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Photo by Niyathi Sulkunte

Letter from the editor: This year is different

Dear Niner Nation,

I'm going to be honest. This year has been hard. It feels strange to write a cheesy letter that says "welcome back to academia!" as if things are business-as-usual. Things aren't business-as-usual. Things aren't like last year, or the year before. So that's not the letter I'm writing.

This year has challenged me, and many of you, mentally, physically, academically, and emotionally. 2020 is not what I anticipated. 2020 has brought me some of the most difficult times of my life.

New Year's is my favorite holiday. There's something about making new goals, experiencing new beginnings, that really motivates and inspires me. A clean slate. A year of possibilities. I spent New Year's Eve 2020 in my apartment with my best friends. I even had a New Year's kiss. I had a long list of resolutions. I was having a great year as Editor-in-Chief, I had a fun part-time job, I was feeling good mentally and emotionally. I recognize the cliché, but I really did think this year was going to be a good year for me and those around me.

So when March came and I was locked out of my newsroom, missing my friends and struggling to attend my now-online classes, 2020 didn't seem so bright anymore.

Now it's nine months into 2020, and I've spent six of them affected by a pandemic, beating myself up for being unmotivated, unhappy and clueless on how to exist. I've punished myself for my mental illness making everything more difficult. I've looked at other people and thought they were "coping" better than I have been. I've looked at my list of resolutions and thought of how much of a failure 2020 has been. I've thought about how much of a failure I am.

How messed up is that? Not only has 2020 brutally kicked my ass, but I've assisted it in the process. And I am sure I'm not the only student who feels this way.

A lot of people are excited about the beginning of

the semester, even with all the unknowns, and I'm truly happy for them. But I am a little scared. I am nervous. I am afraid that it will just be a semester of 2020 continuing to do what it's done to me all year.

So I am going to make *new* New Year's Resolutions, and I invite you to join me. There are three months left in 2020. Although that doesn't sound like much, think about how much changed from January 2020 to March 2020. Three months is longer than we think. While it seems as if COVID is not going anywhere anytime soon, we can adapt as best we can and make the most of the remainder of this unpredictable and peculiar year.

Resolution 1: Stop comparing yourself to others.

We hear this everywhere, all the time, from all the self-love gurus and motivational Instagram stories. However, I feel like it's especially important right now. We're literally living during a pandemic where almost every aspect of our lives is altered. People are going to deal with that in different ways. Yes, even after all this time. It's still okay to be kind to yourself. It's still okay to be figuring things out. You don't need to be on a fitness journey because your friend is running every day. You don't need to be learning a new skill. You also don't need to stop if you're on a roll right now. Wherever you are is okay, as long as you're going forward.

Resolution 2: Stop measuring your days and worth in productivity.

Productivity, while valuable, should not be the goal of every day. We must get tasks done. However, when you find more worth in a productive day than in a restful one, your brain and body may get tired, and your self-worth, warped. You are worthy of love, rest and happiness even if you end your day with a couple things unmarked on your to-do list.

Resolution 3: Appreciate your relationships (including the one with yourself).

During a time when quality time with loved ones

may be limited, it is imperative to appreciate our relationships. COVID-19 has made me realize which relationships feed me positively. I have loved and cherished the time I've spent with my inner circle during this time. Calls to my family have revived me on difficult and exhausting days. Watching Schitt's Creek with my roommates has been a huge source of joy. Texting my best friend at UNC Chapel Hill throughout the day reminds me that I'm loved.

Connecting with others is something that truly makes life worth living. However, connecting with yourself is just as, if not more important. I have been relearning how to enjoy my own company during this pandemic. It is ineffable how important it is to be able to be alone with yourself. Listen to your body and mind, and give it whatever it needs. Whether it's with a book, meditation, journaling, or watching Schitt's Creek by yourself--appreciate the relationship you have with yourself. Be kind to yourself.

These are three resolutions I plan to uphold for the remainder of 2020 and I invite anyone to join me. We have three months left--three resolutions. I know I can handle that. I know you can too.

Or even if you don't take these goals specifically, I challenge us all to make the best of this semester, this academic year, and the rest of 2020, wherever it takes us. This year is different, but it can still be good. We can still make it a good one, for ourselves and each other. I think making the most of this year, as well as life, boils down to being kind to ourselves and each other.

Here's to a good, although different, year.

And from all of us at the Niner Times:
Welcome back. We've missed you.

Best wishes,
Madison Dobrzanski
Editor-in-Chief

Meet Chancellor Gaber

Dr. Sharon Gaber, our new chancellor

by Megan Bird
News Editor

Living in a time where uncertainty is the norm can make it difficult to appreciate positive changes. Many students might forget that behind all of the Niner Notices, promotional videos and notorious UNC Charlotte Bookstore emails is a new face: Chancellor Sharon L. Gaber. Gaber was ushered in as UNC Charlotte's fifth chancellor and second female leader (after founder Bonnie Cone) on July 20, 2020.

Gaber's appointment was long awaited, with the search process beginning in late August 2019 when the UNC Charlotte Board of Trustees appointed a 16 member search committee led by Michael Wilson ('93). The Committee submitted 65 names to the UNC Charlotte Board of Trustees and three candidates came to campus for interviews. Two names were sent to UNC System Interim President Bill Roper who submitted Gaber as the final candidate for the Board of Governors' approval.

She holds a bachelor's degree from Occidental College, a master's degree from University of Southern California and a doctoral degree in city and regional planning from Cornell University. Before her five years as president of the University of Toledo, she spent six years as provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Arkansas and also served as interim provost at Auburn and as a faculty member and administrator at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Perhaps of more importance to students, however: Gaber says her favorite spot on campus is Lake Hechenbleikner, where she walks her dog on the weekends (points to her for already learning that name). Like many of us, she works out in the Bissell House garage to stay sane during quarantine and even purchased one of those interactive workout mirrors. Since arriving in Charlotte she has enjoyed eating outside at restaurants in Uptown



Photo courtesy of UNC Charlotte

and Southend, though she wouldn't turn down a meal at Crown Commons (jury's still out on SoVi, though-- sorry y'all).

Gaber has the unenviable position of starting her tenure during the coronavirus pandemic. One of her first duties as chancellor was convincing the UNC System Board of Governor's to push UNC Charlotte's in-person start date back to Oct. 1. Now, she says students can expect to hear early in the week of Sept. 21 whether in-person classes will resume as planned.

"It's interesting because when I

interviewed here the pandemic hadn't started, but when I accepted the job it had," said Gaber. "I was the president of a university somewhere else going through some of the issues that UNC Charlotte is. The nice thing here is that we had a team working on it already and we now have three additional weeks."

Gaber tells the Niner Times that aside from navigating the pandemic, she hopes to get started on the new strategic plan (the current one expires in 2021) and, in the long term, earn Research I status, a distinction based on the number of doctoral students and external research

grants. She has already met with city and county officials to strengthen community ties and hopes to continue building upon those relationships.

"I tour the colleges and walk through the buildings with the deans and only meet two to four people," says Gaber, whose favorite part of the job is interacting with students and faculty. "I can't wait to be at the point where people are back on campus. Even if we wear face masks, that's okay."

Construction Update

What's under construction at UNC Charlotte now?

by Olivia Lawless
Managing Editor

Green and white are the proud colors of Niner Nation, along with our gold accent and—some people joke—orange. This is because, like the city of Charlotte itself, some part of UNC Charlotte's campus is constantly under construction. From a simple path snaking through South Village to the conclusion of the new University Recreation Center (UREC), something is usually being torn down, expanded, or built.

UREC and the Admissions and Visitors Center are two major projects that were recently completed in Fall 2019. UREC is located beside the Popp Martin Student Union, while the Admissions and Visitors Center is located in South Village, beside Levine Hall.

The most recent updates for on-going Capital Projects, which are renovation or construction projects over \$500,000, are for the new Science Building and Marriott Hotel and Conference Center.

As of February 18, 2020, forming and pouring columns and elevated slabs, as well as interior metal framing and electrical work, was in progress for the Hotel and Conference Center. Temporary lighting and the floor sink were also installed in the first few floors.



Undergraduate admissions center, photo by Nic Jensen



UREC the week of its opening, photo by Olivia Gregson



Construction progress of Science Building, photo by Nic Jensen



Construction progress of hotel and conference center, photo by Nic Jensen

As of February 18, 2020, roof trusses, interior framings, interior spray and fireproofing were being installed in the Science Building. In-progress construction on the RUP and Data Center, which is part of the Science Building Project, includes interior painting and control installation. The estimated completion date for both the Science building and the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center is Spring 2021.

Construction around what used to be Scott Hall is ongoing. Students living in South Village and accessing food in South Village must take paths designated by on-site construction maps, such as the newly-constructed sidewalk behind Levine and Sanford. Traffic along Sanford Lane will be restricted to construction vehicles only. Residence Hall XVI, which is being constructed where Moore Hall was formerly located, has an anticipated completion date of July 2021.

At this time, UNC Charlotte is scheduled to start the first three weeks of classes with remote instruction, suspending in-person instruction until Thursday, October 1. It is unclear how this will affect construction on campus.



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MEET THE STUDENT HEALTH CENTER

by Max Young
Copy Editor

Niner Times File Photo of Student Health Center

As the Niner Nation flocks back to the Queen City this semester, the Student Health Center has prepared policies in order to keep students safe and healthy. Students will be able to make appointments Covid-19 related or not. Here is what to expect if you need to use the SHC's services.

These policies include:

Masks or cloth face coverings are required for students, visitors and staff.

Plexiglass sneeze guards, floor markings and waiting areas configured to promote physical distancing.

Patients are asked not to bring companions/visitors to their appointment.

SHC staff will complete a Covid-19 screening prior to reporting for work.

Mobile self check-in is available. Once you arrive

on the property of the Student Health Center, you may utilize your cell phone to check-in for an appointment and by-pass the SHC check-in computer and be directed to your provider's waiting room.

Testing can be done on individuals who show symptoms, who come in contact with someone who has recently been positive or someone who is identified as high risk. Testing for this group is typically covered by health insurance.

If you test positive, the Student Health Center provides Covid-19 diagnostic testing for eligible students. However, the availability of these results are based on lab testing capacity and nationwide shortages.

The University has provided the Niner Health Check which allows students to "mark" themselves healthy enough to go on campus.

The reason a health provider may not cover Covid-19 testing would be if an individual is

concerned about potential exposure. In this case, the individual should quarantine for 7-10 days to reduce the chance of a false-negative result.

In the event that an individual has tested positive, the Student Health Center will notify local health officials and isolate the patient. Isolation is required for 14 days along with daily testing of the individual.

Telehealth appointments are available for some health issues such as a cough, sore throat, fever, runny nose, ear pain, pink eye, skin concerns, mental health needs, nutrition, gynecology issues, contraception, and prescription refills. This is not an all-inclusive list.

To make an appointment: Call 704-687-7400 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday - Friday

For more information on new policies, go to <https://studenthealth.uncc.edu/>



NEW HOBBY GUIDE

What UNC Charlotte students have been up to during quarantine

by Hiral Patel
Opinion Editor

I can't speak for everyone, but I can say that most of the people that I know including myself were used to constantly going out. As soon as I wake up, I would leave my house and come back at night most of the time. Getting food, working out, watching a movie, working a job, whatever I wanted to do involved leaving my house.

The Covid-19 pandemic hasn't been great for anyone, whether they were directly impacted by the virus or not. When the stay-at-home order was first issued a lot of people like my friends and I did not know what to do at home. Those who held jobs could not go to work as businesses and institutions were shut down, using an electronic screen became tiring and started to strain users' eyes, and with the scare of catching the virus, many did not want to go out for something as simple as a walk.

After online classes were over from the Spring 2020 semester, I was bored out of my mind and wanted to do something about it. I wrote out a list of all of the things I've wanted to do but never had time for such as getting back into shape. Sitting at a screen all day and only moving from point A to point B in my house had taken a toll on my physical and mental health. I felt lazy and sluggish. Because of my list, I started eating healthier by looking at blogs and TikToks on delicious and nutritious meals, and I made a workout routine with different exercises and yoga. Not only did I feel lighter, but I felt more energized to look for and try new things such as finding time for arts and crafts. I was able to design my room by putting up wall art, hanging lights, building and decorating furniture and I also found the time to go through my old belongings and clean it out or put it to use. Having a sibling at home helped a lot too, so I wasn't entirely bored. I basically had a best friend that I could spend my day with. My older brother taught me how to play certain video games, and trust me, I was never fond of them. We would just go on drives and even have a picnic in our backyard sometimes. We would even go to our uncle's house to help him take care of his garden; gardening was on his list of things he's always wanted to do.

But this was just how I spent most of my time during the quarantine. A lot of students around campus have spent their time similarly or differently. Mackenzie Lee, Junior at UNC Charlotte said, "Quarantine has given me the opportunity to truly focus on bettering myself mentally and physically. I've started to exercise three times a week and have pushed myself to become stronger and healthier." Another student, Jordan Williams, junior

at UNC Charlotte, took a different approach and focused on her love for pets and animals. "During quarantine, I adopted a puppy and fostered two kittens. I named my puppy Cookie and the kittens are named Princess and Buttercup. Quarantine for me hasn't been bad at all. I've enjoyed the time to myself and my animals."

We will continue to stay in a similar state as long as the pandemic is at its peak. I hope many of you are smart enough to not go out, or if you do, then I hope you are smart enough to wear a mask. But while you're home, I encourage you to try new things and make new memories. If anything, this is also probably the only chance you will get as a college student to go through your list of things you've always wanted to try.



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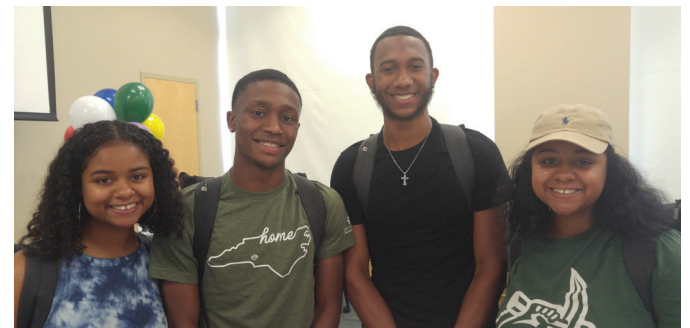
The SAFE Academic Year Program is an opportunity for first year students who were unable to attend Voyage to still get connected with our office, gain a mentor, and participate in our academic and social programming throughout the year. Visit safe.uncc.edu/apply to learn more. Applications close on the first day of class, **September 7th**.

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identity.uncc.edu/education/queer-year-1



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STUDENT NINER MEDIA

WHAT'S ON THE MENU?

9 must-try restaurants around Charlotte

by April Carte
Asst. Copy Editor

With Covid-19 giving the restaurant industry a run for their money, there is no doubt dining this semester may look a little different. If you are not feeling a to-go order from Crown or Sovi, here is a list of 10 off-campus restaurants (in no particular order) to visit during your time at UNC Charlotte.

Boardwalk Billy's. \$\$

A UNC Charlotte classic right on the water, with a very inviting atmosphere. Boardwalk Billy's offers a wide variety of food options like seafood, burgers and barbecue, making it a good meet in the middle restaurant to satisfy all of you and your roommates needs. If sitting inside a restaurant again isn't your thing yet then check out their front and back outdoor seating which comes with great views (which I would have recommended even before Covid-19). Also available for takeout!

Zapata's. \$\$

A two story authentic Mexican restaurant awlso with a nice view of the water. As a Charlotte native, I've eaten at Zapata's a number of times and have never been disappointed. This small family friendly restaurant can seem kind of tight at times so with Covid-19 limitations, this would definitely be the time to go! Outdoor seating is also available here.

Famous Toastery. \$\$

A brunch must have! Famous Toastery is newer compared to its neighbors on the water but that does not mean it is any less delicious. With freshly squeezed orange juice and bacon that just hits a little different, getting up in the morning just got that much easier. But make sure you wake up before 2 p.m. or else they will be closed!

Toppers Pizza. \$\$

Located off of NC-49, Toppers is a good switch up from your regular Pizza Hut, Dominos or Papa Johns. A mac and cheese pizza that is perfect for your 2:00 a.m. cravings, this pizza chain is known especially for their unique toppings (so do not just order a plain cheese pizza). Pizza makes the perfect Covid-19 dinner— no sitting in a restaurant involved!

Tin Tin Cafe. \$\$

A Japanese restaurant that is perfect for a college student's pockets. Just about 10 minutes from campus tucked away next to a Bojangles, Tin Tin Cafe offers great sushi and lunch/dinner hibachi options. Due to the small indoor seating available even in normal circumstances, this place is strictly doing to-go orders. But luckily it is just as enjoyable eaten in the comfort of your own home.

Haberdish. \$\$

If you are willing to drive a little further (about 15 minutes) into North Davidson aka NoDa, Haberdish has some of the best fried chicken you'll ever eat. It is a southern restaurant with family-style comfort food options and great cocktails (if you are of age). They recently began taking reservations for indoor seating again, however the easier (and just as good option) would be to get it for takeout or curbside pickup.

Cava. \$\$

I like to call it the Mediterranean Chipotle. So if neither Mediterranean food or Chipotle sound appealing to you, maybe try something else. Cava is a quick and fairly healthy option with a wide variety of toppings and sauces to include in your pita or grain bowl. Although it is slightly more expensive, the portions are quite big and perfect for next day leftovers if you can't eat a lot in one sitting. This place is easy to grab it and go, also with curbside pickup available!

Boston Market. \$\$

Although a chain, Boston Market is a casual counter-serve restaurant offering warm rotisserie chicken, green beans, mashed potatoes, cornbread and so much more. You won't ever finish your meal feeling hungry and this is the best place to order extra food to have for the week. It is pretty tucked away off of 49 but when you find it you'll thank me later. Available for dine-in and curbside pick-up.

Seafood Connection. \$\$

If you are looking for the perfect black-owned restaurant to support, make sure you stop over to Seafood Connection. It is just about as close to eating seafood on the coast as you can get in Charlotte. The portions are large and the crab legs are seasoned and cooked perfectly. Although seafood always seems better when you eat inside the actual restaurant I have to say, this one is still pretty great at home.

Whether you choose to sit inside (socially distanced) or get your food to-go, you are bound to enjoy these places either way. But remember: wear a mask inside all restaurants even if you are just picking up your order and don't be afraid to call ahead and ask about what precautions are being made in order to ensure your safety. Happy eating, Niners!

Scan for more info on restuarants



6 Movies to Stream This Fall

With Theaters Still Closed, Check Out These 6 Stream-able Movies

by Tyler Trudeau
Community Editor

With numerous movie theaters across the nation remaining closed as the summer sizzles to an end, the fall movie season is set to kick off on an equally somber note. While the state of theaters might leave the fate of tentpole blockbusters like Christopher Nolan's "Tenet" and others up in the air, cinema is not dead yet as streaming services and Video On Demand platforms seek to bring the hottest movies directly to your living room. Films that were once meant to dominate the big screen such as Disney's "Mulan," are now opting for the small-screen journey, a path that could radically shake up the mix of contending films come this year's awards season. Before we get there, however, the fall season has plenty of small-screen debuts to entice audiences in the coming months before the year's close.



What was meant to rival fellow tentpole feature "Tenet" at theaters this summer, the live-action remake of Disney's iconic take on the story of Mulan will finally land in front of families across the nation as it streams exclusively on Disney+ on Sept. 4. However, there is one catch. Its arrival on the streaming platform that has yielded such hits as "The Mandalorian" and "Hamilton" will be marked for "Premier Access," meaning those who wish to watch the film right away will need to fork over another \$29.99 in addition to their current subscription. While Disney fans that are eager to catch the studio's latest live-action reboot might be an easy sell, some may opt to wait a few more months for the adaptation to eventually stream for free. Well, almost free.



While Disney+ may reside as the home for all the Disney classics of one's past, and the current Marvel and Star Wars obsessions of one's present, Netflix has retained its spot as the place to watch almost anything, including this Sherlock Holmes fan fiction. Adapted from the book series of the same name by author Nancy Springer, the tale of "Enola Holmes" finds the younger sister of the iconic detective embarking on her own investigations into various mysteries. With the film pitting "Stranger Things" alum Millie Bobby Brown as the titular character (created by Springer), it will also feature Henry Cavill and Sam Claflin as Sherlock and his brother Mycroft Holmes, respectively.



As awards season steadily approaches, Netflix is banking on a handful of original titles to set itself among the ranks of the annual performance-led contenders that typically visit movie theaters at the year's end. One of those titles is the ensemble thriller "The Devil All the Time," based on the novel of the same name by author Donald Ray Pollock. Following the converging tales of disparate characters in post-World War II Ohio, the film will feature Spider-Man actor Tom Holland in one of his most dramatic roles yet as he faces unholy preachers, serial killers and crooked cops.

Antebellum

Streaming On Demand, Sept. 18

Photo courtesy of LionsGate

In the vein of horror thrillers like “Get Out” and “Us,” September’s “Antebellum” looks to once more compare and contrast the racial issues of our present with that of our past—of course by way of nightmarish alternate realities. After successful author Veronica Henley (Janelle Monàe) suddenly finds herself trapped in a pre-Civil War era period, she must carve out a desperate path back to her own reality. Set during the time of the Underground Railroad, the film will likely explore a far more nightmarish parable on the lives of 19th-century slaves. All while imagining how that dark past might further influence our future centuries later.

The Trial of the Chicago 7

Streaming on Netflix, Oct. 16

Photo courtesy of Netflix

Another high-profile, performance-heavy film arriving on Netflix this fall is the story of a group of counterculture protesters that made waves during the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Known as the Chicago Seven, the group of defendants were charged with a slew of charges for their anti-Vietnam War objections, igniting a defiant movement that radicalized Nixon-era America. With writer-director Aaron Sorkin (“The Social Network,” “Steve Jobs,” “The West Wing”) heading the project—which has evolved from a long-delayed story from director Steven Spielberg—the film will run through the dramatic events that defined the Chicago Seven. Its fast, flamboyant script is just as much a draw for audiences as its stellar cast.

On The Rocks

Streaming On Demand, Sept. 18

Photo courtesy of American Zoetrope

Bill Murray reteaming with writer-director Sofia Coppola for the first time since 2003’s “Lost in Translation,” the latest Apple TV+ original film to hit the streaming service looks to explore the familiar premise of rocky father-daughter relationships, through the lens of a dreamy ode to a pre-pandemic New York City. As father Felix (Murray) and daughter Laura (Rashida Jones) embark into the depths of the sprawling city, their bond is constantly tested as they struggle to understand the throes of misguided love. With Coppola experienced in not only delving into the psyches of troubled characters but also in subverting the norms of everyday culture (including cinema itself), the film could hold the same comedic and emotional resonance as her previous films. All while painting an intricate portrait of the unexpected world around us.



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UNC CHARLOTTE LOOKS TO GO “ALL IN” WITH REBRAND

After going through a rebrand during the summer, UNC Charlotte looks for a fresh start and look

by Bryson Foster
Staff Writer

New uniforms and logos have the UNC Charlotte campus buzzing with enthusiasm. With the Charlotte 49ers starting to become a resurgent in the sports world, some new looks will be shown on the field and court this year. The new logo looks to encompass much more than just its campus but instead the city of Charlotte as a whole. The changes were made to help Charlotte stay up to date with what fans

**“As a university, we want to be seen by others as Charlotte’s one and only college team,”
- Mike Hill, Athletic Director**

want to see. It was an in-depth process for the athletic department as they wanted to give the people a way of seeing the university in a new light.

“We wanted to develop some tools as we worked with a local firm in Charlotte that understands our university that would lead to an effective way to get feedback from our students, staff, and alumni,” said Athletic Director Mike Hill. “We wanted to show what the market at large thought it [Charlotte] represented as a whole; we really wanted to get people talking,” said Hill.

The logo was meant to give the university some new excitement and enthusiasm

headed into building years for the sports programs. With the basketball team finishing (16-13) in the regular season and the football team having a historic year, going to the first-ever bowl game in university history.

With programs that seem to have a brand new life, it was time for a brand new look. It was the first time the university had gone through a change like this since 2000.

Hill sees an emergence of Charlotte’s sports programs.

“There was a want to have a strong brand because we have started to become a powerhouse not just in our state but the region and the nation as a whole,” said Hill.

The new “CLT” logo



Photo courtesy of UNC CHARLOTTE

has been created to include the city of Charlotte as a whole. Another new change is the use of “9ers” and “49ers” logos respectfully.

Hill has seen the new logo already become something people in the city recognize. “I wear a lot of gear with the new logo and I’ve had multiple people who don’t know me who come up and ask me if that’s the new 49er mark and say they love it,” said Hill. “That’s validation for what we are trying to achieve there.”

The pickaxe has also gotten a new look going from a “C pick” to the “All-in” pickaxe. New uniforms will be used for football and basketball teams this year with new colors of a darker hue of green, white and a brand new gold color on alternate jerseys. The new images look avery sleek and seem to pop. A brand new basketball court will start being used this year as well, with new logos and Niner green.

“The intention with this redesign was to develop a clean and simple look, just as other top schools have a logo that you look at and you know it belongs to that university we want that here and we invite it,” said Hill.

It is a new chapter for Charlotte and defines what the university will look like. It is great to see, and students will love what is being done with the brand. It is an exciting time that has the university shrouded in attention.

“As a university, we want to be seen by others as Charlotte’s one and only college team,” Hill said.



Photo courtesy of UNC Charlotte

Note: The logos are UNC Charlotte green. They have been altered to gray for printing purposes.



2020 ELECTION VOTING GUIDE

Routes for registering to vote, early voting and absentee voting in North Carolina elections

by Emily Kottak
Asst. Features Editor

As we all know, we are experiencing unprecedented times and are having to adapt to a new normal. Many aspects of our lives have changed and along with that, voting may look a bit different in the 2020 election. Here are some steps to help make the voting process efficient this year.

Register to Vote

First of all, be sure to register to vote. North Carolina offers online voter registration, but you can also register by mail by filling out a voter registration form. There is no fee for voter registration services. The North Carolina State Board of Elections website provides a link to the qualifications a person must meet in order to register to vote in North Carolina. There is also a lot more helpful

information on their website to help with all things voting, including registering.

Early Voting

The early voting period in the state of North Carolina runs from Thursday, October 15, 2020 to Saturday, October 31, 2020. Specific dates and hours may vary based on where you live.

Absentee/Mail-In Ballot

Due to the pandemic, some may find it difficult to physically go to the polls on election day. Common solutions people are turning to are absentee/mail-in ballots. There has been confusion in regard to the difference between these two. The difference is that absentee voting still requires a person to apply

for a ballot to be sent to them whereas mail-in voting is when a ballot is sent to a person without them having to ask for it. For years, a reason had to be given for a person to apply for an absentee ballot, but that is no longer the case in several states.

16 states use absentee balloting as the only form of voting through the mail. In some states, like Maryland, all registered voters are being sent applications for a mail-in ballot which is quite controversial.

According to the North Carolina State Board of Elections, "To receive a mail-in absentee ballot for an election, a voter or the voter's near relative or legal guardian, or any member of a bipartisan assistance team (MAT) authorized to assist voters, must first use the State Absentee Ballot Request Form to request the ballot."

If a person is not registered to vote in their county of residence, they must register to vote no later than 25 days prior to the date of the election. For the November general election, the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot is 5 p.m. Tuesday, October 27, 2020.

For the November 2020 general election, only one witness is required for an absentee ballot. In all other elections the voter should mark the ballot in the presence of two witnesses. There is a list of prohibited witnesses and assistants which can be found on the North Carolina State Board of Elections website.

The two steps voters must complete after marking their ballot are: seal the ballot in the container-return envelope and complete the Absentee Application and Certificate on the ballot container-return envelope.

After the Absentee Application and Certificate is completed with all necessary signatures, the voted ballot

must be returned to the county board of elections no later than 5 p.m. on Election Day. The envelope can be mailed or delivered in person.

There is controversy regarding absentee/mail-in ballots as some see it as a less secure voting method. Some approve of absentee ballots but not mail-in ballots, especially in cases like where the secretary of state in Michigan mailed all registered voters in the state ballot request forms. Some believe that the fraud risk is higher when it comes to mail-in ballots, making it a controversial practice.

As we continue to adjust to this new situation, it is important to remember that we are still capable of having our voices heard. Getting to the polls may be more challenging this election than in previous years, but that should not stop the American people from voting for what they believe.

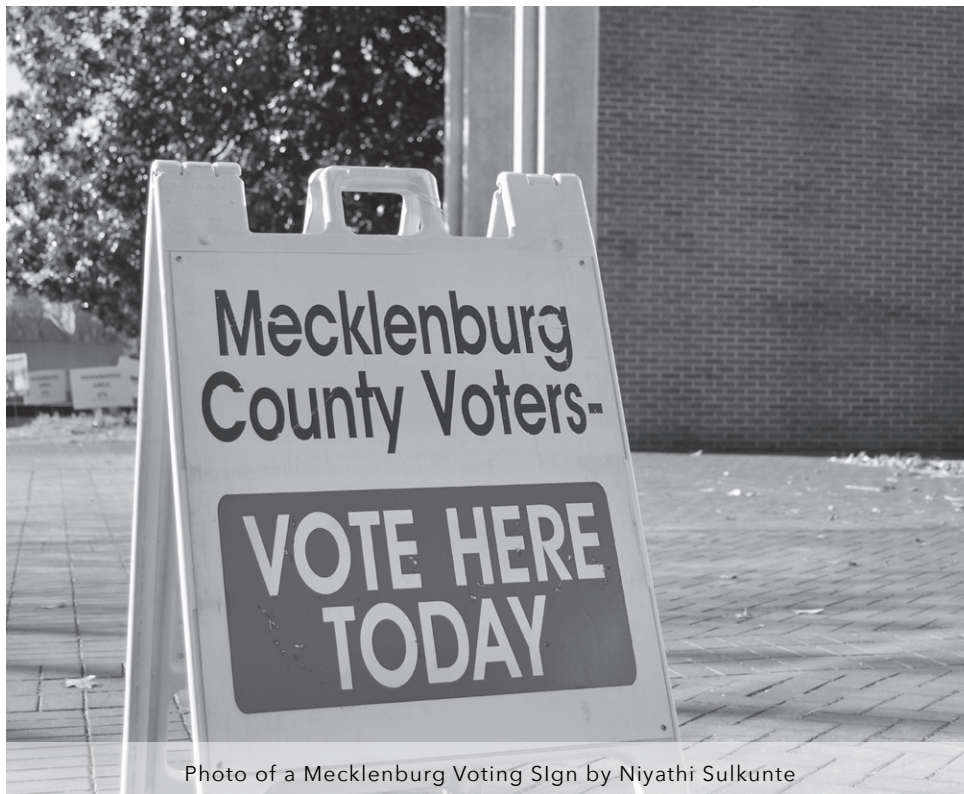


Photo of a Mecklenburg Voting Sign by Niyathi Sulkunte

Important Voting Dates

Early Voting:
Oct. 15, 2020-Oct. 31, 2020

Absentee Ballot Deadline:
Oct. 27, 2020

Voter Registration Deadline:
October 9, 2020

Election Day:
November 3, 2020



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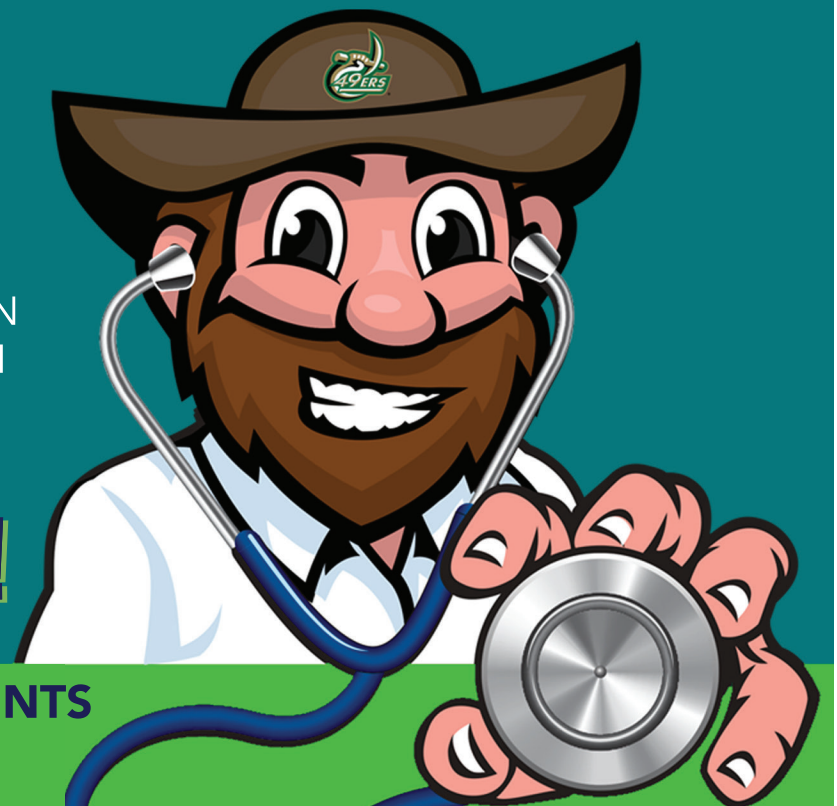
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SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR HIGH SCHOOL SELF

by Brandon Mitchell, Asst. Layout Editor
by Max Young, Copy Editor

Consider this a guide to avoid peaking in high school. This list is mainly for first-years, but everyone should be able to benefit. We all have remnants of high school lingering within ourselves. It's time to kill them.

Create your personal fashion

Fashion didn't matter in high school, but it does now. Every new interaction has potential to positively or negatively impact your career. You need to mature your fashion so people take you seriously, but don't equate mature with boring. Business attire is not required. I'm telling you to dress well, and that doesn't always mean professional. Do some research. Find people who dress like you would want to dress. Take that and find a style that makes you feel like your best self. I promise that putting effort into your clothing choice will increase how others perceive you and how you perceive yourself.

I'm no fashion expert, but I know a couple fast rules of the trade. Firstly, find your size and fit. Buy clothing that accentuate the parts of the body you want accentuated. I'm short so I buy clothes that make me look taller and slimmer. Taller people may want to avoid looking taller. Your fit will define your proportions and is consequently one of the foundational blocks of style.

Create a capsule wardrobe. Fill your closet with pieces that are versatile and timeless. After reading this article, look up Tan France's guide to a capsule wardrobe and follow his advice. Once you get that down, you can start adding bits of your character to your style through statement pieces.

After finding your fit and building your capsule wardrobe. Add a little flair to your outfits by finding new colors and patterns to your wardrobe. Be bold. Everytime you get comfortable with your style, find new ways to push yourself. Use your clothing as a way to show everyone the real you.

Here's a final tip for the guys out there. Get a suit. A pair of khakis and a button-up won't cut it anymore. It doesn't have to be an expensive suit, but it is a necessity if you want to get anywhere professionally. Get the suit tailored. It's not that expensive, and a well-fitted suit will make you stand out amongst your peers. - B

Clean up your social media

You are here. The Queen City beckons your name. You aren't in Kansas anymore, either symbolically or literally if you are from Kansas. College allows you to reinvent yourself in countless ways that can help you maintain your individuality while gaining clout at the same time. Unless you don't need your phone to survive like the boomer you are, your social media account is your chance to be more connected to your friends and future niner family.

The first thing you can do to have a sick page is to be as genuine as possible. People want to see the 'real' you. Acting unapologetically yourself will allow your followers to want to hang out with you in "real life" once the corona-era is over. It will also help you build up your confidence. College is a social jungle of many different groups and subcultures; explore it and flaunt your

true self on your page and you will be surprised by the people you will connect with. At SOAR, I met my co-author Brandon through orientation, and we exchanged snapchats and now he is one of my most tolerable co-workers.

Another way to pimp your social media account is to have a network fist attitude. LinkedIn isn't just for your dad to show off his several PhDs. You can use it to connect with your friends and even your friend's friends. LinkedIn is also the easiest way to market your skills and career aspirations. For example, one day, I messaged a podcast director for a major broadcasting service. She then messaged me back and now I have a connection with my dream company and a really cool mentor. So, if you are stuck and need professional guidance in a certain field, be adventurous and ask for help from someone who knows their stuff.

All in all, college is a place to try new things and be the person you want to be. In today's hyper-digital world, social media awareness is a key skill that could change many aspects of your life, socially and professionally. Get out there and start your collegiate journey. - M

Diversify your friend group

I went to a small predominantly white high school in the middle of yeehaw town, USA. A diversified friend group was not an option. I'm sure many of you were in the same position, but that's no longer a setback. Every political opinion, race, gender, sexuality and ethnicity is represented in some way within UNC Charlotte's

student body. Take that as an opportunity to expand your perspective. Go to student organizations and campus events that focus on concepts and identities that aren't familiar to you. Even if you consider yourself as progressive or open minded, you will be surrounded by opportunities to keep growing.

Here's a quick list of some orgs that'll help you expand your view of the world: SexWeek, Queeryear1, Spectrum, Black Student Union, 100 Black Women, and International Coffee Hour. There are plenty of others to look into as well! - B

Study through the pain

College rewards you with a lot of things. Time is not always one of those things. College often taketh your attention and focuses it on school, and that isn't always cool. Success in college looks different for every student, but one way to maximize that success is to have an organized study method. UNC Charlotte often integrates the Google Suite into classes.

Google Docs' user interface is clear and accessible. Your notes should be your temple; where you can explore your thought processes digitally. For example, I will usually write jokes to myself that will make me remember aspects of the lecture. Taking notes online also makes it easy to put in graphics that could explain material better than words can. If the saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words" is true, then your notes will look like a sickass picture book that will provide you with the references you need to ace any assignment.

Your study materials should be for you and you alone. Although a shared Doc with your classmates sounds like a good idea, you will get the best results if you can write

in your own words or in a specific way that only you will understand. This can help you teach your classmates in a way that is easy to explain and memorable.

As mundane as school can be, take time to really spice up your notes and have fun with it. If you appreciate the small things in life that get you through the otherwise banal, being organized will keep you sane and focused. - M

Level up your self-care routine.

In high school, my diet was primarily fast food and my exercise routine was non-existent. Maybe you were better than me or maybe you were worse. That's irrelevant now. College is the time that the wear and tear of life will start to show if you aren't careful. Healthy habits set now will be invaluable in the long run. Plus, a healthy self-care routine will act as a sort of safety buffer for the inevitable stupid shit you do in college. There are infinite ways to improve your health, but here are a couple easy steps to get you started.

Eat healthy sometimes. I would never expect you to stop going to Cookout; we're only human after all. Still, there is a balance to be found. If you have a particularly unhealthy lunch, balance it out with something like a salad or grilled chicken for dinner. Find an equilibrium within your diet.

Skin care is for everyone. If you want to look younger for longer, invest some money and time into developing your own personal routine. Get face wash that isn't also another type of soap. Apply the soap gently with warm water and rinse it off with cold water. After that, use a non-scented moisturizer on your face and any other dry areas on your body. That should be your lowest

acceptable standard for taking care of your skin. If you want to go further, look for products that target the specific issues that you face. There are countless bloggers and YouTubers that focus on skincare, one of them will have the answers to your problems.

Find a way to stay active. If you like sports, join an intramural team. If you like nature, go on an occasional hike. Go explore the UREC if you are comfortable in a gym. I prefer working out at home, which is probably safer too with the whole Covid thing happening. I have been using the Nike Training app recently, and I really enjoy its workout plans and format. I am not telling you how to or how much to exercise, but I am telling you to do it. - B

Final Notes

I know this article might seem condescending and stern at times, but please trust that we wrote this out of love. If you want to be the best you, that takes effort. I wish someone had told me these things earlier so I didn't spend my freshman year plagued with acne and a hideous wardrobe. You will change in college, and it's up to you if you change for the better. I'm rooting for you. Do me proud. - B

Not only is this a comprehensive guide to ditching your high school self, but hopefully you can use these tips to have some sort of introspection on yourself. Who are you? What do you want to do here? How will you accomplish your goals? UNC Charlotte is your oyster and we are happy you are here. Welcome Back, baby. - M



Photo of lockers by Moren Hsu via Unsplash

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STUDENT NINER MEDIA



CHANGES COMING TO CAPS

Photo by Niyathi Sulkunte

CAPS limits individual therapy sessions due to increased demand

by Megan Bird
News Editor

UNC Charlotte's Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is rolling back the number of individual therapy sessions allotted to students each year in an effort to serve more people. Previously, students were allowed up to 12 sessions per year; now, that number is capped at 4-6.



Photo courtesy of UNC Charlotte Counseling and Psychology Services

According to CAPS' Assistant Director for Outreach Dr. Erica Lennon, the decision was made to address the long wait times caused by increased demand. CAPS experienced a 20% increase in student

demand during the fall semester of 2019 compared to the previous year, resulting in wait times of 3.78 days on average between scheduling requests and appointments. Demand has stayed high this semester, even with CAPS operating virtually and many students living far from campus. The counseling center saw 264 students during the first two weeks of this semester compared with 270 during the first two weeks of last year's fall semester. The average wait time, however, has decreased to 2.19 days, likely due to the smaller number of sessions allotted to each student and the stronger emphasis on group therapy.

Lennon attributes the increase in student demand to reduced stigma for mental health resources, a heightened awareness of CAPS' services, recent tragedies like the campus shooting in April 2019, increased media attention to race-based violence, and the coronavirus pandemic. According to a study by the Center for Disease Control conducted in late June, 25.5% of surveyed 18-24-year-olds reported seriously considering suicide, and 75% reported at least one adverse mental or behavioral health symptom.

Despite increases in student demand, the counseling center's operating budget from

"While we recognize the changes in how we are approaching individual counseling, the expectation is that this will allow us to continue to serve all students who initially seek us out by connecting them with the service that will be best suited to attending to their needs and reducing the time they will need to wait in order to be seen."

**-Dr. Erica Lennon, CAPS
Assistant Director for
Outreach**

the State has remained at \$42,000 for the past 15 years, according to CAPS Director Dr. Paula Keeton. The remainder of the budget (salaries) is paid by student fees. Their overall budget decreased between 2019 and 2020 by about \$68,000.

Still, CAPS is finding new ways to meet


demand without increasing waiting times. They expanded the number of group workshops from 20 to 29 and removed restrictions on how many workshops students could attend. They are also devoting more time to initial consultations and crisis services.

Keeton says group therapy is the treatment of choice for one of the most prevalent concerns among students: anxiety.

"Our hope is that we have expanded the amount and types of offerings that we can provide students to address their goals related to their well-being and mental health," said Lennon. "While we recognize the changes in how we are approaching individual counseling, the expectation is that this will allow us to continue to serve all students who initially seek us out by connecting them with the service that will be best suited to attending to their needs and reducing the time they will need to wait in order to be seen."

Lennon added that CAPS' approach to individual counseling has always been goal-oriented and brief in nature. When students were able to attend up to 12 appointments, she says, most only utilized 4-6 sessions.

WELCOME BACK 2020



CHARLOTTE ATHLETICS TAKE ON TOUGH TASK OF RETURNING TO SPORTS

After months of being on the sidelines due to COVID-19, Charlotte Athletics looks to safely return to sports this Fall

by Bradley Cole
Sports Editor

Photo by
Chris Crews

The last time a Charlotte 49ers sports team competed in an NCAA event was in early March when both the women's basketball and softball teams picked up wins on Mar. 11.

Shortly after, Conference USA canceled all games for the rest of the athletic season in order to stop the spread of Covid-19. The rest is history.

Since then, life has become a lot different. Face masks and social distancing is the new normal and uncertainty is an everyday thing. One thing is certain though, athletic events will look a lot whole different this year and beyond. The days of maximum capacity crowds are over for now.

Charlotte athletic director Mike Hill and his team spent the summer working to find a safe way to bring back athletes to the playing field and eventually fans for the 2020-21 athletic season.

It's a long road that will have a few bumps along the way. Hill and the Charlotte athletic department have put in measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus since athletes came back to campus on Jun. 15, even though the NCAA permitted voluntary workouts for select sports starting Jun. 1.

"We were not comfortable bringing back athletes until June 15 because we wanted to ensure the protocols we had in place were fully vetted by medical experts and people on campus," said Hill. "We are pleased with the results thus far."

The summer has seen a lot of big-name schools report clusters of coronavirus cases inside their athletic departments. Charlotte has not seen any burst of positive coronavirus cases since athletes have come back.

"You're seeing around the country teams have had outbreaks and we are fortunate that thus far we have not," Hill said. "You certainly hold your breath every week there is a test."

Some of the protocols that have been put in place include the weekly testing of athletes and the staff that works closely with them. Temperature checks

and questionnaires occur on a daily basis when players and staff go in for the day. Social distancing is practiced along with masks. During the football season, football players will be tested for COVID-19 three times a week by Conference USA.

Unlike other years, the outside public isn't allowed to attend the football team's preseason practices.

It's no surprise the new protocols have been an adjustment for everyone involved, but Hill likes the progress that has been made by the teams that have been back on the practice field.

"I give our coaches and our athletes a ton of credit. They are walking the walk," said Hill. "It's not easy to do. Part of why it's not easy because it's not a lifetime habit."

Even though there haven't been many cases for the Charlotte athletic department, Hill knows there's a chance a player or staff member could contract the virus. If that happens, Hill wants to ensure people there are appropriate plans in place.

"If we had an outbreak, a lot of it would depend on the numbers but we have protocols in place in accordance with university and county guidelines related to quarantine and contact tracing," said Hill. "Depending on the number, that could affect your ability to practice."

Another point of contact the school will keep a close eye on is when student-athletes travel to other schools for games. Given the athletes will be going into new territories, new protocols will also be implemented.

"I think you will see our coaches and health staff have our athletes on lockdown while we travel so they are not engaging with other people," said Hill.

Another big question around the country for athletic teams is whether or not fans will be able to attend games. And if so, how many?

Programs around the country such as the University of Georgia and Tennessee have started to announce plans to bring back fans to football games at 20-25 percent capacity.

For Charlotte, there will be no fans for their home

opener against Georgia State on Sep. 26. As of Sep. 1, North Carolina legalization does not allow groups of more than 50 people in outdoor spaces, which would prohibit fans at sporting events in the state as the state is still in Phase 2.5 of the reopening process.

"These decisions will be institutional," said Hill. "For us, we unfortunately still don't have a plan that we are prepared to announce. We have been working on a variety of scenarios all summer long from no fans all the way up to as maximum capacity that we can possibly accommodate."

No matter what decision the athletic department decides to go with, it will be approved by the appropriate local health officials.

"The reality is that no matter what plan we develop, it's gonna have to be a plan that our county and officials and state are comfortable," said Hill. "We are a part of a larger community and we want to make sure we don't contribute to community spread."

Hill looks to wait to see what the status is for the state's reopening plan to make any final decisions on the football's team other three home games. After the Sep. 26 opener, the next home game for the 49ers is Oct. 17 against Florida International.

The Charlotte football team will be the only team that is 100 percent going to take the field this fall as of Aug. 31. Men's and women's soccer and volleyball had their seasons postponed to Spring 2021 on Aug. 21. There has been no decision made on the cross country season.

No matter what happens this fall, Hill hopes the team and players focus on what they can during the time of uncertainty.

"What we have talked about as a program is that we need to focus on and what we can control here," said Hill. "And that's following our protocols and preparing for a season."

Shows to Distract You From Online Classes

9 Shows you should watch this fall

by Anders Hare
Arts & Entertainment Editor

If 2020 has taught us anything, it is that the world we live in is full of uncertainty. Fortunately, what's not uncertain is that we are living in an era of great TV. Whether you are Disney+ and chilling to your favorite throwbacks or checking out the latest and greatest shows happening on the small screen, there is something out for everyone to enjoy. 2020 hasn't stopped shows like "Ozark," "Insecure" or "The Good Place" from blaring from your TV, phone, laptop, or iPad, and garnering acclaim from critics. If anything, this over-arching umbrella of uncertainty gives consumers a chance to escape into the worlds of their favorite characters. So with that said, sit back, relax and check out Niner Times' list of nine TV shows (new and returning) you should watch this fall.

"Mapleworth Murders" (Quibi, August 10)

Produced by SNL creator Lorne Michaels, Quibi is the vehicle for this comedy-mystery. Penned by and starring writers Paula Pell and John Lutz, this hysterical whodunnit series follows a mystery writer solving homicides in her small town, encountering some familiar faces along the way. With guest appearances ranging from Terry Crews and Wanda Sykes, to SNL favorites like Fred Armisen and Tina Fey, this show is sure to pack just as many as laughs as thrills.

"Ted Lasso" (Apple TV+, August 14)

SNL veteran Jason Sudeikis reprises his role as American football coach Ted Lasso in this sports comedy. This time, instead of riffing in NBC Sports promos, Lasso finds himself coaching an English football team with zero prior experience and the odds completely stacked against him. This comedic paradox makes for a great watch in a time where live sports is scarce.

"Lovecraft Country" (HBO, August 16)

Jordan Peele can do no wrong in the world of horror, so it should come as no surprise that the Monkey Paw and J.J. Abrams-produced "Lovecraft Country" is receiving praise for its frightfully-candid premise. The show follows black army veteran Atticus Freeman as he journeys into the 1950s America in search of his father. Racism and supernatural horrors plague this genius adaptation of Matt Ruff's 2016 novel of the same name.

"Woke" (Hulu, September 9)

Written and produced by cartoonist Keith Knight, this satirical series follows upcoming San Francisco artist Keef, portrayed by "New Girl" star Lamorne Morris. While on the verge of a mainstream breakthrough, he goes through a traumatic experience involving the police, causing him to go into an irreversible state of "wokeness." Knight fuses this live-action narrative with beautifully-animated sequences to give audiences a hilarious, yet thought-provoking tale.

"We Are Who We Are" (HBO, September 14)

Created, written and produced by Italian film director Luca Guadagnino, this coming-of-age miniseries follows two 14-year-olds who come from different backgrounds as their worlds collide while living on an American base in Venice, Italy. The drama explores the friendship and tensions between their respective families, and rapper Kid Cudi and "It" star Jack Dylan Grazer are sure to keep audiences coming back for more.

"PEN15" (Season 2) [Hulu, September 18]

If the first season of this Lonely Island comedy didn't have audiences cringing, then season two is sure to back more hilarious moments. Show creators Maya Erskine and Anna Konkle return as their quirky tween selves

trying to navigate middle school in the early 2000s. With new frontiers of family issues and boy anxiety, 7th grade can't get any more awkward, or funny, than this.

"Ratched" (Netflix, September 18)

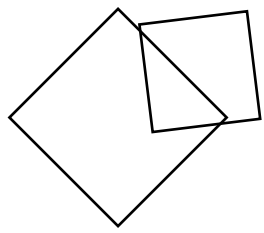
Renowned television creative Ryan Murphy can do no wrong when bringing thrills and chills of horror to the small screen. His latest endeavor is an origin story of Mildred Ratched (played by Murphy vet Sarah Paulson), a nurse-turned psychopath at a mental institution. Based on the 1962 novel "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," this highly-anticipated show is sure to make its mark on the fall 2020 TV season.

"Fargo" (Season 4) [FX, September 27]

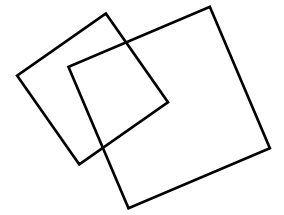
In this fourth installment of the critically-acclaimed "Fargo" anthology series, Chris Rock takes the lead as the head of a crime syndicate made up of black migrants fleeing the Jim Crow South with a rocky relationship with the Kansas City mafia. A major winner in past award show seasons, "Fargo" returns for the first time since 2017 with a season helmed by seasoned writer and producer Noah Hawley.

"The Walking Dead: World Beyond" (AMC, October 4)

It is hard to believe it has been 10 years since "The Walking Dead" first premiered. Now, the iconic horror show gets a breath of fresh air with "The Walking Dead: World Beyond." It is here where we will see the next generation of those who "came of-age" during the apocalypse as we know. Coming up right on the cusp of the fall season, this sequel is sure to be a treat for die-hard fans of "The Walking Dead."



SHARING YOUR SPACE



Tips to live with your college roommates

by Maria Solano
Video Editor

We are approaching the beginning of the school year, and although it might start in a peculiar way, some of you may be nervous about sharing a room with someone that you don't know. You might have talked to them beforehand about what you are going to bring on move-in day, but you have not met them in person. Communicating with your roommates should be something that makes you feel comfortable in your living space. Here are some things that you might want to do to enjoy being in your room:

1. Get to ACTUALLY know each other. I am not telling you to tell your roommate your deepest secret on move-in day, but you are going to spend so much time together that

you might think about getting to know their hobbies and interests. It is so uncomfortable to enter your dorm and be in awkward silence for hours (trust me, I have been there). You might like to watch the same show as your roommates, and you might be missing a binge session with them!

2. Lay down basic rules. This might seem like a given, but some people are afraid to discuss rules with their roommates to not seem harsh on the first week of school. These rules should be talked through, especially under the actual living situation. Feel free to talk about your limits on who enters the room and when to ensure privacy and safety in the dorm. If issues

arise, talk to your roommates instead of bottling all up. Living with someone that talks behind your back is awkward, and it doesn't help to build a cozy living space.

3. Create cleaning schedules. Again, another given, but you would be surprised after knowing how many times they are disregarded. We are adults now, so our moms are not here to clean our dorms anymore (I know, shocking). These schedules can be flexible in case someone is leaving for the weekend or has a busy week. Don't forget to agree on buying cleaning supplies, everyone loves to live in a clean space!

4. Decorations. All formalities aside, you might have to share a

space with a sofa and a TV stand, which is pretty depressing when you enter the dorm for the first time. Decorating the dorm is such a fun thing to do and it is also a great bonding activity! It's so nice to relax with your friends in a cool space, and it could invite you to move from your bedroom. If you do not have this space, you can get creative by decorating your wall.

If you feel like you are nervous about sharing your dorm with someone else, don't worry, you are not alone. You are going to spend a lot of time with your roommates, and who knows? You might be best friends with them by the end of the year!



Photo courtesy of Chris Crews



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