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COVID-19 Updates

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As many of you know, Ursinus has taken aggressive steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by requiring masks, allowing remote learning, facilitating weekly testing, requiring social distancing, as well as utilizing outdoor setups for in-person classes. All of these precautions seem to have contained the virus on campus thus far. Additionally, Ursinus has been sending out emails updating students with the numbers of positive and negative results -- this data can be found at https://www.ursinus.edu/live/news/4706-task-force-updates.

There has not been a significant number of cases since the return to campus. When asked on campus how he feels about the return to Ursinus during the COVID-19 pandemic, sophomore Jackie Bogan said, “I chose to return to campus because it is my second home. I learn better in this environment and it has made me able to see some of my friends, which definitely makes everything better. Being on campus this semester is certainly different but the school is doing its best to ensure everyone’s safety.... Online learning is still an adjustment but luckily some classes are in buildings or in tents outside which I really like. As for testing, we get tested every week for COVID which I don’t mind too much, even though the atmosphere has changed, but it is still home to me.”

Though it is certainly an adjustment for students on campus, whether students chose to stay home due to safety concerns or because of the other impacts of COVID, life as a remote student has also had its adjustments. “I guess you could say I didn’t really ‘choose’ to be remote, it was more I kinda had to in order to support myself and my family financially. I also didn’t think my college experience would be worth the risk on campus. I am sad about it though, it certainly feels as if this year was stolen by COVID,” sophomore Shane McQuaid said.

Ursinus has provided many resources for remote students such as tutoring resources and the ability to reach out and connect with other students who are remote.

“Keep the Promise” Campaign

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June 30, 2020 marked the conclusion of Ursinus College’s ambitious “Keep the Promise” Campaign that started four years ago in October 2016. In this campaign, which correlated with the college’s 150th anniversary, Ursinus has surpassed its goal of raising $100 million for its three priorities of “advancing academic innovation,” “invest[ing] in student success,” and “ignit[ing] the power of our people.” This has resulted in many physical changes to the campus, such as the opening of the Innovation and Discovery Center and the Schellhase Commons, along with further improvements to the U-Imagine Center for Integrative and Entrepreneurial Studies and the Melrose Center for Global Civic Engagement, among other locations.

Additionally, the “Keep the Promise” Campaign has led to the creation of over 50 scholarships, many educational programs on campus, and an overall increase in funding for educational endowment. One of these scholarships is the Abele Scholars Program, a scholarship that provides financial assistance for students who come from low to middle-income families, demonstrate academic promise, and are residents of Pennsylvania and several surrounding states. Ursinus’s Summer Fellows also began under this campaign, an educational program that allows upperclassmen to work with and be tutored by a faculty member during a period of eight weeks dedicated to researching that student’s chosen project. Additionally, the “Keep the Promise” Campaign has led to the creation of the Philadelphia Experience, an initiative that allows Ursinus students to spend a semester living and studying in Philadelphia in order to provide them with their own individualized, supplementary educational opportunity.

Overall, Ursinus College, through the “Keep the Promise” campaign, has raised $28 million in endowment.

The ongoing global pandemic did not seem to make a significant impact during the final stretch of the “Keep the Promise” Campaign, as the project has succeeded in its mission of making Ursinus a more academically advanced and affordable college for its student body. Ursinus has strengthened its academic, athletic, and larger community ties and has received numerous awards and recognition for doing so. Through the generous donations of over 10,000 alumni and parents, the college has provided its students with more ways to prosper both on the campus and off of it.
How Ursinus is handling flu vaccines

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While the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, flu season has just begun. This fall and winter reducing respiratory illnesses, like the flu and common cold, is important now more than ever. Battling influenza and COVID-19 at the same time significantly increases the chance of death, says government scientists. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) advises individuals, especially those at risk, to get their shot sooner rather than later because of a potential shortage. CDC officials measured that October is the most ideal time to receive the vaccine.

With October being the best time to receive the vaccine, Ursinus College is having a flu shot clinic for students and staff. “It is our expectation that all faculty, staff, and students on campus will participate in the on-campus flu-shot program being run by CVS October 12th, 13th, 14th.” The clinic will take place in the Floy Lewis Bakes Center along with mandatory COVID testing. This conveniently allows students and staff to receive their shot without having to leave campus. Students can receive theirs on October 12th through the 14th ranging from 9 AM to 4 PM. Staff can receive theirs from the 12th through the 14th but only from 4 PM - 5 PM.

To receive the vaccine, participants need to bring a clear copy of their personal health insurance which acts as their form of payment. This is “To help expedite this walk-in clinic, we ask that you print and complete the attached consent form in advance and bring it with you.” The form can be found on the college’s website under the ‘Calendar’ tab.

Ursinus wants to thank all participants for doing their part in protecting themselves and the college community. For more information about the flu shots: https://www.ursinus.edu/calendar/view/event/date/20201012/event_id/20581
Meet Ursinus’ new Title IX coordinator

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It feels like an eternity since former Title IX coordinator and associate dean of students Kim Taylor left Ursinus for a new position at Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges in early 2020. For about six months after Taylor’s departure, Professor Anna Marks served as Ursinus’ interim Title IX coordinator while the College searched for a candidate to fill the position. On May 6, 2020— a few months into the COVID-19 pandemic that required an abrupt transition to online classes last Spring— the U.S. Department of Education publicized amendments to Title IX.

Over the summer, Ursinus announced their new hire for the Title IX coordinator position in an email. Lauren Stroud joined Ursinus after holding a similar position at Temple University for the past six and a half years. Ms. Stroud said, “During that time, I worked with students with various health conditions and ADHD.” Ms. Stroud’s manifold administrative experiences at Temple make her uniquely qualified for her new job at Ursinus. She recounts, “I also served as a member of the Student Conduct Board, where I heard cases involving students who had potentially violated the student code of conduct.” Continuing, “[w]hen a full-time position became available in the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards, I transitioned to the role of Program Coordinator for that office.”

Later on in her career at Temple, Ms. Stroud transitioned to a full-time position in the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. “During that time, I assisted with conducting Title IX hearings, conducted administrative hearings with students, and oversaw conduct board hearings, which were typically for cases that could lead to suspension or expulsion. I also supervised our C.E.R.T. (Conflict Education Resource Team) Peers, which were a group of 10 students who provided mediation and conflict resolution training to student and student organizations on campus,” she said. This student group is similar to Ursinus’ Peer Advocates. Amid a pandemic and following major regulatory changes to Title IX procedures on college campuses, it is imperative that the Ursinus community has a strong administrative team that students can trust. As we navigate social distancing and best practices to minimize the spread of COVID-19, communication can be compromised. For students who wish to report cases of sexual misconduct and access resources and information, the semi-virtual operation of the college can exacerbate their anxiety and uncertainty.

Lauren Stroud is well aware of these barriers and complications, and she has made the facilitation of communication between students and the administration a priority. “During my time at Ursinus, I hope to educate the campus community and what Title IX/Sexual Misconduct looks like and work closely with the Director of Prevention and Advocacy, Katie Bean, to try to prevent these types of cases.” In addition, “I also hope to establish more of a presence on campus so that students are aware of how to report and to whom,” Ms. Stroud emphasizes.

On behalf of the Ursinus community, we extend a warm welcome to Ms. Stroud!
The Ursinus College Chapel Program

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The Ursinus College’s Chapel Program is a non-denominational space for religious and spiritual life on campus. Held in the Meditation Chapel, which is located in the basement of Bomberger Hall, the Chapel Program is led by Reverend Terri Ofori, as well as five other chapel leaders and a chaplain assistant who help guide all events and programs. Events held at the Chapel are meant to inform participants about different communities in the spiritual world, and all are welcome no matter their relationship with spirituality. What is important is that mutual respect is given between all participants.

The Chapel program gathers to discuss topics without passing judgement. In previous years, there were sanctuary events that explored topics such as Buddhism, and African and Islamic spirituality. There were also weekly events such as “Sisters in Spirit” and “Weekly Meditation.” Due to the current COVID-19 situation, there has not been as much programming as desired, but the Chapel still has a regular program offered to students, the weekly virtual “Bible Study.”

“Truly have an interfaith experience as we have always wanted to achieve.”
- Serena Rose Gaskin 2023

The Chapel has also worked with other on-campus religious and spiritual groups in the past, i.e. Hillel and InterVarsity, wherein those organizations have been invited for open discussions, collaborative thinking, and exchanges of ideas. Surprisingly, the current pandemic has allowed the Chapel to work more closely with these groups. Serena Rose Gaskin, a second-year student and the Chapel president, said, “[w]e’ve adapted our weekly ‘Sanctuaries’ to be biweekly, collaborating with Hillel to truly have an interfaith experience as we have always wanted to achieve.” Even through the current uncertainties, the Chapel is still able to bring people together.

Many students will find the Meditation Chapel to be a place to meditate, pray, and reflect. “The Meditation Chapel is a space where students can escape the busy environment of the campus community, and take time to relax and refocus. Personally, I use it to unwind and read affirmations,” said chaplain assistant Maia Peele ’23. Students have the option to be alone, gather together, or join virtually for these practices. The practices, overall, can be sources for maintaining and strengthening one’s mental health.

Still, the Chapel can be overlooked on campus as a mental health resource because it is not known to all students. Through the Chapel program, students have the ability to talk with a chapel leader, or with Reverend Ofori. These chats can be an opportunity for students to clear their minds and receive guidance with any problems or curiosities they may have. The next time you need a quiet place to gather yourself and your thoughts, the Chapel and its program(s) are a good place to go.

\[\text{Meditation Chapel is a space where students can escape the busy environment...and take time to relax and refocus.}\]
- Maia Peele 2023

SPOTTING THE THREE BEST-DESIGNED MASKS EACH WEEK!

WANT TO BE FEATURED IN OUR “MASKS OF THE MOMENT” SECTION?
TAKE A PICTURE OF YOUR MASK AND PROVIDE BRAND/COMPANY NAME.
SEND YOUR PICTURE, NAME, AND YEAR TO JEBERRIOS@URSINUS.EDU
PICTURES ARE DUE EVERY WEDNESDAY!!!
**OPINION**

**Sit-down dining in Upper Wismer puts the campus at risk**

Sage Best

It’s a standard scene on campus these last two weeks – masked students line up around the perimeter of Upper Wismer to get takeout in copious amounts of Styrofoam in order to comply with COVID-19 guidelines. In the center of the room, unmasked students sit close together, eating and talking, sharing air not just with each other, but with the students opting for takeout, and with dining hall workers. There is no way this is a good idea.

Indoor dining has been a contentious issue in the pandemic era, and in September the CDC published a report stating that adults with COVID-19 were about twice as likely to have eaten out in the last 14 days as those who were not ill. This suggests that restaurants are a high-risk setting for COVID-19 spread -- and Wismer does not follow the most strenuous best practices. Students sit with others outside of their family unit, three to six to a table, chairs maybe three feet apart. That’s only the beginning, though.

One could argue that “dining in” is a personal decision. But here’s the problem. Research has shown that small respiratory droplets spread far more than six feet along air ventilation pathways and can remain in the air indoors for hours. Given that we have been told masks mostly protect people around the wearer, not the wearer themselves, there’s an obvious issue here. Every student who has to walk near these unmasked students to get food is at risk. Students who may be immunocompromised or simply want to play it safe can no longer comfortably get food from Upper. The Wismer workers (some of whom are in their 50s and 60s, putting them at much higher risk than students) are at risk from both particle drift and having to wipe tables within six feet of unmasked students, and they have to go home to their families. As a student who works at Upper Wismer, this is not only a general concern but a very personal one.

In a conversation about this situation, members of the college’s COVID task force described indoor dining as a considered risk, pointing out that our testing and contact tracing exceeds what is expected of schools, and that it is impossible to have a residential semester without accepting some uncertainty. But we have only had one round of testing that came back with no positive results, and we know these tests are not entirely reliable, so we can’t be sure how big of a risk we’re taking. Further, who bears the brunt of the risk? Dining hall workers are getting a disproportionate amount.

It is understandable that students are excited to be able to eat with friends again, and they may not grasp all the dynamics of this situation. That is why we have a task force on campus to advise administrators. After the massive outbreaks in colleges all over the country only weeks ago, what is the college thinking?

**Ursinus’ Role in Racial Justice**

Val Eichler

This past summer, Americans saw a resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement. In reaction to this news, Ursinus sent out an email on June 3rd stating:

“At its very core, racial injustice threatens the safety, well-being and progress of all marginalized communities that have, for far too long, been left to fight this battle alone. We speak often of the four questions at Ursinus, and it is time that we apply those questions to this critical matter in a constructive way among one another. We have faith that uncomfortable conversations, sobering as they may be, will lead the faculty, staff, and students of Ursinus to a greater understanding of the painful inequalities that divide us. We need to empower our students to lead that dialogue and to channel that pride and passion in a way that provides guidance for us all.”

With this in mind, it’s vital to hold Ursinus accountable and continue the “uncomfortable conversations” mentioned in the school’s email. The school should take time to address the Campus Safety Department and its role on campus.

Campus Safety, of course, is charged with protecting the campus and its students, often playing a role similar to police. Of course, there are numerous differences between Campus Safety and a police department. Officers working for Campus Safety don’t have the power to arrest students, and Campus Safety officers do not carry the weapons typically associated with police officers. Yet, the power dynamic between Campus Safety Officers and students still mimics that of the police and everyday citizens. This is particularly troubling given the frequent association between police and racial injustice.

Ursinus College is, and has always been, a predominantly white institution (PWI). The voices of students of color haven’t been prominent here, even in recent history. At an institution that already struggles to support Black students and People of Color, it’s time to start an honest conversation about how our campus can provide the proper safety measures that aim to address the needs of all students.

This isn’t to say that I believe that we should entirely remove Campus Safety from Ursinus. Campus Safety Officers still provide necessary protection against threats to our safety. Most notably, the recent break-ins on campus require a strong response and investigation. However, I think it’s time that we start considering progressive approaches that fall more in line with current ideas of police reform. We could begin by trying to start a campus-wide conversation propelled by students of color on the changes that they would like to see happen with Campus Safety.

I think all Ursinus students could have an enriched experience if we made attempts at translating police reform ideologies into campus safety practices, especially given that this would be a groundbreaking practice among colleges and universities.

Of course, I am writing this piece as a white person. I haven’t personally experienced racism on our campus. I believe that if we were to start this conversation on Campus Safety, we should be centering the conversation on the perspectives of Black students and other People of Color living and working on our campus.

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happens all the time during a regular season; eating dinners together in Wismer, doing homework, hanging out in each other’s suites, but the guidelines have allowed the team to devise new bonding exercises. Junior, Outside/Right Hitter Olivia Debonte says, “We stay connected with our freshmen inside and outside of the gym by always making our support known and with fun, safe activities such as take-out Wismer or grabbing a seat on the balcony of the Commons with Starbucks.”

“I’ve learned from Coach Cecily that it is crucial to control things we can and be thankful for everything that we CAN do...” — Paige DeAlba, Class of 2021

Engaging in physical contact is usually embedded during game days -- high fiving one another, team huddles and a group circle or a hug after a winning point. The team is working really hard to abide by the guidelines, by keeping a ‘new normal’ mentality. The team has utilized new playing surfaces in the midst of COVID, setting up nets on Snell, using the sand courts scattered around campus, and their usual home court in Helfferich. “As for our practices, we get to play two days a week inside and once outside on the field. It’s really awesome to have that opportunity especially playing on the grass because it helps with our indoor game. We also will be having an inter-squad scrimmage at the end of next week which is incredibly exciting,” says Debonte. The changes to their practices have not diminished their spirits, the women of the volleyball team continue to overcome all of the challenges that are presented to them. The three seniors this year have been credible leaders to the team and continue to lead during this unusual fall season. Paige DeAlba, a senior middle blocker, talks about her hopes for a spring season. “Being a senior during this time is very upsetting, just because we’ve worked so hard for the past three years and then we do not get what we have been expecting to get, a normal senior season. I looked forward to being able to do all the special things that seniors get to do. We are essentially missing all of our lasts. Our last time going through a tough preseason, the last first game, the last time playing at a competitive level against other conference teams, the last bus ride to and from a game, the last sub off/onto the court in a real game, and our senior day. All of these things we won’t get in the fall of our senior year, which is a tough pill to swallow.”

The seniors continue to push through these difficult few months, with the support and life lessons from their coaches. “I’ve learned from Coach Cecily that it is crucial to control things we can and be thankful for everything that we CAN do. I cannot thank her and my team enough for still making these past couple weeks as realistic of a season as possible,” says Paige. The seniors are leading by example for the team so they can become stronger, smarter, and better at the game they love and miss playing competitively.

Good luck to the volleyball team as they continue to work hard every day until they possibly receive a spring season. Ursinus students are anticipating the arrival of the first game day in Helfferich. Go Bears!

“Hands-on” type of instructor, but COVID has not allowed him to continue his normal ways. “Personally, I know it has made me a bit more ‘hands-off’ with greeting everyone,” states Moronese. Additionally, he adds that, “Coaching is a bit different too, because I’ve been trying to use my hands less to make adjustments while critiquing technique, and replace that manual feedback with visual demonstration and more audible cues.” With athletic training, already being a very “hands-on” type of instruction, this is presenting big adjustments for student-athletes as well as Moronese.

“It seems as if there has been new bumps in the road at every turning point, whether it was getting plans approved, or modifying plans to fit new state/school regulations.” — Mike Moronese

Realizing that many students have lost their chance to compete on a collegiate level, how does Moronese help to maintain a positive mindset for them? He acknowledges that this can be a very difficult time for these students. “As a student-athlete, I can’t imagine all of the thoughts and feelings being experienced. As a former-sports coach, I can empathize with feelings of loss, confusion and worry for the future.” Being able to relate to not only the student-athletes, but the coaches as well has been a huge part in how he is able to help these students and staff overcome such a difficult and unknown time. He tries to look at the up side to all of this confusion, “Currently, I am trying to view this time-frame as a developmental period for all of our student-athletes. This is the first time that all of our student-athletes are on campus, in a similar off-season training block without the concern for near-competition,” states Moronese. He has hopes that this time will offer student-athletes the extra focus on certain skills that they need to improve on. “I am optimistic that with this phase, we can teach many things that will improve our performance and well-being moving forward into the future.”

As many new updates on the Fitness Center come about, we hope that everyone stays safe and healthy, all while still getting a killer workout in or some worthy instruction from Coach Mike Moronese. Go Bears!
How the Fitness Center Works Now

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The Fitness Center has been adjusting to its new role on campus. In times past, students used to be able to hop from their cardio workouts on the treadmills, to weight lifting, and maybe even head over to the mats for an ab finisher. With the new guidelines in place, it's tough to finish all one's various aerobic exercises in one sitting. So how is the Fitness Center accommodating students and staff who work out regularly?

Director Mike Moronese, or Coach Mike, talks about some of the bigger adjustments for him: "It seems as if there has been new bumps in the road at every turning point, whether it was getting plans approved, or modifying plans to fit new state/school regulations." Moronese, being the one that oversees most of the executive decisions for the fitness center, acknowledges the struggles of making sure that he keeps up with state and university regulations. One of the biggest struggles that Moronese deals with is how students now have to set appointment times and dates for when they choose to workout. "However, I do think that the new appointment system has been a big adjustment for a lot of people. Having to know/reserve your workout time in advance, while also only being limited to one area of equipment seemed to present a challenge to people early on."

While he realizes that this is the best option for students and staff, it forces people to reexamine how they work out, in order to be able to modify it to the new updates.

Moronese, the only athletic trainer for all sports teams on campus, has also had to adjust his interactions with his student-athletes. He is used to being a very working between veteran players and the new freshmen? This is an emotional time for the seniors who have put their heart and soul into this game, so how are the seniors staying motivated?

The 2020 season for UCVB is unquestionably one to remember, for both the absence of competition and unique team bonding tactics. Sophomore Libero/DS Ashley Kelly says, "This season has certainly been unlike any other to say the least, but we are doing the most to make it work! Our team has worked hard to keep a similar close-knit team dynamic, hanging out in our family units or together abiding by the COVID guidelines when we can. We are hopeful to have a spring season; without our normal fall season we continue to work and practice as hard as if we were in season right now."

The volleyball team works hard to stay connected during these difficult times, and while they all wish they were a family unit, that is not the case. Team bonding