



THE OUTLOOK

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY'S
STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1933

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Classes to Resume Remotely Following Thanksgiving Break

MATTHEW CUTILLO
MANAGING / NEWS / LIFESTYLES EDITOR

President Patrick F. Leahy Ed.D., announced all in-person and hybrid courses, with the exception of in-person clinical and field-based experiences, will move to online delivery for the remainder of the fall semester, including the final exam period, via email on Monday, Nov. 2.

This decision is intended to reduce activity on campus, “particularly as residential students will be given the option to stay home after the break, thereby helping to prevent future spread of the virus among our campus community,” Leahy wrote.

“Thanks to the collective efforts of the university community, we have experienced a notable decrease in cases at Monmouth over the

past month,” Leahy wrote. “However, we simultaneously recognize the rise in cases elsewhere in New Jersey and throughout the country.”

Social interactions on campus will continue to be limited to five or fewer people. Masks must be worn and six feet or more of social

REMOTE cont. on pg. 2



PHOTO TAKEN by Jessica Pak

Following Leahy’s email, it may be another semester before students return for in-person classes.

University Hosts Climate Crisis Teach-in Week

SEAN EMERSON
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Climate Crisis Teach-In, which allowed students to engage with faculty on topics related to climate change, took place via Zoom from Monday, Oct. 26 to Friday, Oct. 30. Event topics included the basics of ocean acidification, sea-level rise, and greenhouse gases.

Megan Delaney, Ph.D., hosted the event “Eco-Grief and How We can Develop an Ecological Wellness Plan,” which detailed the obstacles in the natural world and surveyed the current situation pertaining to eco-grief, tying together the psychological and societal effects.

The term “Eco-Grief,” Delany explained, refers to the anxiety and the uncertainty that comes with the destruction of our ecological surroundings. Grief that comes from the despair of our changing world through either urban development or the escalation of natural disasters brought on by climate change.

The success of “ecopsychology” is predicated on how well we provide sustainability, Delaney explained. Ecopsychology is a therapeutic technique and ideology that tries to treat people psychologically by bringing them spiritually closer to nature.

“The goal [of ecopsychology] is to bridge our long-standing historical gulf between the psychological and ecological and see the needs of the planet and people on a continuum,” Delaney said. “Activities in nature can address the fact that we are still a part of the natural world.”

Delaney explained further that people do not understand the scientific framework of what is happening around them environmentally speaking, and anything that is seriously threatening to them is chalked up to small incertitudes.

“Research shows that doing activities in nature helps kids in terms of academic engagement and enthusiasm,” Delaney said.

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Rise in Prices for Off-Campus Rentals Affect Students

LUCIANA SILVA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The unexpected rise in price of rental properties in Long Branch has caused many Monmouth University students to look for other housing alternatives, according to students and specialists.

“Locally, we are seeing prices increase substantially in certain areas and the demand from buyers is overwhelming,” said Michele Irizarry, a CEO/Broker from Shore Prime Properties who has been working in the real estate industry for the past 18 years. “We cannot bring homes to the market as fast as people are buying them,” she said.

Moving.com, which is part of the realtor.com network, shows a breaking re-

cord on the number of people looking to buy or rent houses in the area. Realtor.com says summer home buying season is off to a roaring start. As buyers flooded into the market, Realtor.com’s monthly traffic hit an all time high of 86 million users in June 2020, breaking May’s record of 85 million unique users nationwide.

“People are trying to avoid big cities like New York and are migrating, especially to the shore area. At the moment, Long Branch is one of the most popular cities and this is one of the reasons why prices are going up,” said Olga Moncada, a realtor from Weichert Realtors in Marlboro, New Jersey. “Another reason would be the low interest rates at the moment. This is a good moment for homebuyers’ as well as for investors,” she said.

“Through informal conversations with the local communities, it would appear that some property owners of seasonal rentals have decided to extend their stay and not rent this year,” said Vaughn Clay Ph.D., Director of Off-Campus and Commuter Services at Monmouth. “With that said, the number of students who are living off campus this year still seems to be holding constant with what we have seen in prior years,” he said.

For those who live a few miles away, the alternative can be to stay at home. “I did not find a place because of COVID-19,” said Ben DeGennaro, a junior marketing student. “Previously I was renting an off-campus house with a couple other students.” Now DeGennaro, is living with his parents in northern New Jersey.

According to junior marketing student Matt Pereira, it was easier to find places to rent near Monmouth University prior to COVID-19. “Due to high prices, students now have to share their spaces with more

roommates. I believe there is a lack of places to rent, and yes, students are definitely forced to live with several more roommates in order to

RENTAL cont. on pg. 3



IMAGE TAKEN from istockphoto.com

The lack of living alternatives and rise in prices for off-campus rentals may have impacted students’ living arrangements this semester.

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Global Education Department Adjusts During COVID Pandemic

ISABELLA HANNA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The University’s Global Education Department has redefined their opportunities for global learning in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, cancelling spring and summer 2020 trips for students. Governments have cautioned their respective citizens from traveling beyond state/provincial borders, going as far as restricting some cases of international travel.

Graduate Assistant, Dena Capparelli, stated that the Global Education Office is adopting new methods of reaching students as she handles the department’s social media accounts. “During the early part of the spring semester, people were constantly in and out of the office, and now, most of the faculty is working remotely,” she explained.

In addition, students are increasingly more cautious to traveling outside the country. Capparelli stated, “while we obviously want more people to study abroad, students have to recognize the risks going into it, including possible cancellations.”

The Global Education Department has adjusted accordingly, making every effort to support interested students. Capparelli and her co-Graduate Assistant, Karla Avila, host weekly virtual Study Abroad 101 Information Sessions. Avila, who has worked with the Global Education Office for over two years, values these opportunities to share her abroad experiences and excite others as a result. Notwithstanding the outlook for near-future travel, Avila stated that “most students are still open, optimistic, and enthusiastic.” In addition to providing insight into Monmouth’s study abroad programs, the department has also encouraged its recent partnership with CIS Abroad and their virtual internships.

Kailee Moszynski, CIS Abroad’s Assistant Vice President of Marketing and Communication, gave some background on the internship application process, the opportunity itself, and the unique benefits to remote learning. Moszynski’s role in students’ virtual internship begins with students’ applications and ends after their completion of the six-week program.

She personally conducts the interviews, which are guaranteed for all applicants. After accepting a student, she works with her teams in Spain, New Zealand, South Africa, and others to determine a specific host location for that intern.

Her role illustrates how she feels about the program, which is that “students are not alone in this program,” and everything is done to “ensure that they

feel like they have a team behind them every step of the way.” After a student is placed with a host, they are assigned multiple programs and modules that get them internship ready. This includes resume building exercises, LinkedIn set ups, time management and organization tips, among other exercises.

According to Moszynski, the team at CIS want “to make sure students are getting the most out of their experiences.” Subsequently, Moszynski stated that “students were surprised at how much they were learning, and how confident they had become for future employment.” These students have access to employable skills that are that

much more advantageous to have in this new remote world.

When discussing the state of this program post-pandemic, Moszynski explained that “what started as a replacement has evolved into a sought-after experience.” Her sentiments were mirrored by both Capparelli and Avila. Avila had even said that she wished this was available to her as a freshman and sophomore, “it is just that unique.”

In terms of promoting this program to the University student body, Capparelli emphasized that this program be taken advantage of by first- and second-year students; she stated, “so many people only think of

the huge trips, like Italy or London,” and neglect other programs that are better suited for their needs.

The Global Education Department’s motto consists of the acronym ABC’s: Academics with a Global Perspective, Broadening one’s Cultural Awareness, and having a Competitive Advantage.

When students can keep an open mind about alternative abroad experiences, Moszynski stated that “students will leave with real experiences, having completed meaningful work and fostered tangible relationships.” This program is the beginning for “making international education a reality for more students,” Moszynski said.



IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com
Florence, Italy has closed its border to prospective students as COVID-19 cases continue to rise.

University Transitions to Remote Instruction as NJ Cases Rise

REMOTE cont. from pg. 1

distance must be maintained,” Leahy wrote, and residential hall visitation restrictions will remain in effect.

The University’s move to remote instruction was initially sparked by a “super-spreader” off-campus event resulting in more than 100 positive COVID-19 cases and required an additional 200 students to quarantine. Leahy acknowledged the series of modifications to academic delivery this fall, writing his appreciation of the student’s “...flexibility in helping to preserve the health and safety of our community.”

The “pass/fail” grading policy has been extended through the fall 2020 semester, whereby students may opt to receive a letter or pass/fail grade for each course. When grading concludes, the registrar will provide additional information to students on grading and a link to the pass/fail e-form.

All residential halls will remain open to students who wish to return to campus after Thanksgiving, Leahy wrote. Any on-campus residential student who chooses to stay home after Thanksgiving will need to inform the University of their decision by Friday, Nov. 13. The Office of Residential Life will then follow-up by email with detailed instructions for

this process. Any student who chooses to leave university housing will receive prorated refunds or credits on unused room contracts, meal plans, and parking fees. All refunds and credits will be prorated for the period beginning Monday, Nov. 30, 2020 through the end of the semester.

Marina Vujnovic, Ph.D., an Associate Professor of Journalism in the Department of Communication and Chair of the Faculty Council, says the decision to move online does not come as a surprise to the faculty.

“President [Leahy’s] decision is along the lines of what other universities are doing and we’ve expected

that given the COVID numbers in the state, we will be moving completely online after Thanksgiving,” Vujnovic said. “Faculty now expect possible sudden changes to our modes of delivery, so I believe that transition will be smoother than in the Spring.”

Vujnovic’s general sense is that faculty do support the decision, she explained. “There is a growing concern about the incoming colder days and everyone agrees that we should do all that we can to help curb the spread of coronavirus.”

Conor Guzinski, a senior computer science student, finds the transition online to be frustrating, but understandable. “Of course, it’s

annoying we pay for off-campus housing so we can be close to the University but we just sit in our bedrooms anyways, but I’m glad [Leahy] is ending the cat-and-mouse game of sending us back and forth and just sticking with a firm decision.”

Leahy plans to “be in touch again soon” with a message detailing plans for the spring semester.

Katherine Fernandez, a senior music industry student, considers the transition online to be inconvenient, but a necessary precaution.

“I’m a music industry major, so [transitioning online will] be a little difficult, especially when it comes to classes that have enough

hands-on learning to be a hybrid class but not enough to remain in-person when classes switch to online, like classes we have in the recording studio,” Fernandez said.

“I can only speak about my students,” Vujnovic said in regards to their ability to successfully transition online. “I teach online and although some students needed additional help, most are doing really well. Taking online classes can be a challenge but I think everyone, faculty, and students, are getting a better grasp of how online education works. I am certain that with some hard work and mutual understanding, we will finish this semester successfully.”

“The Health Center will remain open during this time,” Leahy wrote. The additional testing site in the OceanFirst Bank Center Lobby will also be open and providing free COVID-19 testing Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

“Upon extensive consultation with our public health officials and lengthy discussion with our key constituencies, we are confident that the decision to move academic programming primarily online, while continuing to offer on-campus residential and student services, will be the best move forward for our university community this fall,” Leahy wrote.



IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com
All courses will be delivered remotely after Thanksgiving Break, with the exception of those that are not capable of remote delivery such as science labs.

High Prices Discourage Students From Long Branch Living

RENTAL cont. from pg. 1

afford to pay rent. Given that MU is located next to the shore town of Long Branch, a very popular beach destination for many, it definitely is an area that is in high demand. The pandemic has affected the amount of houses available and in turn made it more difficult for students to find a residence for the semester,” said Pereira.

Paul Newell, an attorney and resident of Glen Ellen Apartments in Long Branch, also mentioned that the high prices might be the reason why students are no longer renting in the complex. “When I first moved in, there were four students living in a unit in my building. Since these students moved out several years ago, rents in the complex have gone up substantially. I do not believe that there are any MU students living in this complex at this time, since it is quite expensive. For a one bedroom apartment you will pay \$1,750.00 a month,” said Newell.

For some students who are trying to cope with higher rental prices, planning ahead can make a difference. Senior communication student Lauren DeMarco has previously rented off-campus and is currently living in a house with three roommates. She said that she believes students can find places to rent, but feels they have to start looking for

a place well before the school year starts. “I do, however, think that some students, depending on their range in price, are sometimes forced to live with more people,” said DeMarco.

Irizarry also said that she has had fewer inquiries this year from MU students looking for rentals. “Overall, students looking to rent during the school year still have homes available to them, if they are willing to meet the rising rent rates. It is the annual rental market that is greatly affected in an area that is dominated by seasonal rentals. Annual rentals are hard to come by. This, compounded by inflated rent rates, make it very difficult for an annual tenant to find housing that is affordable,” she said. “I do feel that due to the high rent rates, students are moving in together to offset the cost of living.”

As reported by Zillow.com, the median home value of single-family homes and condos in Long Branch is \$439,593. Zillow said this value is seasonally adjusted to remove outliers and only includes the middle price-tier of homes. Long Branch home values have gone up 7.0 percent over the past year and Zillow predicts they will rise 5.7 percent within the next year.

The average rent for a studio apartment according to zumper.com is currently \$1,600. This is a 5 percent increase compared to the previous year. Today’s

rental pricing for a one-bedroom apartment in Long Branch ranges from \$1,070 to \$3,590 with an average monthly rent of \$2,022, according to the website ApartmentHomeLiving.com. A three-bedroom apartment ranges from \$1,500 to \$7,076 – averaging \$3,861 for the same location.

“Due to the uncertainty of the moment, some students waited until the last minute to start looking for houses. And that, along with low offers that we have, definitely hurt them,” said Moncada.

Michaela Schenker, a graduate student of criminal justice, said that this is her third year renting an off-campus house. “I believe there are plenty of options as

far as student rentals go,” she said. “There are some that are really expensive but most are within a good budget and cost no more than \$650 a month. Having more roommates does not necessarily mean a cheaper monthly rental fee. I pay more this year than last year, and I have one more house mate than I previously did.”

Mary Tawil, a broker from Weichert who has been in the business for 11 years, said that although some homeowners that used to rent their houses for winter season are now staying for a longer period of time, there are still plenty of options and availability for MU students in the Long Branch

area. Additionally, according to Tawil, prices are stable.

Clay said he has not seen or heard of any additional difficulties when it comes to students renting off campus in the local communities this year. He said, “I believe that students can find off campus rentals with just a bit of organization and effort.”

According to Clay, Off-Campus and Commuter Services has not received any feedback from students who were searching for rentals that would have suggested that landlords or realtors were increasing the price per person or the overall monthly cost of renting a property off campus.



IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com
High rent prices have pushed some University students away from renting houses in the area.

Faculty Present Climate Teach-ins

CLIMATE cont. from pg. 1

“It does enhance critical thinking and improve behavior.”

She believes that factors like these need to be taken into consideration when thinking about us and nature, as Delaney goes on to say that studies show “... nature helps pregnant women with birth weight issues, emotional and social well-being, maintaining healthy eyes, and vitamin D absorption. Nature can take us away from the stimuli of the connected world.”

Sixty-six percent of the world population is projected to live in cities, Delaney said, and with the uncertainty of the future, “... a growing population and the shrinking of land, you know the earth is suffering”

William Schreiber Ph.D., Lecturer and Chair of the Chemistry Department, considers the climate crisis to be the most important issue facing the world because of its threat to all life on the planet. “I was proud to be a contributor [to the teach-in] both last year and this year by explaining the physical and chemical bases of the greenhouse effect,” Schreiber said.

Catherine Duckett, Ph.D., Associate Dean of the School of Science, considers this year’s Climate Crisis teach-in to be the outgrowth of last year’s teach-in, which she organized on the day of an international climate strike.

The Climate Crisis teach-in was the outgrowth of last year’s teach in which I organized on a

strike. “Monmouth Faculty do not strike, but 16 faculty last year presented at the teach-in,” Duckett explained. “This year, a small group of us, including. Heide Estes, Ph.D., of [the English department], Randall Abate, Ph.D., of the Political Science [department] and Professor Kimberly Callas of [the Art department] felt that we should have a larger teach-in that included more people and that it should be more than one day. We organized focus groups and faculty volunteered to present and some invited their students to present.”

Forty different people presented 29 unique presentations and one faculty roundtable, Duckett said. More than 250 different people attended, many attending two or more sessions. The best attended sessions were the Poetry presentation “World on Fire” organized by Professor Deanna Shoemaker and the Friday afternoon student presentations organized by Randall Abate, Ph.D., with upwards of 35 attendees

each.

“Climate change is the problem that is going to be the most expensive, stress producing and damaging in the lifetimes of most students,” Duckett said, “That right there is reason enough for students to study it and for the University to sponsor events about climate change.”

Climate change is happening at a rate faster than most biological organisms can adjust or adapt to, which means that agricultural, fisheries and forestry systems are going to be disrupted, Duckett explained. “Climate change is already causing migrations of people that are disrupting societies and promoting international violence.”

Duckett and the other organizers would like to hear from students about what they want in the next Climate Crisis Teach-In, she said. “The climate crisis is not going away and society needs climate mediated problems solved, how can I as a faculty organizer help faculty meet student informational needs.”



IMAGE TAKEN from Pexels.com
Greenhouse gases are major contributors to global warming.

COVID Tracking App

MATTHEW CUTILLO
MANAGING/NEWS/LIFESTYLES EDITOR

Mary Anne Nagy, Vice President for Student Life and Leadership Engagement, emailed students on Monday, Oct. 26., alerting them of the COVID Alert NJ mobile app. Introduced by The New Jersey Department of Health, the app is “free and secure... [and] anonymously alerts users if they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.” The app will also provide users with up-to-date information on New Jersey reopening news, key COVID-19 metrics, and a user-friendly symptom-tracking tool, all while “maintaining privacy and anonymity between users.”

“I strongly encourage you to add your phone to the COVID fight,” Nagy wrote. “Working together, we can help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our communities.”

The app is free via the iPhone App Store and the Google Play Store, or through accessing covid19.nj.gov/app. Users can opt in to “exposure notifications” on the app, which allows the user to know if they have been in close contact with someone who has the app and has tested positive for COVID-19.

“Encourage at least five of your colleagues, friends or family members to download the app,” Nagy wrote. “The app’s effectiveness depends

on collective participation. The more people who use it, the more effective it will be. The app can, and should, be used by anyone in New Jersey over the age of 18.”

The COVID Alert NJ app uses Bluetooth proximity technology and works through an underlying system developed by Google and Apple, according to the app’s official explanation on the Covid19.nj.gov site. “A user’s app detects and logs Bluetooth devices that have been within six feet of the user for 10 minutes or longer. These devices then exchange anonymous codes.”

If one of the users tests positive within the next 14 days, they will be contacted by a public health representative working at the local health department and provided with a validation code. After a positive user enters the validation code into the app, the explanation goes on to clarify, the app will retrieve all of the random codes collected over the preceding 14 days and will send an anonymous notification to those individuals who have potentially been exposed to COVID-19.

Nagy urges students to continue to follow health precautions, such as wearing a face covering, practicing social distancing and hand hygiene, and staying home if sick. “Thank you for helping to keep our families, friends, co-workers, and communities safe,” Nagy wrote.

Should New Jersey Legalize Marijuana?

JOHN SPINELLI
STAFF WRITER

Yesterday, New Jersey residents voted “Yes” or “No” to decide if recreational cannabis should become legal. Over the years, there have been challenges getting legalization passed through the state legislature; because of these issues, they have decided to cast a referendum and declare a constitutional amendment if passed. As a lifelong New Jersey resident, I am confident there will be more benefits to our state if it passes. As a conservative, I never thought my views on marijuana would have changed, but now this is an issue where I disagree with some Republicans on. Let me explain.

I am not a supporter of drug use, but I do believe in the idea of adults having personal freedom. We claim we live in the land of the free, but are we staying true to that statement? These drug prohibitions have allowed the government to dictate our lives instead of being accountable to the constitution. Although I think drug prohibition in the past was written with good intentions, I think it has caused more harm than good.

For example, a reason why African Americans and other minorities have higher levels of incarceration is due to strict drug legislation, commonly known as the “War on Drugs.” Americans over the years have unjustly been imprisoned for non-violent drug offenses. There have also been instances where botched police raids have led to accidental deaths. I get it, drugs are not good for society, but is it worth packing the prisons and issuing warrants

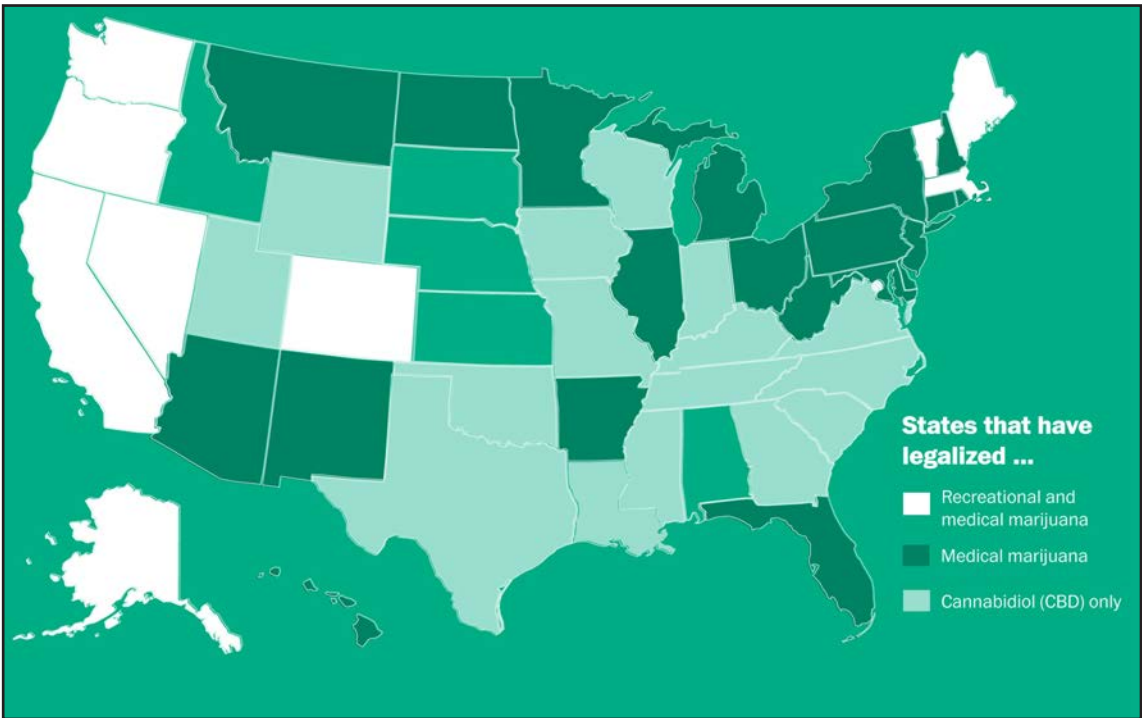


IMAGE TAKEN from The Washington Post
New Jersey could possibly become the tenth state to legalize recreational and medical marijuana after this election.

over a virtually harmless plant? Marijuana was also completely normal before the 1970s. Federal law prohibitions started as a response to the 1960s hippie counterculture. What most people today do not realize is it used to be legal dating back to the Jamestown era. The founding fathers like Thomas Jefferson and George Washington admitted to growing cannabis on their plantations. I did not believe this historical claim at first, but I discovered it was completely true. Given the historical societal tolerance for cannabis, I think this begs another question. There are also plenty of legal vices in our society like gambling, alcohol, tobacco, adult

clubs, etc. What makes marijuana any different from them? Another argument for legalization is New Jersey’s reputation as a popular tourist state. The Jersey Shore itself generates on average six billion dollars per year. Robert H. Scott III, Professor in the Economics Department, explained the details of legalization in his recent opinion article on NJ.com. He said there could be opportunities for tax substitutes and a potential five percent employment increase if legalization happens. Legalized marijuana could also affect universities in New Jersey. Monmouth University’s administration is aware of this potential. Vice President Mary Anne Nagy,

Director of Student Life, said there could be new issues with legalized cannabis. She said, “There are some concerns about how legalized marijuana could affect student life at Monmouth. One of the main concerns is campus safety and dangerous behavior like people driving high to campus.” Nagy continued, “If students use legalized marijuana it could potentially decrease academic and/or athletic performance in students. We will see what happens after the election, but whether or not marijuana becomes legal, I want students to know that if they feel that their use of substances is affecting

them negatively in any way, there is help available at the school.” She explained the details of Monmouth’s policy, “It’s important to know that even if marijuana becomes legal in New Jersey, it will still not be allowed on campus. Since the university accepts federal funds for a variety of reasons (financial aid is a big one), we must follow federal law as it relates to controlled substances and marijuana is considered a controlled substance under federal law. In addition, illegal alcohol and drug usage will still not be permitted in the student code of conduct.” In Scott’s article, he also mentioned more students from out of state might be interested in applying to New Jersey colleges if marijuana is legal. Nagy responded, “In terms of enrollment, I don’t see the legalization of marijuana impacting our enrollment from out-of-state students because again, we would not permit its use on campus.” She emphasized, “Might there be some students from a state where it is not legal to come to NJ, maybe. However, I would hope that the reason that people come to Monmouth University is our great professors, a strong close-knit community, and an ideal location to live out the college experience.” Yesterday voters decided the answer to this question at the polls. I understand why people still think marijuana should still be illegal; their opinion is valid. There are good reasons to argue for continuing anti-drug policies. Despite the potential negatives, in my opinion, marijuana legalization seems to do more good than harm.

Adorable Adoptables

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Ocatsio-Cortez



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Purrella DeVille



Female!

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Local Restaurant Spotlight:

Eating Out During a Pandemic

LILY HOFFMANN
CLUB & GREEK EDITOR

Just as Summer 2020 came to a close, so did New Jersey's ban on indoor dining. On Sept. 4, restaurants and bars in the Garden State were able to open their doors to patrons following disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As per state regulations, establishments have been required to follow policies that enforce social distancing, encourage the use of contactless menus, and require face coverings. These Executive Orders came just in time for the beginning of the fall semester. For many students at Monmouth, off-campus eateries not only lend students a break from meals at the dining hall, but often provide them with a paycheck.

Brighton Avenue in the West End district of Long Branch is home to a handful of restaurants that are fan favorites of both locals and students, providing options from your morning coffee to dessert.

Senior music industry student Mikaela McDonough is a part-time employee at Surf Taco on Brighton Avenue, a local favorite for Mexican-Californian cuisine. For Surf Taco, 25 percent capacity regulations would only permit nine people to be inside the establishment, including workers. "We are continuing

to do take out and have four tables outside for the nicer days people want to sit outside," she said.

McDonough noted that the quick service eatery is still unsure of plans for when the colder weather sets in. She speculates that their accommodations will only change if the state's regulation does.

Specialist Professor of Business, John Buzza, is a catering connoisseur and restaurant consultant. He explained that restaurants along the shore, like those in Pier Village, are especially reliant on outdoor dining. These restaurants missed out on a lot of revenue during their peak season in the summer due to COVID-19 regulations.

He said, "Many of these restaurants have been surviving off government money and grants." This money often goes to rent and payroll, but he wonders how long something like that could go on for. "The government is certainly thinking about 50 percent capacity," Buzza said.

Due to the slower season in the winter, he predicts that restaurants in shore towns like Manasquan and LBI will begin to experience a fall-out. For this reason, Buzza predicts that restaurants will begin putting pressure on the New Jersey Restaurant Association, as well as the government, to permit at least 75

percent capacity.

The Office is another restaurant that has been hit by the effects of the pandemic. Jessica Pak, a junior communication student who works at the Toms River sushi bar, said, "Since it's getting cold out, we installed heaters outside in the patio bar to keep our customers warm."

For customers who would prefer to stay inside, there are indoor accommodations as well. Pak said, "The indoor seating is very safe with all of the tables being six feet apart from each other. Plus, we spray the tables down every time a customer leaves so there are no germs by the time another customer sits down at their table."

Heaters seem to be a popular option for restaurants in preparation for the winter season. Ricky Govel, a junior music industry student, serves at The Butcher's Block in Long Branch. This location has gained immense popularity among locals and celebrities alike for their high-end selection of meats. Govel said, "We have heaters, and we're also going to be closing in certain parts of the outdoor dining so we can still seat people out there."

He explained that they constructed an area outside called "The Terrace," made of reclaimed brick and wood, with fireplaces and heaters to

keep the heat in. This addition has been well received by customers, Govel said. "People love it so much they never want to leave. They feel away from the 'new norm' that we have," he said.

Although dining in New Jersey has been inhibited by the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, local restaurants have been persevering, and will continue to do so until things improve.



PHOTO COURTESY of Ricky Govel

Local restaurants like The Butcher's Block in Long Branch have tried it find ways to navigate indoor and outdoor dining amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Science Students Navigate Labs with COVID-19 Regulations in Place

MELISSA BADAMO
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/ FEATURES EDITOR

JOSEPHINE GARGIULO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, labs and clinicals for science, nursing, and health studies students are looking a bit different this semester with social distancing regulations in place. The movement to remote classes last March had shut down all in-person classes and research labs. However, they were able to resume in person this semester, and will continue after Thanksgiving break when all other classes will move online.

Steven Bachrach Ph.D., Dean of the School of Science and Professor of Chemistry, said that faculty developed a variety of different methods for science courses over the summer to prepare for the fall semester.

He said, "Some labs are completely remote, using a variety of different digital tools. Some labs are meeting in person every other week, with students engaged in a digital lab during the off week. Some labs are running with little change in their operations, other than the COVID-19 prevention measures (masks, social distancing, reduced occupancy). We even have a lab meeting outdoors."

Senior biology student Brittany Sawyer said, "Labs are very different now since the pandemic began. My professors have been very careful with maintaining social distancing by having half of us come in on

one day and then the other half on another day. We also are split into different groups so there aren't as many people using the same instruments at one time. Our work stations are much more spaced now instead of working right next to someone like we did before."

This hybrid format, in which half the students conduct in-person labs at a time while the others work at home, is popular among science courses this semester since labs can only hold eight students when socially distanced. However, according to Dorothy Lobo Ph.D., Associate Professor and Chair of the Biology Department, this method brings along some challenges.

"This [hybrid] format requires twice as much planning and coordination for the faculty who teach the labs. It has been a lot of work," she said. For example, the department has prepared boxes of lab equipment for students to pick up so that they can work from home.

Some professors are also utilizing the virtual program Labster to conduct online labs, a "significant investment" according to Lobo, which allows students to attain valuable lab accessibility from home.

Lobo said that online work generally requires students to be more proactive in organizing their schedule in order to manage the workload. However, she also noted that there are advantages to online work. With her senior-level biology course offering asynchronous lectures, students are able to fit the course into their schedules, keep

up with the material if they have to quarantine, and re-watch the more difficult assignments at their own pace.

The method of delivery depends on the type of class being offered, according to William Schreiber Ph.D., Lecturer and Chair of the Chemistry Department. He said that organic chemistry and general chemistry courses are using a mix of in-person and virtual labs, analytical chemistry courses are being conducted with as much in-person lab work as possible, and physics courses are being conducted virtually.

Senior biology student Jesse Bragger said, "I was very happy that labs were open again because I believe they are so vital at trans-

forming the future of research and medicine so poignant to the pandemic at hand. My lab professor split up my class in half and uses audio visual software including Zoom to allow both classes to hear what he is saying and see what he is writing on the boards from home. We even have our own whiteboards and markers distributed by our professor so that we do not share any equipment."

Some science classes have begun to focus particularly on COVID-19. Bragger said, "The genetics lab is currently focused around COVID-19 and we are coming up with ways to treat COVID-19 using miRNA therapies, which is super cool." By utilizing miRNA therapies in the genetics lab, students

like Bragger can learn about a new target approach to creating a treatment for COVID-19.

Even with regulations in place, professors believe that students can still receive a proper hands-on education this semester.

"The mix of different lab delivery modes has meant that students are getting hands-on experience where truly essential, and the quality of the virtual labs is top notch," said Bachrach. "That being said, I know that all of our faculty will welcome the return to a normal lab class when it becomes safe to do so."

Schreiber said, "Hands-on laboratory instruction is critically important for scientists-in-training. We are providing as much of that as we can this semester, based on available laboratory space and physical distancing requirements. By manipulation of class schedules we are planning to increase this critical aspect of science education during the spring semester."

"It has certainly been a challenge to create appropriate lab experiments, both in-person and virtual, that are safe and enriching," continued Bachrach. "It has also been difficult to have to adapt to changes in the campus environment...I am very proud of what our faculty have done this semester in creating a meaningful lab experience under very difficult conditions."

"The Department really values giving the students a quality experience and we have been doing our best to support each other," Lobo added.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth University

With most science courses being conducted in a hybrid format, students can stay safe while obtaining valuable hands-on experience in their field of study.

Blue Light Glasses: Safety Precaution or Scam?

LILY HOFFMANN
CLUB & GREEK EDITOR

Remember when being called “four eyes” was totally insulting to anyone who wore glasses? Now wearing specs is a huge trend, especially with the rise of school and employment being virtual. Many people are choosing to wear Blue Light blocking glasses. Not only do these lenses claim to offer protection from harmful light, but they have also become a fashion trend for men and women alike.

So what exactly is blue light? Ambr Eyewear is a seller for Blue Light glasses and they explain the science behind it on their website. The electromagnetic spectrum is made up of different colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet. Remember Roy G. Biv from science class? Blue light comes from this spectrum. Otherwise known as HEV: high energy visible light, it is visible to the human eye and it emits a high amount of energy.

Blue light exposure can occur from screen time in any form, whether it be via laptop, television or smartphone. However, the largest form of blue light exposure actually comes from the sunlight

However, scientists are at odds with whether or not blue light exposure is truly associated with serious adverse effects. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, no scien-

tific evidence has pointed to the fact that there is damage to the eye when exposed to blue light.

Surprisingly, being exposed to blue light is actually associated with several benefits, including increased attention spans, improved mood and even enhanced reflexes. These can even be helpful when staring at a screen for virtual classes. Even so there are downfalls related to blue light exposure. It has been concluded that blue light can disrupt one’s circadian rhythm. This is the biological pattern associated with the sleep cycle, and it affects the pattern of waking and sleeping.

Exposure to blue light prior to bedtime can lead to problems falling asleep. According to Harvard Health, this is due to the suppression of melatonin secretions. For this reason, professionals recommend cutting screen time several hours prior to going to bed.

This begs the question of what the benefits are of wearing blue light glasses? And are they really even effective? According to the Cleveland Clinic, the symptoms many people believe to be associated with blue light exposure, are actually due to digital eye strain, or Computer Vision Syndrome.

After staring at a screen

for prolonged periods of time, the eye may begin to feel dry and feelings of discomfort may arise. This is likely due to the eye’s exhaustion from moving about the screen and shifting focus. For some, headaches even occur after too much time at the computer. Many refer to these symptoms as “Zoom fatigue.”

Junior communication student Hailee Kalee combatted these feelings by purchasing a pair of blue light blocking glasses. She said, “After trying my first pair of blue light glasses I noticed immediate relief from all the symptoms I was previously experiencing.” Like many

others, Kalle was enduring optic migraine and light sensitivity. She added, “My eyes adjusted much better to screens and now I can do my online school work and look at my phone with little to no problem.”

For some, the conflicting information regarding the effects of blue light may deter them from purchasing a pair of blue light glasses, which can cost upwards of \$100 from more well known brands such as Warby Parker and Quay.

Professor Ryan Tetro, Esq. of the Political Science and Sociology Department recommends simply looking off screen when the Zoom fatigue settles in. For him, this feeling is a lot like car sickness. “I find that it helps my eyes [to] focus on something steady. Not flashing colors or moving screens. I will do something simple like just stare at a picture on the wall or even just the wall itself...It’s kind of like when you are in a car and you try to look at the trees passing by the lines in the road. It can make you feel sick. But if you stare at something constant in the distance, it doesn’t have the same feeling.”

Clearly, limited information on the topic prevents students from truly knowing if blue light glasses are really helping in the virtual learning scene. Regardless, the new trend has given many a sense of safety and comfort, while giving people a sense of style.



IMAGE TAKEN from Allure.com

The benefits of being exposed to blue light are increased attention spans and improved mood.



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THE TRIAL OF THE CHICAGO 7: Sorkin's Latest Legal Stunner

ALEX DYER
ASSISTANT NEWS / ENTERTAINMENT
EDITOR

I spent a lot of my free time this year watching the United States struggle greatly with a push for social justice. As far as civil rights go, our country's division has reached a level we haven't seen since the 1960s.

In August 1968, many left-wing activist groups gathered in Chicago to protest the ever-increasingly unpopular Vietnam War, planning to disrupt the Democratic National Convention, which was set to nominate the also unpopular Hubert Humphrey to take on Richard Nixon. For days, members of the Youth International Party (yippies), Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (Mobe), and other groups opposing the Vietnam War gathered en masse to peacefully protest. On Aug. 28, a police-incited riot broke out, and, after over 600 protestors and unaffiliated civilians were beaten and gassed by heavily armed

members of the Chicago Police Department and Illinois National Guard, eight leaders from these anti-war groups were arrested and tried for inciting a riot.

Released on Netflix in September, Aaron Sorkin's *The Trial of The Chicago 7* begins with an upbeat and almost funky montage that progresses from clips of draft letters in mailboxes to the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X to an introduction of the movie's cast; and a large cast it is. The Chicago Seven themselves are: Tom Hayden and Rennie Davis, members of the SDS; Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman, leaders of the yippies; David Dellinger, leader of the Mobe; and John Froines and Lee Weiner, who were called "givebacks" in the film—meaning they were tried so the jury could "give them back" after convicting the others.

Bobby Seale, leader of the Black Panther Party, was also a defendant; one who was disenchanted with being associated with the riots, as he was only in Chicago for four hours on Aug. 28. Played by up-and-comer Yahya Abdul-Mateen

II, Bobby Seale's fiery conduct in an unfair courtroom gave me goosebumps on multiple occasions; every time Judge Julius Hoffman (Frank Langella) handed down a contempt of court charge (and he did this a few times), I cringed. When he was bound, gagged, and treated like a beast for voicing his dissatisfaction, I nearly bit my tongue at the fact that this happened just some 50 years ago.

However, I think that's the point of Abdul-Mateen's performance: to elicit a response of shock and disappointment at injustice. We instinctively don't like to hear a judge tell court officers to take a black man into a room and "see to it that he's dealt with." Though a relatively small part of the 130-minute film, going into awards season, I can't help but have a feeling his supporting role will be acknowledged.

Just as Abdul-Mateen's performance intentionally got my unconditional sympathy, Langella's turn as the very real villain Judge Julius Hoffman (no relation to defendant Abbie Hoffman) was highly thought-provoking in the other direction, as it were.

Langella's subtlety in weaving together harsh adjudication and the onset of senility is a really great combination that he pulls off really well. In that sense he also becomes an excellent proxy for many unqualified law professionals that unfortunately plague our system to this day; I would be remiss if I glossed over the fact that, as Sacha Baron Cohen's Abbie Hoffman said multiple times, this was indeed a political trial.

Although the actual events that took place involved all seven of these men, much of the film revolved around the specific case of Tom Hayden, played by Eddie Redmayne. I've always found Redmayne to be charming, if not a little bland, which is solid but leaves a sort of excitement to be desired.

In *The Chicago 7*, Redmayne kept his boyish, Hugh Grant-like charm but put it fully toward playing Hayden. This time, though, I felt different about Redmayne. He brought Sorkin's interpretation of Tom Hayden to life in a way that was genuinely exciting, despite the whole movie essentially taking place inside the courtroom. It's difficult not to get emotionally riled up and invested in the cause when Redmayne screams into the crowd that "if blood is gonna flow, let it flow all over the city;" his charm and passion really come off as authentic, and it captivated me in a way he never has before. This is perhaps my favorite performance of his, hands-down.

None of these performances would be worth talking about, though, save for Aaron Sorkin's masterful script. Sorkin is well-known in the top tier of screenwriters, especially when it comes to legal dramas. With a robust body of work including *The West Wing*, *Newsroom*, *A Few Good Men*, *Moneyball*, and plenty others, Sorkin's script was not lacking. As for how that writing translates into acting, I think Sacha Baron Cohen's interpretation of comedian and yippie leader Abbie Hoffman is a great example.

In this nonlinear story, flashbacks are interspersed throughout the court scenes. A few of these flashbacks exist as Cohen doing standup in character as Hoffman, and this juxtaposition of comedy inside a strict drama actually serves to simulate how many actually learned about the trial and riot themselves. Cohen's droll performance in a relatively serious film brightened up Sorkin's strong story even more.

The technical art side of *The Trial of The Chicago 7* isn't necessarily a phenomenon by any means, but there are no shortage of talented people working on the wardrobe for this '60s period piece. Whoever was in the fake blood department had a good amount of work ahead of them and deserves a commendation for supplying fake blood for some 500 extras playing injured protestors. The score, by Daniel Pemberton, was somewhat generic for a courtroom drama—think *Law & Order*—but not inadequate by any means.

One technical aspect I think was nailed, though, was the work by Greek cinematographer Phedon Papamichael. He channeled very well the feeling of the 1960s and the camerawork really shone, especially in outdoors nighttime scenes; he made an impromptu protest concert precipitating the riot look and feel like an intimate Woodstock, and in turn built on top of the suspense element leading up to that riot scene.

It can't be emphasized enough how important it is that *The Trial of The Chicago 7* came out in 2020. In the past year, we've become all too familiar with peaceful protests being met with police violence. As one of the most prominent and famous cases of this phenomenon, the Chicago Seven trial is a sobering reminder that the fight for civil justice didn't end in the Civil Rights era, nor is it over now. At four out of five stars, Aaron Sorkin's film uses yesterday's history to hammer home just how important justice is today.



IMAGE TAKEN from ThePlaylist.net

Aaron Sorkin's legal drama follows the real-life story of The Chicago Seven, a left-wing activist group of the 1960s, whose members were arrested after protesting the Vietnam War.

Book Review: *Bending the Universe*

KRYSTA DONNELLY
STAFF WRITER

You know a good book when it takes you a moment to realize your fingertips are laced around the edges of the page, your mind is gripping on to every word that dances on your lips, and the meaning of those words resonate with your life, whether it is your past, present, or future.

Beautiful and brutally honest poetry has that effect on readers, and *Bending the Universe* by Alaskan artist Justin Wetch captured that ideology tremendously. Wetch is an idealist disguised as a pessimist through his writing. He published this book at 19, while he was a freshman at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

This international bestseller is a collection of 100 original pieces, broken up into five different sections; Society, Love, Life, Personal, and Nature. The handful of these uncover the true, raw morality of multiple aspects of life. The common thread running through his writing is thor-

oughness and perspective. *Bending the Universe* explores a range of topics, ranging from diversity to body image; from politics to love and heartbreak.

Wetch does a remarkable job at portraying his opinion in this book. Not in a way that is overwhelming, but in a convincing manner that allows readers to second guess their view point on specific topics in life. Wetch's book has the ability to alter how one perceives life, both personally and from a global, outsider viewpoint. It has the power to alter one's mindset, opinions, or personality. It makes us, the ones that are reading, face some of the realities we refuse to face on our own.

Bending the Universe does not just aim to speak about Wetch's adventures in life and personal emotions; it also encourages others to grab a hold of their voice and allow it to be heard. He yearns to have his readers stand up for causes that are right and for what they, as people, believe in, and to not be held back by entities that attempt to silence them.

This book examines the mistakes in the world, and leaves room for possible and reachable change.

The cover of *Bending the Universe* speaks for itself. The colorful imagery paints an image as to what lies in the pages underneath. The poems are intense and honest, igniting some feelings and senses you never knew you were once capable of. The fire in his words is electrifying.

Wetch has a way of taking some difficult-to-discuss topics and releasing them onto the page in a well-constructed and warm manner. Now, by no means am I saying he beats around the bush, but the intended points are made evident, yet personal. That is what I enjoyed most about this poetry, and something that stuck with me.

Sometimes, it is easier to pick up a book and have someone speak to you, rather than call someone to dish out your worries or feelings. Wetch allows you to feel like he is right beside you as you read and feel the way you do. What is nice about this one is that

there is no start. More importantly, though, there is no end. *Bending the Universe* was created to be flipped through, finding sections and themes to feel and read when necessary.

In "Society," Wetch dives into the problems our society currently faces—racism, inequality, sexism, gender roles, misconceptions; the list goes on. He touches upon politics, but is not too controversial. "Welcome to America" is an outstanding piece that largely reflects the current events happening around us.

In "Love" and "Life," he acknowledges the inner difficulties with pursuing relationships and going after goals and decisions. "Personal" was a generous section for Wetch to provide. He allows the reader to question their own space and the world around them, but he equally shares the same about himself. Ultimately, nature allows an entirely new perspective to the brilliance of the outside world that I once was ignorant to.

Wetch's outstanding talent,

which is nothing short of breathtaking, shines through in this book. *Bending the Universe* will sing to you, resonate with you, and alter your mindset.

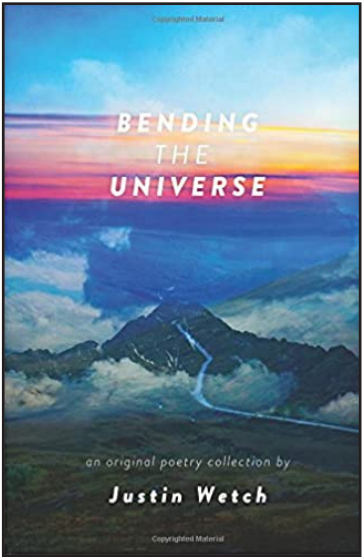


IMAGE TAKEN from Amazon

In *Bending the Universe*, poet Justin Wetch writes about a range of topics, from politics to love and heartbreak.

Social Work Society to Host 15th Annual Teach-In

LILY HOFFMANN
CLUB & GREEK EDITOR

The Social Work Society and School of Social Work will host their 15th Annual Teach-in via Zoom on Nov. 7. Co-sponsored by the Institute for Global Understanding, the teach-in's theme is "Quarantine Confes-

sions: How it took a global pandemic to shed light on some of the most pressing societal issues in the United States."

Virtual conferences include a keynote address on the COVID-19 state of affairs in New Jersey, as well as panels on economics, health, and education. The teach-in will end with a

call to action and closing statement.

All of the panels will be hosted by members of the Social Work Society's Executive Board. Brittany Macaluso and Jamie Terrone serve as the organization's Co-Presidents. Olivia Monahan serves as Vice President and Brianna Rudolph is the group's treasurer. Ha-leigh DiMuzio is the secretary, Marissa Henderson serves as event chair and Kailey Montiero is the social media chair.

According to Macaluso, planning for annual Teach-In events begins in the spring semester. She said, "Each year the Social Work Society focuses their teaching around a specific global problem that is plaguing our society today." To members of the Society, it only made sense that the effects of the impending pandemic should be talked about this year.

"The event isn't necessarily about the pandemic itself, but discussing relevant issues that were either buried and brought to light because of the pandemic, or other social issues that were created as a result of it." This thought inspired discussion panels with themes such as education, economics, and health care. Within each panel, sub categories will be discussed. For example remote learning would be discussed

during the education panel, and food insecurity would be presented during the session on economics.

Members of the Social Work Society as well as their Executive Board Members will be hosting the panels and moderating questions. Macaluso said, "The E-board is the group of students who plan the event." During this period of planning, members of the organization begin reaching out to people who would be fit to speak.

All of the topics being presented during this event are especially timely. This week, University President, Patrick Leahy made the decision to switch to fully to remote instruction following Thanksgiving Break. This might cause difficulty for students who have been enrolled in classes instructed in-person throughout the semester. This is a topic that would most likely be discussed during the education panel.

This event is not exclusive to Social Work students. Anyone who is interested can attend. Macaluso said, "Within each of the panels we can almost guarantee that everyone watching will find something that they can relate to/resonate with, possibly in terms of adjusting to remote learning, struggling

to afford food, or being laid off..We have so many relevant topics that will be covered."

She added, "This could also be a way to help [them] feel more connected and feel less alone in what they are going through." She added that this could also be a way for students to be linked with experts or other community resources.

Macaluso included that food insecurity within the community would be discussed within the panels as well. According to Monmouth University, 30 percent of students who attend a college or university in the United States experience some form of food insecurity. This could be an opportunity for students to be informed of community resources such as SGA's "The Nest" food pantry.

For the students that may be tired of hearing about COVID-19, Macaluso said, "While [students] might not want to hear about it anymore...we think this event will provide a unique perspective on what is going on and what we can collectively do moving forward."

For more information on the Teach-In, be sure to check out the Monmouth University Social Work Society's Instagram, @mu_sw_society, or contact Sanjana Ragudaran, Ph.D. and Jeanne Koller. Ph.D. from the Department of Social Work.

MONMOUTH
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15th Annual Teach In

Sponsored by the Social Work Society & School of Social Work
Co-Sponsored by the Institute for Global Understanding

Quarantine Confessions:

How it took a Global Pandemic to shed light on some of the most pressing Social Issues in the United States

Virtual Conference via Zoom

Saturday, November 7, 2020

12:00 PM - 5:00 PM EST

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM PST

12:00-12:30 Welcome Address

12:30-1:20 Keynote Address: COVID-19 State of Affairs in NJ

1:30-2:20 Economic Impact Panel

2:30-3:20 Impact on Health (physical and emotional wellbeing) Panel

3:30-4:20 Impact on Education Panel

4:30-5:00 Call to Action and Closing Statement

If you have any questions, please email Dr. Sanjana Ragudaran at ragudaran@monmouth.edu or Dr. Jeanne Koller at jkoller@monmouth.edu

“Being Me in Greek Life”

LILY HOFFMANN
CLUB & GREEK EDITOR

Monmouth University is the home base for five Multicultural Greek Council chapters including, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., Chi Upsilon Sigma National Latin Sorority Inc., Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority Inc., Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity Inc. and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.

On Thursday Oct. 29, the organizations of MGC hosted a virtual event called, "Being Me in Greek Life." The event was presented by Alexa Rodriguez, a junior psychology student, and a sister of Lambda Theta Alpha. She is also the events chair for Monmouth's Multicultural Greek Council.

The event was an open discussion forum for members of MGC chapters to discuss their experiences in Greek life thus far. It touched on topics such as overcoming stigmas, the benefits of joining their organizations, and Greek unity.

Rodriguez opened up the event by asking what inspired participants to join an MGC organization. For many attendees of the event, it was the sense of community. Priya Telidevara, the President of MGC said, "Coming to Monmouth was definitely a culture shock for me." Coming from a diverse hometown, she felt isolated from other cultures. She said the MGC organizations were always welcoming and gave her a "home away from home" feeling, that is often associated with joining a fraternity or sorority.

Yarleny Mejia, a junior communication student add-

ed, "I feel like MGC is really super close to each other. These are a group of people that get you. You can talk to them about anything and they just understand where you're coming from." Many other members of the community agreed that the support from their organizations is one of the best aspects.

Another topic of conversation was the negative stigma that Greek life often gets. Often, Greek life receives a bad reputation, especially in terms of partying and hazing. Members of the Monmouth MGC community denounced these stereotypes, saying that if anything, their organizations pushed them to become better members of the campus community. Vanessa Espino, a sister of Chi Upsilon Sigma said, "I feel like for me, it was definitely that I learned more about professionalism and time management."

Many participants have also benefited from a leadership standpoint. Telidevara

said, "I think one of the biggest things I've learned from Greek life is separating business matters from personal matters, especially because these are my sisters." She said it's helped her create professional boundaries when dealing with business matters within her organization, Lambda Theta Alpha.

Will Nicholson, the Graduate Intern in the Office of Fraternity Life asked attendees to share memories that they have working with other organizations on campus. Participants agreed that philanthropy is a common bond. Mejia reflected on The Big Event saying "I specifically remember having a grand old time with Lambda Theta Phi, their jokes are so funny. Not even that, but there were people from IFC and Panhellenic, and it was lowkey so fun."

MGC will be hosting more events throughout the semester. For more information, follow their Instagram page, @monmouth_mgc.



PHOTO COURTESY of Mike Mantis

Members of the Multicultural Greek Council pose at an event in February 2020

TALKING ABOUT CULTURAL APPROPRIATION WITH LTA

LILY HOFFMANN
CLUB & GREEK EDITOR

On Tuesday, Oct. 27 Lambda Theta Alpha Sorority Incorporated held a virtual discussion on cultural appropriation. The event was entitled "My Culture is Not Your Costume," and it discussed what is and is not considered offensive to wear on Halloween.

The keynote speaker was Demi Ardic, who is a senior sociology student. She was initiated into the chapter in the Spring of 2020. The event commenced with a game of virtual hangman with the phase "cultural appropriation."

Ardic defined cultural appropriation as the use of someone's cultural identity as a trend or style. She said, "the more dominant culture takes a certain [aspect] from a certain culture and makes it their own without giving credit where credit is due."

She exemplified this by showing pictures of the Chicago Redskins logo, popular white rapper Bhad Bhabie's dreadlocks and a picture of an Asian woman with chopsticks in her hair. She explained that when people participate in acts of cultural appro-

priation, they glorify a certain culture without feeling enduring the same hardships that they do.

Attendees of the event were put in breakout rooms to discuss their own examples of culturally appropriated Halloween costumes. Some popular examples included gypsies, guidos, and sugar skulls.

What made this event unique was that it allowed for open conversation between participants. Senior sociology student, and sister of Lambda Theta Alpha said, "I think it's really important to have these presentations and discussions especially in college because if you're not educated you could just go to the Halloween store and pick a costume and not even realize how you might be offending someone."

Moriah Roof, a sophomore education student and sister of Alpha Omicron Pi said, "Through this presentation, I learned about cultural appropriation with costumes and how to be respectful while choosing a costume for Halloween."

Overall, the event was an informative success and they look forward to hosting more sessions like this one in the future.



PHOTO COURTESY of Lambda Theta Alpha, Tau Chapter

Sisters of Lambda Theta Alpha's Tau Chapter pose outside of Wilson hall in 2019

2020 Is the Vote by Mail Election

GABRIELLE MALETTO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Many aspects of the race for the White House have been thrown into uncertainty due to the coronavirus pandemic. Because of this global health emergency, most voters this year have received mail-in ballots.

There are two kinds of mail balloting systems: universal vote by mail and absentee balloting. The traditional “go out and vote” method that is promoted to students and other voters will be somewhat different this year.

States including California, Nevada, New Jersey, Vermont, and even Washington D.C. went forward with proposals to expand the use of absentee ballots in their elections, bringing into question incidence of voter fraud and the overall effectiveness of mail-in voting.

According to Darrell West, a political commentator at the Brookings Institution, there is fear on the conservative side because they feel it might “increase votes for the Democratic party.”

Both political parties are fighting for their stance on why each voting method, whether it be by mail or in person, will work the best. Democrats and Republicans alike have their individual views on the matter.

Patrick Murray, Director of the Polling Institute at Monmouth University, said that research has shown that voter fraud is a rare phenomenon. “Still, that is not to say that we won’t see an uptick in instances of attempted fraud this year,” he said.

He suggests that because the mail voting process is being rushed into practice by many states, there are bound to be some bad folks who try to take advantage of it this year. “Those cases will almost certainly pale in comparison to the number of voters who end up being inadvertently underrepresented on a technicality because they did not complete their ballot properly,” said Murray.

Campus Vote Project (CVP) believes that young adults have the potential to make a difference, especially those in college.

CVP also found, “Young adults (ages 18-29) made up about 21 percent of the voting-eligible population in 2014.” But voter turnout for this demographic has reached record lows in recent years, leaving them marginalized, according to the site.

However, voting by mail in most states is by postal balloting, where the voter needs to submit an absentee ballot.

Joshua Chanley, a senior history and political science student, said, “Absentee ballots are slightly different from mail-in. In usual circumstances, there is no real issue with fraud because absentee ballots are filled out by people who currently aren’t home, e.g. college students.”

College campuses could include various resources for their students to register and mail in their ballots which might avoid cases of voter fraud.

Sarah McCambridge, a senior political science student, admitted that she does not know a lot about it. “I am just nervous about ballots not being counted or people sending in a ballot and then voting in-person because I heard some towns are doing in-person voting for some as well,” she said.

Aaron Gordon, a senior reporter with *Vice* magazine, said, “American voters have every reason to be confused about how elections work in this country and how mail-in voting works in particular.”

McCambridge just wants her vote to count.

Chanley added, “My suggestion is that if students can go home and vote in person, do so.”

Not every student, though, has the opportunity to go to their home state and vote.

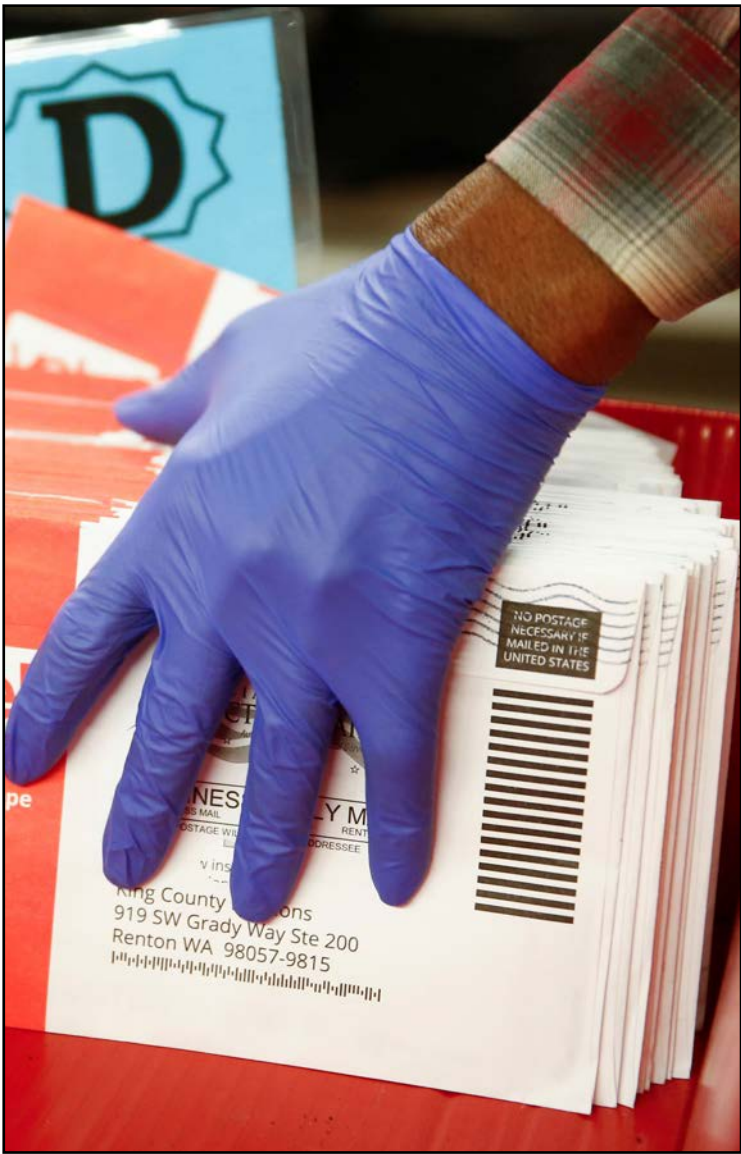


IMAGE TAKEN from NYTimes

The coronavirus pandemic has caused states across the U.S. to increase mail in voting for the general election. President Trump has raised concern over voter fraud that would occur via this method, but research has shown that voter fraud is a rare occurrence.



IMAGE TAKEN from Bloomberg

Ballot drop offs will help to ensure that ballots are returned and counted on time, addressing problems that happened with the U.S. Postal Service during the primaries in the spring and early summer months. Ballot drop boxes are provided for the purpose of giving voters the opportunity to return their mail ballot in a safe manner.

The U.S. Postal Service is going to play a key role. Murray said, “They (US Postal Service) didn’t help matters by sending out boilerplate postcards about mail voting that contradicted the process in some states.”

Murray said, “We already have evidence that they did not deliver some ballots in time, or at all, during last summer’s primaries.”

However, Murray reasons that providing multiple early voting locations and drop boxes will help counteract this problem with the U.S. Postal Service. Early voting could also be of use to busy college students.

A ballot drop box provides a system for voters to return their mail ballot. Michael Phillips-Anderson, Ph.D., an Associate Professor in Communication, said, “Dropping off a ballot at the Department of Elections or a designated ballot collection boxes should be safe and effective.”

There are specific guidelines for how to keep ballot drop boxes secure and efficient.

As reported by the U.S. Election Commission (2020), “24/7 video monitoring of drop boxes to ensure security, bipartisan teams of election officials for ballot collection, and a strict chain of custody procedures to ensure that only authorized elections officials ever handle ballots.”

Phillips-Anderson also asserts that despite recent controversy with the U.S. Postal Service, “We should make sure that the post office has sufficient funding to carry out its public service mission.”

The U.S. Postal Services’ website reports that they receive no direct taxpayer funds and rely on profits from stamps and other fees. Due to the ongoing pandemic, revenue has increasingly fallen, according to the Brookings Institution.

“If they’re going to be submitting the ballots, we need to ensure that they have ample funding for the security of students and other voters,” reiterated Phillips-Anderson.

Monmouth University has worked towards providing voting information and resources to students on its website of the locations of these drop boxes and how to obtain mail-in ballots this election cycle. Students are also able to register online to vote in New Jersey.

Murray concluded, “The bottom line is that mail voting, or dropbox voting, is a necessity this year.”

“Not only are many voters afraid to go to the polls for health reasons, but election officials would have been unable to recruit the necessary number of poll workers – who tend to be senior citizens – to staff all the usual polling places.”

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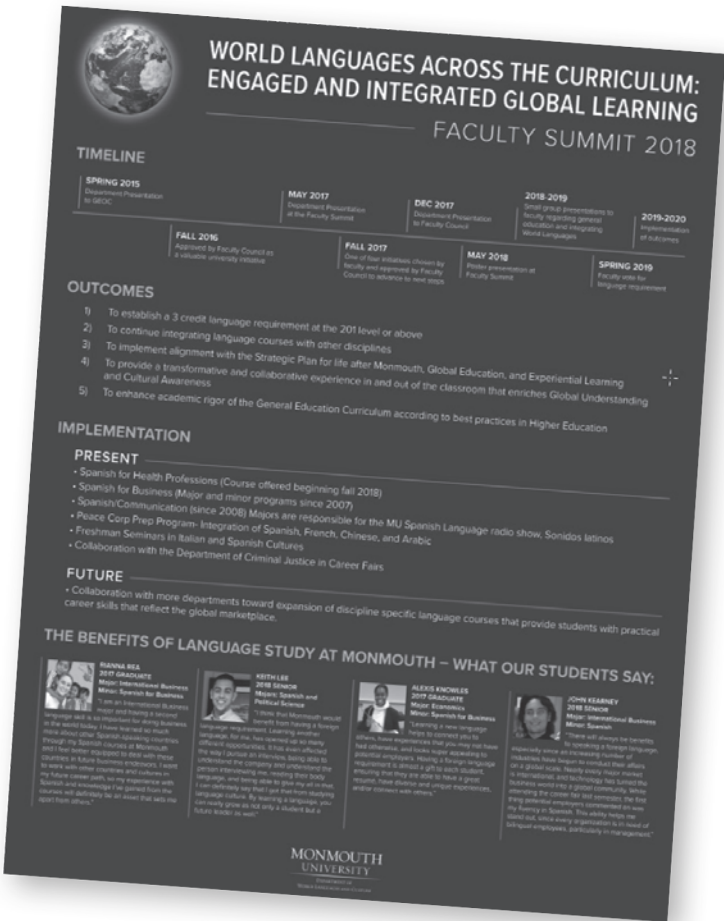
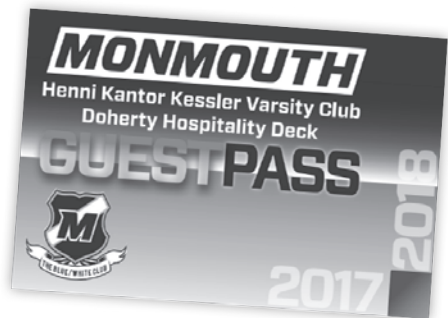
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Silent Hawks In The Stands For Basketball Season

MARK D'AQUILA
SPORTS EDITOR

2020 has been an unprecedented year for just about everything, and of course that includes Monmouth athletics who has been held out from playing all sports this fall. However, the Monmouth University campus can at least look forward to the return of basketball this winter at the OceanFirst Bank Center.

On Monday, Nov. 2 Monmouth athletics announced that they will be selling fan cutouts for the 2020-2021 basketball season for \$50 a piece while they wait for fans to be allowed in the arena at the start of the season.

The Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference has announced that based on their regulations no fans will be allowed at basketball games through Dec. 23 at the very earliest. They have yet to make a final decision regarding games after that date as it continues to be a work in progress being evaluated day by day. Even after fans hopefully come back to the arena later in the season, cutouts will remain in the stands to help maintain social distancing.

Students, faculty, parents, advertisers, and fans will be able to show their Monmouth pride by purchasing a cutout to represent their fandom during these unforeseen times for sports.

"I am excited about the University's return to live competition this basketball season," said Associate Athletics Director of Marketing & Sponsorships Eddy Occhipinti. "As per the MAAC, fans aren't permitted to attend games prior to Dec. 23, and the fan cutouts are a great way to show support and be involved this season. The proceeds go to the



PHOTO COURTESY of Shore Sports Network
Monmouth athletics has announced that they will be offering Hawk Fan cutouts for the 2020-2021 basketball season to make up for the lack of fans in the arena to start the new season.

"As per the MAAC, fans aren't permitted to attend games prior to Dec. 23, and the fan cutouts are a great way to show support and be involved this season."

EDDY OCCHIPINTI
Associate Athletics Director of Marketing & Sponsorships

Athletic Director's Excellence Fund, which directly supports our student-athletes, which is vital at this time."

The Excellence Fund is a key part to this decision by MU athletics who will be dedicating these cutout proceeds to their own student athletes and help them advance their careers during this difficult time.

For fans who would like to participate in this cause, all orders must be submitted by Friday, Nov. 13 so that they can be placed throughout the arena in time for the first home games of the basketball season. The cutouts will be placed throughout the lower level of the OceanFirst Bank Center along with a variety of other seat coverings to fill the arena for its opening games.

The \$50 price will be enough to ensure that each cutout will be displayed for the entire length of the 2020-2021 season. Monmouth athletics suggests that those interested dress in their favorite Monmouth apparel or school colors for their photographs which will be emailed following their order. All orders can be placed at fly.monmouth.edu/cutouts where there will be instructions on submitting photos and guidelines for how to do it correctly. These photos will then be printed, cutout, and mailed directly to the OceanFirst Bank Center in plenty of time for Opening Night.

After the season, those who order cutouts will also be able to pick up their very own Monmouth Hawk cutout to keep. Monmouth athletics will also place all photos into a photo album on the Blue and White Club Facebook page during the first game of the season to represent all of the fans who have supported them.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics
The Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference will not allow fans at their games until December 23 at the absolute earliest.



PHOTO COURTESY of Monmouth Athletics
Monmouth Hawk Fan Cutouts can be purchased at fly.monmouth.edu/cutouts for the price of \$50 per cutout.

Track Runs in the Family with Brandon Davis

JACK MURPHY
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

Track and Field is right around the corner as winter sports are slowly approaching. When people think about Track and Field, they normally think of the running events. However, the throwing events such as shot put, hammer throw and discus are also staples of the sport.

Brandon Davis, a graduate student at Monmouth University is a member of the Track and Field team. Brandon comes from a family that has a history with the sport of Track and Field.

“This sport has been within my family for years and they passed it down to my brother and me. My parents had competed in track when they were in high school and college as well,” said Davis, “I began as a distance runner, over the years I transitioned to sprints and eventually to field events. The field events, especially throwing is where I would decide to specialize in middle school.

Davis focused mostly on shot put, discus and javelin in middle school and then made the transition to high school. Once he started competing at Monmouth, Davis added the weight throw and ham-

mer throw into his training regimen as well.

According to Brandon, each event offers its own challenge and techniques that make them unique. When it comes to his favorite event he would have to go with the shot-put.

“Shot put is an event that I have worked on for years with making constant adjustments to improve my technique. Just like many of the other events as well there is more to be worked on,” said Davis.

Brandon also said that since he is lacking in size compared to the other throwers he competes against, this motivated him to

work even harder to make a statement with his performance.

The life of a student athlete is quite different from a regular student. Student athletes have the responsibility of balancing their schoolwork with their vigorous schedules. “Skills such as time management, responsibility, and accountability are developed when in college but especially when you are part of a college team. Using these opportunities and challenges that come with being a student athlete to grow only help us for our future careers,” said Davis.

After his time at Monmouth, Brandon will have his master’s de-

gree. He is planning to go into law enforcement once he receives his degree.

“I have studied law enforcement for the last five years and obtained a minor in psychology as well,” said Davis. “As of now, I am looking at going into the local or state level.”

As a graduate student, Brandon has spent over four years at Monmouth University. As someone who has spent so much time at Monmouth, he has some advice to underclassman.

“Advice I would give to underclassmen and those being recruited here, is to make the most of your time here. Become the person you dream to be as you help others achieve their goals as well,” said Davis.”

Brandon’s throwing coach Christian Spaulding had nothing but praise for the graduate student. “Brandon’s time at Monmouth University has been filled with successful stories and moments both in the classroom and throwing circle,” said Spaulding. “From my perspective as his coach, he has developed into a resilient young man that is able to overcome obstacles and always take the positive approach in all situations.”

Brandon’s hard work has earned him All-Academic and All-Conference team honors. Spaulding said, “A thing I would like to add about Brandon is his mentality and ability to overcome adversity. After his time at Monmouth he will be recognized as one of the best to come through our Track and Field program,” said Spaulding.



Track & Field athlete Brandon Davis will be entering his fifth season as a Thrower for Monmouth. Brandon graduated last Spring and is now a graduate student.

A Season Without Cheerleading

VICTORIA DOWD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A typical Saturday in fall semester at Monmouth University sees MU Cheerleaders spreading school spirit across campus in anticipation of game day. This fall has been much different with sports cancelled due to COVID-19, ending the cheerleading season before it even began.

Learning that fall season was cancelled came as a huge disappointment for the cheerleaders, especially for those who have been with the program for years. Jenna Garra, a junior with two years’ experience on the team, was named captain for the 2020-2021 season before activities were halted in March. Garra was excited about the coming season, and continued to hold out hope until it was officially cancelled in July. When asked how she took the news she said, “I was very upset because football season is our favorite time of the year, and that means no practice for the team either.”

The cancellation of fall sports has had wide-ranging effects on the cheerleaders. They are used to the demanding schedule a school year brings, but now find themselves in an unfamiliar position of having free time on their hands. Finding ways to fill their schedule can be a challenging task for athletes. Losing the structure that comes with being on the cheerleading team requires an adjustment to self-discipline, but they have adapted to the changes introduced to their lives this semester.

Cheerleading is a demanding sport that requires team members to be physically fit. The athletes train throughout the offseason in preparation for the fall semester,

which is the time cheerleading season typically kicks in to gear. With training facilities closed, cheerleaders had to find different ways to stay in shape. Running, walking, and bike riding have been popular choices for some of them, but those options will diminish as the weather turns cold.

Amber Muller, a junior on the team with two years of experience was also disappointed to hear the football season was cancelled saying, “I was very upset because I knew that our season would be cancelled too.” Commenting on the decision to cancel she said, “I was not in favor of cancelling the season. I would have liked to still cheer at conference games even if there was limited capacity in the stands.”

The teammates both noted they have extra time available in daily schedules with the season cancelled, and shared their experiences with that adjustment. Muller thrives on a busy schedule explaining, “There is a lot more time on my hands now and sometimes it’s hard to know how to occupy myself when I’m always so used to being busy.”

Garra also misses the busy schedule, but points out she has made the best of it. “I’m way less stressed and have more time to focus on my school work and spend quality time with my friends and family now,” she said. While both Garra and Muller acknowledged that the decision to cancel sports did not come as a surprise, the disappointment was no less when the news became official.

The decision to cancel fall sports was not made lightly. University officials decided to cancel all MU sports when the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference

(MAAC) opted to skip the 2020 fall season in mid-July. The football team however plays in the Big South Conference, which had not canceled at that time. When asked if the university was considering allowing the football team play if there was a season, Athletic Director Marilyn McNeil, Ph.D. said, “The University believed that if it wasn’t safe for one sport it would not be safe for any sport.” She added that the Big South Conference wound up cancelling their season soon after Monmouth’s decision, and the Hockey Team plays in the America East which had also cancelled their season. McNeil added “The NCAA has since established spring championship dates, so we are making plans to prepare and compete in those spring championships.”

There is no way to forecast if some athletes may decide against returning to sports in the upcoming seasons due to health concerns related to COVID-19, with McNeil noting, “It is impossible to have a crystal ball at this time. We are confident that we will be able to hold our winter sports as planned with a few adjustments.” While those adjustments were not outlined in her response, McNeil said she expects spring sports to be held as planned, but university officials will continue to monitor the number of positive cases, science, and daily progress as a matter of safety protocols.

Monmouth University’s Men’s basketball season is scheduled to begin on Nov. 25th and the cheerleaders are hopeful that they will be able to cheer at the

games. The basketball team plays in the MAAC, where university President D. Patrick Leahy, Ed.D. serves as the Vice Chair of the conference’s Presidents’ Council. Leahy is also chairing a committee that examined the logistics of opening the basketball season for the conference, according to McNeil.

With a limitation of 25 people permitted in an indoor venue, McNeil was asked if the cheerleaders will be allowed to perform at those games. She advised that it was not a university decision and “attendance at our basketball games, right now, is solely within the purview of the governor of New Jersey”. This would seem to leave the fate of MU cheerleaders returning to action in November in the hands of Governor Phil Murphy.



Monmouth Cheerleading has been put on a halt due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Similarly to other fall sports, cheerleaders have not been able to compete this season.



Monmouth basketball is offering fan cutouts for the 2020-2021 season that can be purchased for \$50 while fans are held out of games until Dec. 23 at the earliest.