNL creator Lorne Michaels, David Caspe, Jackie Clarke, Ken Whittingham, and Andrew Singer.

Watch the show’s trailer and recent clips on the official NBC website. You can catch the premiere of “Kenan” at 8:30/7:30c on Feb. 16.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Shows and films you have to stream this February

BY SHAYLEN STANCIL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It's the start of a new month, which means there are new shows and movies available to watch on all your favorite streaming platforms. Here are some of the top picks for this month:

Bridgerton

If you love period pieces and romance dramas, then you will love "Bridgerton," which is now the most-watched Netflix original series, produced by Shonda Rhimes, known for executive producing shows such as "Grey's Anatomy," "Scandal" and "How to Get Away With Murder." Released on Christmas Day, this series follows a royal English family, the Bridgertons, as they try to find true love. Although there are only eight episodes to binge, it was quickly renewed for a second season.

Cobra Kai (Season 3)

Fans of "Cobra Kai" all over the world rang in the new year by binge-watching the newly released third season. If you are

a fan of "The Karate Kid" franchise, then "Cobra Kai" is the show for you. It rekindles the intense rivalry between Daniel LaRusso and Johnny Lawrence, despite them having gone their separate ways so long ago. Seasons one and two are available on YouTube Premium and all three seasons are available on Netflix.

JonBenet Ramsey: What Really Happened

This one is for all the true crime lovers. Despite over 20 years passing since the tragic and mysterious death of six-year-old JonBenet Ramsey, there is still new information being released regarding her case. Included in the documentary are previously unreleased audio recordings from a homicide detective who worked tirelessly on this case. This documentary is available to stream on Discovery+.

Finding Ohana

If you're looking for a feel-good comedy that your whole family can enjoy, check out "Finding Ohana." This movie is about two siblings from Brooklyn on a trip to Oahu who find a journal that can lead them to hidden treasure on the island. This takes them on a quest to not only find

treasure but to learn about their Hawaiian heritage. This movie is available on Netflix.

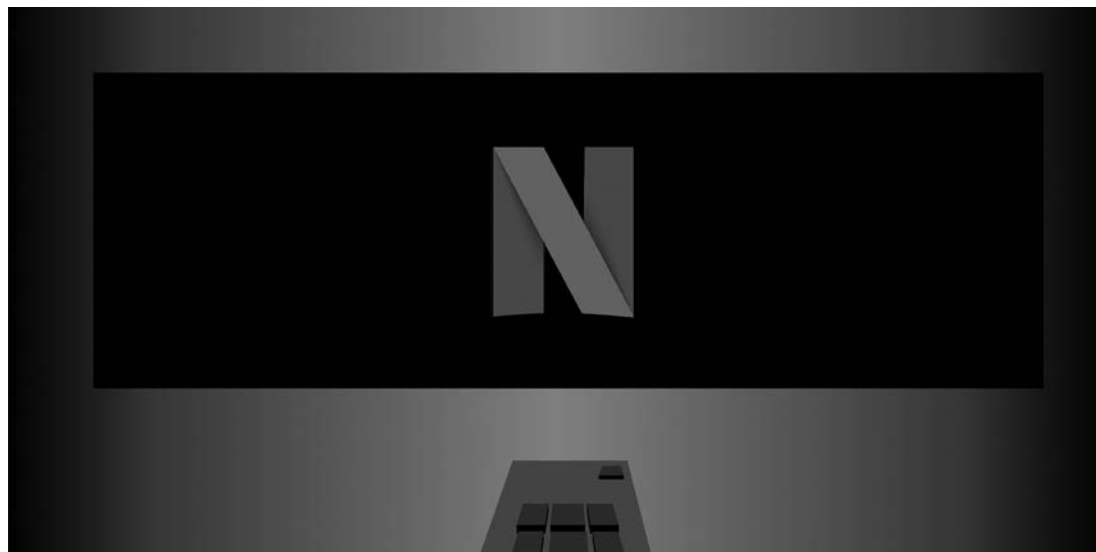
Malcolm and Marie

"Malcolm and Marie" was first announced in the summer of 2020 while the trailer came out in early January. This movie was one of the first features to be completed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The story is about a filmmaker, played by John David Washington, and his girlfriend, played by Zendaya, who have just returned home from his premiere. As the night continues, their relationship is tested as things that were underneath the surface start to be revealed. "Malcolm and Marie" will be available on Netflix starting Feb. 5.

Billie Eilish: The World's A Little Blurry

This documentary will give the world a glimpse into the life of one of the most famous artists of the current generation, who is only 19 years old. The documentary features many home videos of Billie, her brother Finneas and her parents. It aims to highlight that she is a normal kid despite the massive and rapid success she has achieved in the past two years. Apple TV+ will release this documentary on Feb. 26.

Graphic courtesy of Christopher Colquhoun



V-Day Playlist

BY CAM GARDEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

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As Valentine's Day approaches, the pressure of planning the "perfect date" and orchestrating perfect memories are looming large. However, the quintessential date includes a quick playlist. Here are the best songs to put in your Valentine's Day playlist:

"U Move, I Move" – John Legend, Jhene Aiko

Moving away from his iconic love song "All of Me," this track from Legend's most recent album provides a soulful melody about the intimacy of loving someone else, accompanied by R&B vocalist Jhene Aiko.

"Lover [Remix]" – Taylor Swift, Shawn Mendes

This song by Taylor Swift, featuring Shawn Mendes is quite different when compared to her notable break up and heartbreak songs. The harmonies create a tender and loving atmosphere.

"No One" – Alicia Keys

The classic hit "No One" is a simple but adoring expression of an uncontainable love. It is easy to sing along to, dance to or even just exist together while the song plays in the background.

"Cosmic Love" – Florence + The Machine

Though this is a lesser-known indie-pop song, it is definitely a hidden gem for those who haven't heard it yet. With an upbeat tempo and catchy lyrics, this song serves as the perfect expression of passion for another person. Definitely worth a full listen if not an immediate add to your playlist.

"Dumb Stuff" – LANY

Although it has few lyrics, the sentiment remains powerful. It quite literally shows love for the 'dumb stuff' in any relationship; the 'stuff' that almost always ends up being the most important.

"I Was Made For Loving You" – Tori Kelly, Ed Sheeran

Slowing the pace down a bit, this ballad performed by Tori Kelly and Ed Sheeran contains an incredibly raw emotion and admission of finding pure love. She explores the love described by soulmates and being created to share a perfect love with the perfect person.

"Simply The Best" – Noah Reid

A personal favorite of mine and probably of anyone who has watched Netflix's "Schitt's Creek." This rendition of Tina Turner's 1989 hit provides an acoustic and delicate expression of love.

"Stand By Me" – Ben E. King

This song belongs on every romantic playlist that has ever been and will ever be made. The classic song takes on love in a less direct way, expressing the importance of being with the one you love.

"At Last" – Etta James

Another classic love song. This song puts longing and peace all into a perfect, clean-cut 3-minute song tied together with James' beautiful vocals. A must-have for the ideal Valentine's Day playlist.

"Beyond" – Leon Bridges

Lastly, Beyond serves as the perfect song to end the night. If "Lover" didn't get you dancing, this song surely will. Every word flows like velvet, carried by a simple R&B melody.

POLITICS

How social media bans could change politics

BY BARRY LEWANDOWSKI
STAFF WRITER

On Jan. 8, former President Donald J. Trump was banned from Twitter, as the site claimed he directly violated their policy. In the wake of the former president's ban, the path forward for social media outlets has been unclear, prompting the question: how does banning extremists on social media platforms affect us, and in turn, American politics?

In 2019, Twitter published their policy on world leaders and their accounts. Twitter believes users have a right to be informed and engage with their leaders directly, because of that, they do not fall under the exact same rules when it comes to

reporting tweets. This, in part, is what made it so surprising when Trump's Twitter account was permanently suspended, with Twitter citing its "Glorification of Violence" policy. Should politicians still receive that protection?

"No, I don't think so," said Chris Haynes, a political science professor at the University. Haynes does not see the benefit of treating anyone on social media platforms differently based on their position.

"I can't really grasp why anyone would want to treat them any differently, except to enable them to speak to the public. Though there are other ways to do that," said Haynes.

But what about regular citizens? Is banning them the right answer? According to political science professor Patricia Crouse, it doesn't matter.

"I don't think anyone has a legal right to social media accounts," said Crouse.

"All social media platforms are private companies, and they are there to make a profit, not promote anyone's First Amendment rights," said Crouse. "It follows then, that social media platforms have the right to ban anyone they want from said platforms."

Where does social media go from here? What repercussions could follow from sites like Twitter banning its users?

"Economic repercussions could follow, of course," said Haynes.

"Twitter, for example, is a private company, and users join out of their own free will," he said. "It's possible people who really like Mr. Trump could take their business and move it elsewhere."

But Haynes sees a similarity in extremism on social media sites with extremism in our world, and one potential downside to banning users who incite that.

"[Social media platforms] could be used to plan attacks," said Haynes. "And obviously that's something Twitter or Facebook doesn't want to be associated with... But if you push them underground, it may be harder for the government to know about them."

With a new president in office and Democratic majority in Congress, U.S. politics is different than it was just weeks ago. According to Haynes, some of that change is coming from social media bans.

"I think the amount of misinformation that the general public is exposed to is much less now that Trump is off Twitter,"

said Haynes. "And I think these bans can, in a way clean up the amount of misinformation that's out there."

Others believe that the political process is the same now that it's always been, regardless of who has access to social media. While the social climate of our country has changed in regard to social media, according to Crouse, the government remains the same.

"On January 20th at 12:00 pm a new administration took control of the White House and our government," said Crouse. "Our new president tweets maybe once a day. Has that changed how the government process works? Not at all. American government and politics functioned just fine before social media was ever a thing and will continue to do so with or without certain people on Twitter."

What to know as the impeachment trial begins

BY TYLER WELLS
STAFF WRITER

The Senate met on Tuesday to be sworn in as jurors preceding former President Donald Trump's second impeachment trial, slated to begin on Feb. 9. Articles of impeachment

Trump holding a newspaper
Photo courtesy of Creative Commons



against Trump were filed following the insurrection of the U.S. Capitol building on Jan. 6. He was charged with inciting the insurrection during his speech to supporters where he told them to make their voices heard and "fight like hell" against a "stolen election."

There has been no evidence of a fraudulent election.

The House of Representatives voted 232 to 197 to impeach Trump on Jan. 13, sending the hearings to the Senate. From there, 67 of the 100 senators would need to vote to convict the former president.

After the Democrats won the Georgia runoff elections and Senate majority in early January, the two parties currently split the 100 Senate seats. If all 50 Democrats vote to impeach, at least 17 Republicans would also have to for a conviction.

"We know that the president of the United States incited this insurrection, this armed rebellion against our common country," Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi said on Jan. 13. "He must go."

However, the odds do not look favorable for a conviction.

The Senate also rejected a motion made by Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky) to dismiss the impeachment trial. Paul argued that the impeachment was unconstitutional as Trump no longer held office. The motion was stricken on a 55-45 vote, coming up short of the 67 needed to convict Trump.

"45 of us, almost the entire caucus, 95% of the caucus voted that the whole proceeding was unconstitutional," Paul said. "This is a big victory for us."

GOP Sens. Mitt Romney, Ben Sasse, Susan Collins, Lisa

Murkowski and Pat Toomy were the five who crossed party lines. Senate minority leader, Mitch McConnell (R-Ky), was among the Republican senators who voted to dismiss the impeachment charges. However, he denounced Trump's actions following the Capitol storming.

Even though Trump is no longer president, the impeachment would have other implications. A conviction allows the Senate to have another vote to keep him from holding office in the future.

This could be a big development as Trump and his contemporaries have suggested forming a third political party, according to a Wall Street Journal article. The new party would be named the "Patriot Party," aides and others close to Trump said.

Though it isn't clear how serious Trump is about this, he has

been clear about his displeasure for some other Republicans. Some have even suggested that talks of forming a third party are meant to put pressure on the impeachment hearings.

This has put other congressional Republicans in a difficult position: choose to side with Trump or go against his voter base.

The impeachment process will officially begin on Feb. 9 as the Senate will hear arguments from the defense and prosecution. Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont will preside over the trial.

Trump is the first president to ever be impeached by the House twice. The first time was for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress in his reported efforts to have a foreign power interfere with the 2020 election. The Republican-held Senate acquitted him on all charges.

OPINIONS

First-year students reflect on the fall semester

BY KIANA WHITE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Since freshman year of high school, I dreamt of becoming a college student. I knew I wanted to experience being a residential student and engage in campus life through events, activities and so much more. Never would I have dreamed that my freshman year of college would entail wearing masks, social distancing and following COVID-19 mandates. Without a doubt, my first year of college was far from normal. Allow me to take a moment to help clarify a freshman's perspective of starting their new

college experience during a pandemic.

Music and sound recording major Deanna Fielding said that if given one word to describe her first-year campus experience it felt "restricted and kind of

bland." Although she acknowledges the blandness of this past semester, she also realized that there were various "high points," such as campus activities that many organizations on campus implemented.

Furthermore, fire science major Sadara Funches said that being on campus, "although in a

pandemic, it was a nice transition to adulthood."

Both students agreed on the newly established independence granted being first-year students on campus. Like them, independence was one of the several reasons many first-year students decided to reside on campus. From the various hardships the pandemic caused from cutting first-year students' senior year of high school to Zoom fatigue, many were yearning to get out of the thresholds of their hometowns and/or cities.

Reflecting on the 2020 fall semester, granted that the university did its best to make students' residential life tangible, there was still the lack of normalcy. The social distancing guidelines and mask mandates

made it very hard to meet new friends and to gain a personal relationship with professors. Thus, making it feel isolated, which created more challenges for networking and building personal connections.

Through it all, first-year students like Funches and Fielding, are uncertain of what the rest of the 2021 semester may hold but are excited to be back on campus. Like them, I am excited of what this semester may have in store for both under and upperclassmen. My advice for first-year students is to get involved on campus through joining Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs). Take it from a fellow first-year student, you will not regret it because there is a club for everyone.

Bixler Hall

Photo courtesy of university website



How COVID-19 affects people with chronic diseases

BY AMANDA M. CASTRO
MANAGING EDITOR

While it is evident that COVID-19 can adversely affect anyone who contracts it, the risk is even higher and deadlier for chronically ill and immune-compromised individuals.

In a statement for The Charger Bulletin, health services medical director at the University of New Haven Jill Banatoski said that although university and state health officials are still constantly learning about COVID through information that is distributed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), scientists and medical centers, there is still a lot to learn.

"We have learned that patients with several medical conditions are at increased risk of more

severe illness if they contract COVID 19," she said.

Amid the illnesses that can be further complicated by contracting the coronavirus are, according to Banatoski and the Hopkins Medicine website, "cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Down Syndrome, heart failure, coronary artery disease, and cardiomyopathies. Also included on this list is immunocompromised state in patients after solid organ transplant, severe obesity, type 2 diabetes, sickle cell disease, and smoking."

Banatoski also said that there are more severe illnesses and chronic conditions included in this list that are less spoken about "including cerebrovascular disease, neurologic conditions, liver disease, cystic fibrosis, overweight status, pulmonary fibrosis, and thalassemia...asthma, type 1 diabetes, hypertension, and immunocompromised state from bone

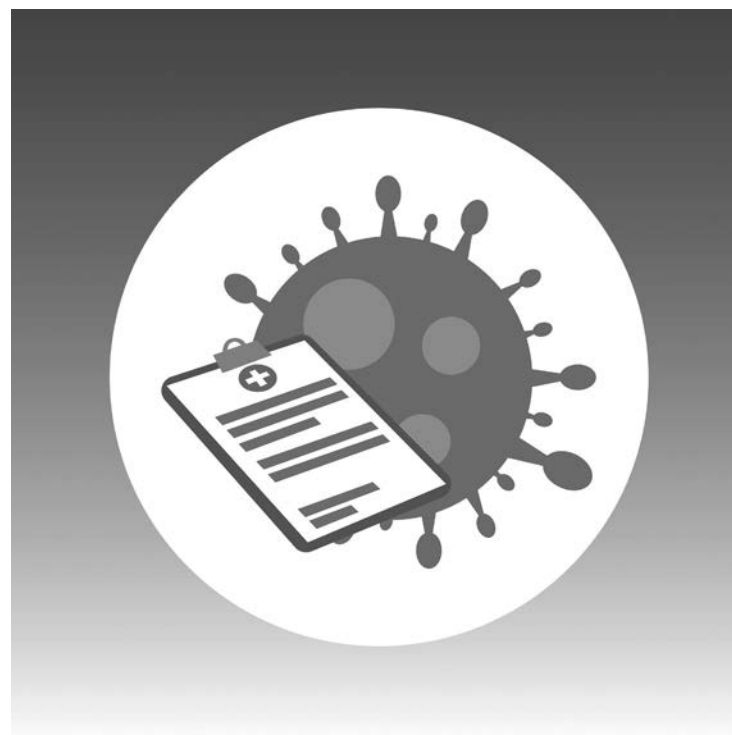
marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV."

With the university being full of students with possible chronic illnesses and immunocompromised systems, Banatoski said

that university students will be properly treated on campus.

"If students with these conditions contract COVID 19,"

Graphic courtesy of Christopher Colquhoun



said Banatoski, "the Health Services Clinicians are diligent about their follow-up care and are vigilant to monitor them for any progression of disease or prolonged course of disease. We often provide pulse oximeters to measure blood oxygen and we have more frequent video visits with them."

According to Banatoski, it is also important that students on campus comply with state and university COVID-19 prevention guidelines. She said that the university's measures help minimize and prevent the spread and presence of the virus on campus.

"Despite these times when it is easy to feel isolated," said Banatoski, "we need to remember that we are a caring community of learners who need to support each other and do our best to keep each other healthy so that everyone can continue to enjoy a successful educational experience."

VIEWPOINT

Long-live sweatpants nation

BY KELLY ADKINS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

To all professors who are irked by students dressed in pajamas during their lectures, close your ears. In terms of the fashion-realm, all us lazily-clothed college students are up to par, after all. After 2020's oversized, loungewear fashion trended due to COVID-19 stay-at-home orders, it seems that 2021 will be no different.

The fashion industry suffered in 2020, the New York Times calling it "the industry's worst year in history." Yet, if a clothing item could win MVP, it would be sweatpants, whose sales increased by 80% by April while clothing sales fell 79%.

It turns out that capitalism's loss is social construct's gain. The shift away from form-fit-

ting, midriff-flossing, make-you-feel-like-a-sausage-casing clothing has empowered women in America who are not Instagram or GymShark models.

As a female athlete, my body has never looked slim even in my best shape. Tight clothing could accentuate my curves but never left me looking like the women fashion-gurus on Instagram or Tiktok. So, this shift to athleisure comfort-clothing is a relief.

Even top-name designers are catching on to the new norm in their Spring 2021 collection launches. Much to the dismay of fashion-experts hoping 2021 comes with a desire for heightened fashion after a year of stir-crazy frustration, names like Michael Kors, Versace and Valentino — to name a few — are fueled by relaxed glamour.

In essence, the new trends are by-products of the consumer's demand to be comfortable while

looking attractive enough on Zoom calls.

Skinny jeans and body-con-styles are tossed away alongside the body-shaming norms they inherently enable. Make way for wide-leg trousers, hidden cutouts in loose-fitting attire, and lots of flowy material.

Effortless fashion includes spicing up leisurewear with monochromatic color-blocking, layering, and pairing normal bralettes with oversized blazers.

Beauty is no longer pain.

According to Vogue, even high-end fashion industries are up-cycling their unused material to create new lines.

This is great news for balling-on-a-budget college students, like myself, who worship their trips to Plato's Closet and Goodwill. It is official, thrifting is eco-friendly and COVID-fashion approved.

In other words, sorry moms and professors, it's not a phase. Long-live sweatpants nation.

Pop-Tarts: Ravioli or pastries?

BY KIANA WHITE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Last week at Bixler Hall's mandatory meeting, a thought-provoking question arose: are Pop-Tarts considered ravioli or a pastries? In all honesty, if you could see the puzzled, perplexed and bewildered look that was on mine and my roommates faces, you would have hollered in laughter. Yes, in that moment, I was utterly confused about why a person could ask such an absurd question. Who has the time and energy to think of a question like that and why?

Let's take a brief moment to recall the dispute of whether or not water is wet. I remember it like it was yesterday: people arguing, glaring and hollering at each other to prove why their opinion was superior to their opposer's. Friends turned into foes. Families turned against


one another. Unlike the water-wet dispute, this question barely cuts the cake in pop culture. People tend to put too much thought into simple questions.

However, on a very serious note, Pop-Tarts receive more hype than they deserve. This sugar-filled snack is commercialized, promoted and advertised to suffice the snack-craving needs of both children and adults. To be frank, it is a waste of money, calories and snack brand. The question, however, still stands: are they ravioli or pastries?

A Pop-Tart is a pastry, but you of course are welcome to your thoughts. If you are still not moved, consider this: are Pop-Tarts sweet? Yes. Are Pop-Tarts filled with fruit-based, chocolate-based and other enticing flavors? Yes. And lastly, are they made with dough that is sweetened, frosted and glazed for flavor? Yes. Then, my friend, Pop-Tarts are in fact pastries.

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