

The Daily Collegian

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5 YEARS SINCE THE WORLD STOPPED

PAGE 2 | THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2021

LOCAL

THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Seniors react to in-person graduation

Students serve as essential workers

By Andrea Garcia
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Penn State students nationwide have been affected by the effects of the coronavirus, many losing their jobs due to public safety reasons. However, a few students have remained at their jobs under the title of an essential employee. According to the Essential Services Act of 2013, the term "essential employee" is defined as "an employee that performs work involving the safety of human life or the protection of property, as determined by the head of the department or agency."



"We've done our best to cobble things together over the past year, but it's still been tough."
Sarah Potter
Out of the Cold Manager

"...I do believe that people shouldn't be scared and need to continue on living their lives for now."
Adriana Cudi



MAY 4-8, 2020 | PAGE 3

Uncertainty surrounds fall 2020

Officials, faculty look ahead amid coronavirus concerns

Beaver Stadium in need of improved COVID mandates

Following an upset over No. 12 Wisconsin, Penn State football will return to Beaver Stadium at full capacity this Saturday — the first time since Nov. 30, 2019 — where it will play host to Ball State.

OUR VIEW
As great as it is to be 107K strong, the safety of community members is more important

community to prevent a possible outbreak happening from the start rather than wait until cases rise. And with people coming from different parts of the country to watch the game, the community is being put in a position to simply deal with the aftermath. Barbour said the coronavirus protocols for all outdoor sporting events could be subject to change if the CDC shifts its stance on the matter. If seems more like when at this point, but Barbour's statement



After being announced in June, Sandy Barbour, vice president for intercollegiate athletics, affirmed

out of the question at this point for Beaver Stadium. Tickets have already been sold and travel plans are likely already in place. But that doesn't mean new ones have Penn State learned from the

Penn State cancels study abroad trips to Italy, Japan

By James Langan
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Penn State students who planned on traveling to Italy and

short-term faculty-led programs have been cancelled. "In Italy and Japan, short-term faculty-led courses have been due to logistical dis-

prohibited university-affiliated travel to China and South Korea. The university is assisting students with chronic diseases in CDC Level-2 Advisory countries, according to Powers.

Powers said the university based these decisions off of recommendations from the State Department, the Center for

Penn State officials have been in direct contact with Penn State travelers to provide the latest information from the University and health agencies. Powers said Penn State will continue to update on the situation and future cancellations.

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PAGE 2 | THURSDAY, AUG. 6, 2020

FRESH START



MY VIEW | MEGAN SWIFT

Kaylyn McGrory/Collegian Creative

Making the most of college & COVID-19

Coronavirus abroad: anxiety of being sent home



How will remote advising work?

By Warren Merrick
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Every fall, a new batch of students begin their first semester at Penn State — many of whom will likely change their major or make significant alterations to their academic plan within the first year of their college career.

According to the National Center of Education Statistics, about 80% of college students in the United States change their major at least once. Thus, it is of great importance for incoming freshmen to take advantage of their university's academic advising services, office hours and learning resources.

assigned adviser for approximately 15 minutes. However, with the move to remote services, drop-in advising will no longer be available in many colleges.

This is because the remote drop-in sessions utilized throughout the summer often resulted in prolonged meetings that sometimes lasted 30 to 35 minutes. Other issues with the sessions included reduced nonverbal communication between advisers and students, as well as general technical difficulties.

According to Jamey Perry, a Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications academic adviser, virtual drop-in services for students in the college will only be available during the first week of

PSU mask extension is right



In-person classes suspended during spring break

Penn State announced the initial switch to remote learning due to the spread of the coronavirus on March 11. Originally, online classes were set to occur online until "at least April 3."



Collegian Archive Files

COVID BY THE NUMBERS

Hundreds of students reflected on pandemic experiences, the lingering impact

By Rachael Keller and Pragma Sinha
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Five years after the start of the pandemic, a Daily Collegian survey of more than 340 Penn State students reveals a complex portrait of life after COVID-19, one defined by disrupted academics, shifting social patterns and an enduring reexamination of health and wellness. The responses, collected throughout September and October 2025, paint a picture of a generation still learning to navigate the aftershocks of an unprecedented global event.

Infection and exposure

In terms of infection history, the virus touched many students in some way. More than a third of the respondents said they had COVID at least once, while almost ten percent of students have reported having the virus more than three times. Contrarily, almost 30% of students responded they have never tested positive for COVID. Along with this, the majority of the students surveyed responded that the last time they contracted the virus was between 2021-22. In 2025, around 8% of respondents said they had the virus.

Learning through loss

Almost two-thirds of respondents said the shift to remote learning during the pandemic initially hurt their academic performance. On the other hand, 20% of students said they had improved their academic performance while almost 16% of students saw no change. Almost 65% of students pointed to the fact that the shift to virtual learning made them appreciate in-person classes and discussions more than they did pre-pandemic. While around one-fourth of students found the shift to make them prefer online and hybrid classes. The rest of the respondents saw no lasting impact.

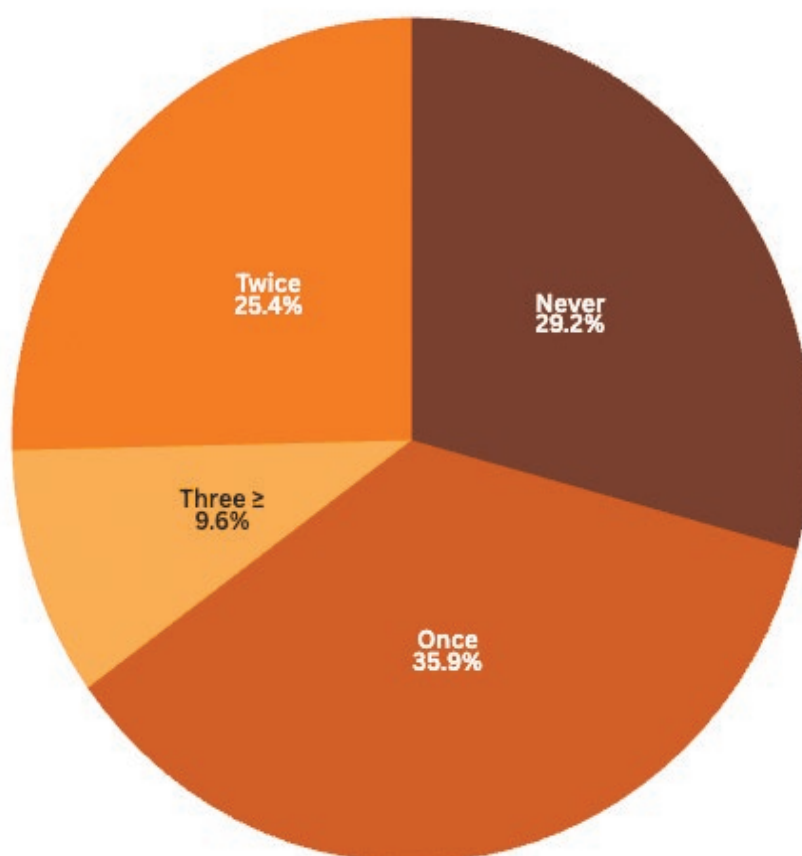
Recovery with caveats

During the height of the pandemic a little over a quarter of respondents said they felt lonely and isolated very often, while almost half of them said they felt those emotions sometimes. In contrast, about 26% of students said they rarely or never experienced those emotions.

In the long run, though, only about 9% of students reported still struggling with their mental health

The number of times students had COVID-19

The majority of respondents reported last having COVID between 2021 and 2022, while 7% had it this year.



while almost half of respondents said they have no lasting effects.

The post-pandemic balancing act

In terms of COVID's effects on students' social lives and skills, responses are mixed, with the majority of students reporting they saw no change in their

social lives. Around 30% of respondents said they socialize more now in a post-pandemic world, while almost one-fourth of students said they socialize more online or selectively. Only 13% responded saying they socialize less. Half of the respondents reported they feel the pan-

demic changed how their generation communicates and builds relationships in a major way, while only 7% said they saw no change.

Navigating health and vaccines

About half of the students surveyed said as a result of the pandemic they are somewhat more conscious

of their health. Around one-fourth of respondents said they take their health much more seriously or they have no noticeable change in their attitudes toward health and wellness, respectively.

A little over one-third of students said they were both vaccinated and up-to-date on boosters while almost half of respondents said they were vaccinated but not up-to-date on boosters. 13% of students said they are not vaccinated.

As a result of the pandemic, almost half of respondents reported they had no real attitude change toward vaccinations. Contrarily, one-fourth of students said they were somewhat or very cautious when it comes to vaccines, respectively.

Lingering worries about the pandemic's impact

Students also expressed concern about the pandemic's broader societal impact, with almost half of the respondents stating they are somewhat concerned with the pandemic's lasting effects on the world. On the other hand, one-fourth of students said they're either very concerned or not at all concerned with the virus' lasting societal impacts.

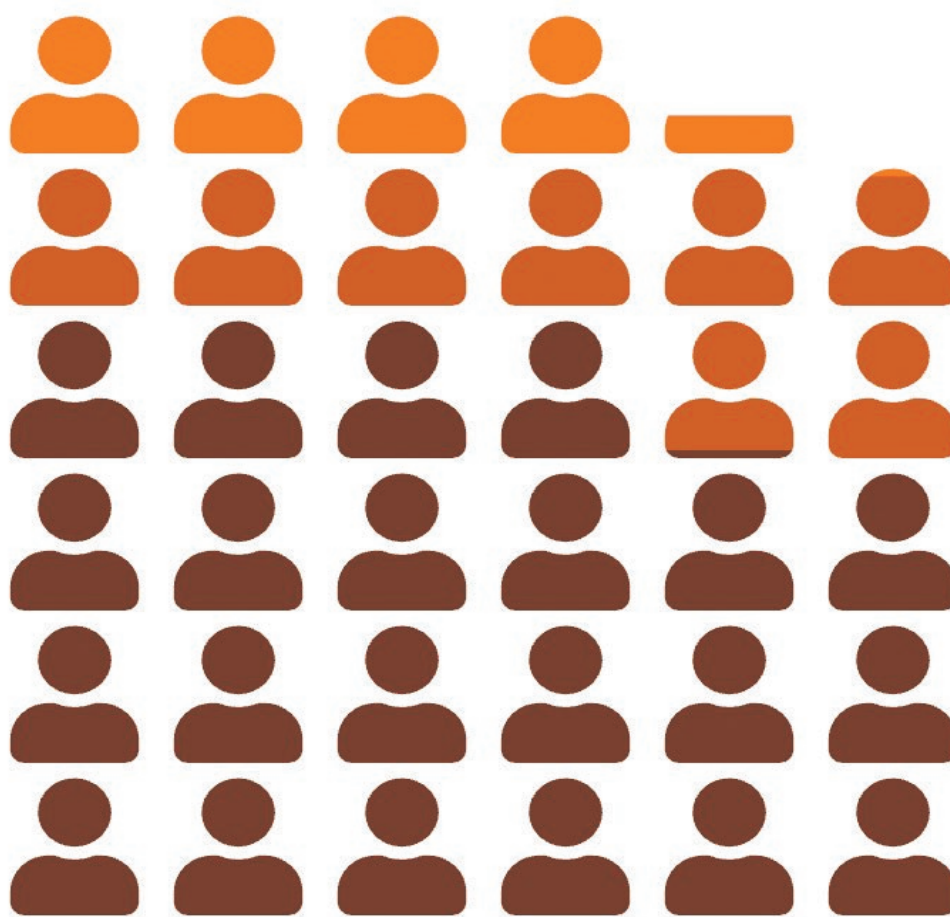
In the end, half of the surveys' respondents stated they still sometimes think and reflect on their experiences during the pandemic, while almost one-third said they rarely have that reflection.

Continuing to adapt

Taken together, the data reveal a student body still marked by the pandemic's imprint: academically, emotionally and socially. Some have used the experience to grow more adaptable, health-conscious or intentional about relationships. Others remain weighed down by the habits and anxieties of those years. But across the board, Penn State students appear to share one common thread — COVID-19 may no longer dominate their daily lives, yet its shadow continues to define how they study, connect and imagine the future.

How did the pandemic change students academically?

- It made me value in-person classes and discussions more.
- I prefer online or hybrid classes now.
- It had no lasting impact on how I approach school.



Do students feel the pandemic permanently changed how our generation communicates or builds relationships?

About 90% of respondents reported noticing a change, while just over 6% said nothing has changed.



'Covid took that away'

Students reflect on COVID-19 pandemic experiences, impact

By Emma Naysmith
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

At its outset, the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting quarantine practices impacted and continue to influence the lives of many students today.

Madhura Dahale said she first felt optimistic as a high school freshman when she heard about the initial two weeks off of school, but quickly changed her mind.

"For me a big part of my life was running with my friends," Dahale, a third-year studying kinesiology and neurobiology, said. "A lot of that was a big social thing for me as well, so, being at home and losing that, and having to run alone was just not fun."

Years later Dahale said she was most impacted by the pandemic socially and now holds greater value and gratitude toward social experiences.

"It was something I didn't realize was there until it was gone," Dahale said. "Knowing that everything can change so quickly, and literally anything can happen ... and just appreciating each of those moments that I do have."

Dahale said the experience taught her more about herself academically with being introduced to virtual learning opportunities.

"Now I opt to take them online just because of the flexibility and being able to do things on my own time is just so much more appealing," Dahale said.

Yuvraj Singh said the pandemic left him feeling empty at times and with nothing to look forward to.

"It turned into an indefinite suspension of school which kind of sucked because school was my only way of socializing with people, other than playing games with my friends," Singh, a fourth-year studying architectural engineering, said. "It's not like you could do anything about it. There's nobody that did anything



David Snyder, of Bellwood, Pa, receives his vaccination on Monday, March 15, 2021, at the Bryce Jordan Center in University Park, Pa.

wrong, it's kind of just a circumstance that took place."

Reflecting on his experience and expressing gratitude for the supportive environment he had throughout this experience, Singh said he believes others should pursue their interests.

"If you have any thought of doing an extracurricular, go for it because you don't know if something's gonna come up that's gonna prevent you from doing it," Singh said. "I saw that happen a lot ... I was gonna join a coding club with my friend, and I never actually got to do that because Covid took that away."

Katarina Hogan said her experience in the pandemic gave her a greater sense of resilience and adaptability.

"When you go through something that is not good, I think that, in the end, I'm maybe potentially better for it," Hogan, a third-year studying energy engineering, said.

Hogan said it was difficult seeing the community struggle and how inadaptable some institutions were during that time.

"A lot of my friends and I were

able to come together, and my family as well, and persevere through the situation," Hogan said. "I have an extended family member who passed away from Covid. I know people who have had family members pass away from Covid. And so seeing people not take it seriously, and then having it have negative side effects was really tough."

Hogan said the experience overall has brought her to believe in the importance of adopting a holistic approach to health.

"I think that mental health and physical health have such close ties," Hogan said. "It's important to have an understanding of both to have a great understanding of how someone's doing and how to move forward."

Zachary Porter described his quarantine as a weird adjustment that, in some ways, caused him to be cautious around others as both his grandma and dad had Covid.

"They both survived, but at the time I didn't think they would because of how many people I heard about dying," Porter, a first-year studying animal science, said. "I was under a lot of fear of, if I talk

to someone or get close to someone, I'm gonna get Covid. It kind of made me stay away from a lot of people."

Today, Porter said he's made an effort to relearn how to be more social with joining his high school speech club and enrolling in a public speaking class to grow his confidence. He added that his pandemic experience brought out a sense of "clean freak" and fear of being alone that is still felt at times today.

For Priyal Patel, quarantine began in seventh grade and she described her quarantine as "bland with little action."

Patel, a first-year studying finance, said she at one point had COVID-19 and her health decreased a lot while she quarantined in her room.

"I didn't really get much time to focus on school and stuff because I was just sick constantly," Patel said. "Everyone was really supportive and understanding of each other's situations."

Patel said since the pandemic she's become increasingly intentional in incorporating additional

measures for health into her everyday life, like always washing her hands immediately upon returning home.

Krishay Sachdeva said the pandemic and its quarantine period brought upon feelings of frustration, specifically surrounding the health of his grandparents and well-being of family members.

"They couldn't come over, because they're older and they can get sick, and it would affect them more than me," Sachdeva, a second-year studying biochemistry and molecular biology, said. "I used to see my mom and dad panicking because our business was family owned; we were in the restaurant business, and that was a big factor."

In terms of academics, Sachdeva said he's noticed him and his peers have had a harder time focusing for longer periods of time.

He said procrastination has grown to be a lot worse, especially with the rise of brain rot across Instagram Reels and mind numbing games such as Block Blast.

"You just want to take your mind away from reality sometimes," Sachdeva said. "It's sort of like you had so much time back then ... going back to a more normal routine, kind of shifts, 'Oh I want to spend a lot more time doing nothing,' which is how you remember Covid."

Furthering into college, Sachdeva said he's become more outgoing and cherishes his social interactions more.

"I hang out with my group once or twice a week," Sachdeva said. "But then it's also seeing them around or just spending time with them while I'm studying also really helps, even when I don't want to talk to people. Just having someone in the room with me working on something else is something that I've started to appreciate more."

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Professors reflect on teaching during COVID-19

By Brennan Kamp
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

It's been almost six years since Penn State resorted to fully virtual classrooms during the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic and professors are still seeing the effects of that era on their students and even their own methods of teaching.

Penn State closed down its campuses and moved their classrooms to online on March 16, 2020 and for most professors it felt like the worst was ahead. When the plan to continue the rest of the year completely online was laid out, several professors became hesitant about the switch in teaching.

Walter Middlebrook said he hated everything about the loss of the personal contact of being in the classroom.

"The students didn't react well," Middlebrook, a professor of journalism, said.

Middlebrook held a steady outlook on the transition to virtual learning and said he simply hated it.

Similarly, Scott Schmieding said his initial thoughts were online learning would not work well. He said he was cautious the sudden change might not be the best course of action for the students going forward.

"It's hard to pay attention to a lecture anyways, (and) when you're sitting in front of a computer, it's almost impossible," Schmieding, a professor of mathematics and dynamical systems, said.

Early on during the pandemic, it was easy for professors to see the immediate challenges of



Seats in classrooms are taped up in order to help students maintain social distancing in classes at Penn State University, as shot on Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2020.

trying to conduct college lectures of sometimes over 200 students, John Iceland is among them.

He recalled it being hard to know if students were really paying attention while teaching on Zoom.

"Many of us, myself included, hadn't used Zoom much, so practical aspects of how to put together and deliver class material was the primary concern," Iceland, a professor of sociology and demography, said.

Middlebrook echoed these con-

cerns and said from a teaching perspective, "you can't be sure where the students are, you can't tell what's getting across."

As COVID-19 cases continued to rise, Penn State professors had to look past the negativity of the situation and find ways to continue giving informative and educational class experiences, even in an online setting.

"When we went to the virtual format, it gave me an opportunity to implement new techniques," Eric Doerfler said.

Doerfler, an associate teaching professor of nursing at Penn State's Harrisburg Commonwealth campus, had to adapt to the new academic climate to fit the extensive course load of nursing and found great success with his newfound teaching methods.

"I created a virtual hospice experience ... and the students found it so useful that they told me to keep it," he said. "It actually added to the clinical hours."

Other professors used more cheerful methods to try and get their students more engaged in an increasingly dissociative classroom setting.

Mary Beth Oliver, for example, made masks for her students, got their addresses and dropped them off at their homes. She said her method helped better the

relationship between student and instructor.

Oliver, a professor of media studies, put a lot of emphasis on keeping student engagement as high as possible.

"That was the main thing, just keeping people engaged and accommodating people," Oliver said.

Now, in 2025 with classes and campuses being back to in-person classrooms since the fall semester of 2021, professors are still seeing the fatigue and after effects of that virtual learning experience on their students.

"Distancing for so long, doing this remotely, I don't think things snap back to the way they were," Iceland said.

Doerfler said students being taken out of clinicals during the pandemic had lower pass rates in their initial nursing exams.

"There's been less social engagement with the instructor," she said.

Schmieding also spoke on the decline of social interaction after the pandemic and said broader socialization "took a sharp turn down."

While the decline of engagement from student-to-student and student-to-professor still looms throughout the university, professors are continuing to make an effort to bring life back

"It's hard to pay attention to a lecture anyways, (and) when you're sitting in front of a computer, it's almost impossible."

Scott Schmieding

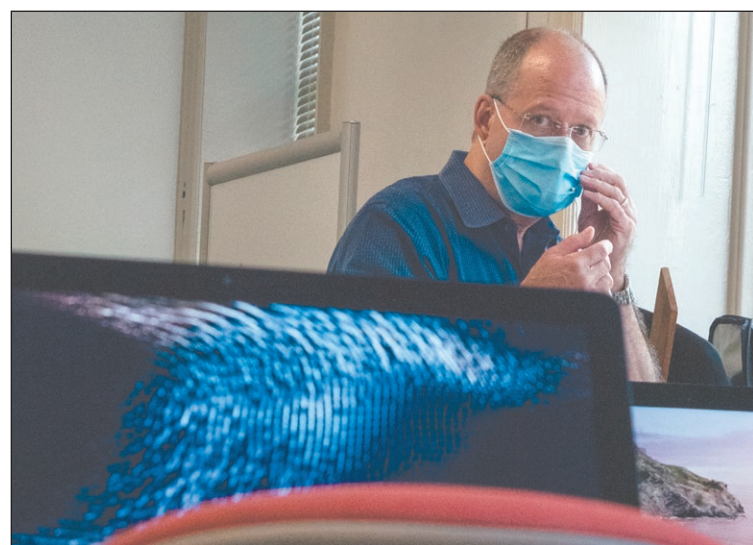
into their classrooms.

"I try to do a lot of group projects," Middlebrook said. "I try to push them to get out and talk to other people."

Other professors made it a point to bridge the gap between students and instructors, including Doerfler.

"We've all made more of an effort to be more proactive in reaching out to students who aren't just struggling, but even for ordinary difficulties adjusting to the course work," he said. "That has worked in terms of student support and just learning support."

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John Beale, professor of communications, setting up his microphone in class at Penn State University, as shot on Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2020.

John Beale, professor of communications, setting up his microphone in class at Penn State University, as shot on Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2020.

'It was hard'

COVID-19's impact on academic integrity, attention span

By Anisa Daniel-Oniko
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Five years post-pandemic, students and educators continue to discuss the ramifications of that unprecedented era on learning, academic integrity and attention span in the classroom.

Kaelonah Darlich was a high school freshman when the pandemic hit, she recalls finding online learning difficult.

"I just felt like I wasn't held accountable for how I was learning while the pandemic was happening, because it was very easy to pass your classes," she said. "I didn't feel like I actually learned anything, so the next year after everything settled, I felt very unprepared."

Darlich, a third-year studying biology, had two remote and one hybrid learning option.

"It was, for me, really difficult because I value that connection I had with my teacher," she said.

When her school shut down for the rest of the year in March 2020, Darlich said academic integrity was difficult to manage since the schools couldn't force students to "hop on Zoom and do assignments."

Darlich knew many students whose initially low GPAs increased significantly during the pandemic.

"They admit that it wasn't necessarily because they tried harder, it's because it got easier," she said.

Many students noted that ChatGPT did not exist to affect academic integrity back then. However, Autumn Mitchell said AI-based math apps were popular at the time and math teachers had to actively discourage

students from using them, emphasizing the importance of showing their work.

"If you completed an assignment quicker than what was expected, say, for online assignments, then they often had talks with students after class to see if they actually did it or not," Mitchell, a third-year studying English, said.

Mitchell was initially excited to try online learning, but as the school year wore on, she found herself missing the in-classroom experience and the ability to engage with teachers about assignments.

Her high school made the unique choice of cancelling all assignments, and instead, students could choose two final projects from a pre-approved list to work on for the rest of the year.

"Although I appreciated the ability to experiment with projects focused on creative writing and even cooking, I was unsure about how this would interrupt my progress moving forward in high school," Mitchell said.

The pandemic didn't affect her academic success negatively, but she believes it worsened students' connections with peers and teachers.

"Some people who I went to school with said that their attention spans and motivation really declined and that returning in-person was frustrating for them," she said.

For Daniel Jing, the shift to online learning was a "big change," but modified learning plans and time management helped him succeed, despite having COVID-19 on three separate occasions.

Jing, a fourth-year study-

ing chemical engineering and meteorology and atmospheric science, said his grades increased due to slightly lighter workload during the pandemic. Although "learning wasn't an issue" for him, Jing thinks many low-income families may have struggled with the requisite internet access.

"I definitely really feel bad for those who weren't able to access online materials as readily as us," he said.

Jing's high school tried to ensure academic integrity, requiring students to have their cameras on and desktops clear when taking tests.

"Teachers definitely wanted to monitor us to make sure that we're doing our own work, especially during exams," he said.

While Brooke Weinstein looks back on lockdown with nostalgia, she wasn't fond of online learning.

"I think it negatively impacted my academics in general, because when I was on Zoom, I would be on my phone during class, and then that stretched throughout the rest of my high school experience," Weinstein, a third-year studying marketing, said. "Academic integrity (went) straight down the toilet."

Weinstein's school didn't have robust academic integrity policies, and students often looked up answers. Some teachers moved away from multiple choice questions, but she believes it might have been better if learning was focused on projects and experiences, like how her mother did with her students.

Weinstein's mother, an elementary school teacher, did themed weeks during the pan-

demic. She would have guest speakers visit the class regularly and focus more on learning content through stories.

Samuel Richards, a sociology professor who taught remotely during the pandemic, said for him it was a scary time.

"It was painful," he said. "It was hard for me, not just as an educator, but as a human being to watch life just get sucked out of us. It was tough to know that campus was empty to a great degree."

His lectures were on YouTube, the exams were open-book and attendance was collected twice during each class, but Richards says it's impossible to know what academic integrity was like.

"But I try not to be pessimistic and think that (students) are a bunch of cheaters," he said.

Similarly, Richards said he thinks the pandemic had a permanent impact on attention and focus.

"The problem is, is it just COVID? Or was it COVID and these smartphones?" he said.

Richards said he feels like he's moved on from the pandemic, but isn't so sure students have.

"Like, you lost something in that year and a half, or two years," Richard said. "And I don't know what you lost, but you lost something, and I think that continues to resonate at some level."

Jing, like most of the other students, feels the pandemic is in his past. Nevertheless, he can't forget what having COVID-19 felt like.

"I have the pandemic still in my head," he said.

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Jonah Rosen/Collegian

A student picks up free masks from the Penn State Office of Student Affairs at the Allen Street gates on Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2020.

COVID-19's influence on sports



Lily LaRegina/Collegian

Rows of seats sit empty during Penn State men's basketball's game against Virginia Commonwealth University at the Bryce Jordan Center on Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2020. Penn State won 72-69.

Noah Aberegg
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Former Penn State men's basketball guard Myles Dread was on a flight home from the Big Ten championship in March 2020 when the news broke of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We all kind of caught wind together when the plane was a couple hundred feet in the air and everyone started getting signals on their phones," Dread told The Daily Collegian. "We started getting notifications that everything was shut down, and it was a very eerie feeling the rest of the plane ride, and even the bus ride back to the gym."

The Nittany Lions faced immense uncertainty, as did the rest of the world, as it waited to hear what would happen and if they would get their shot at the NCAA tournament.

While the pandemic ultimately took away that opportunity for the blue and white, it put everyone in a frenzy worldwide as restaurants, stores and offices were shut down. But for these athletes, it took away their sport and what fuels them most, their fans.

"We missed a lot of crowd noise and crowd support for sure," Dread said. "Nobody had fans, so I think it was just an unfortunate situation for everybody."

For former All-Big Ten outfielder Haylie Brunson, the pandemic took away her first look at college softball as she was set to make her first visits to Pitt shortly after the pandemic started.

"Text messages were kind of really the only thing we were able to do and set up phone calls or zoom calls," Brunson said. "It kind of did suck, because normally you set up your official visits after you commit or sign, but my class never got that."

While Brunson didn't face many issues with recruiting as she committed to Pitt early, she missed out on chances as a fresh commit. Many of her friends, as well, struggled through recruitment.

"It really screwed them over

because they never got to see the campus," Brunson said. "Some of the kids in my class didn't even go on a visit, they just talked with the coaches over a Zoom call."

While track and field sprinter Max DeAngelo was much younger in his collegiate career, his eighth grade year got cut short, and he missed several opportunities over the next year to showcase his talents.

"The whole track season kind of got screwed over," DeAngelo said. "I think we got maybe two meets (into the season) before school ended."

Over the next two years, these athletes of all ages faced uncertainty as the pandemic continued. While many of the athletes knew things would eventually return to normal, they weren't sure how long, and in the meantime, what things would look like until then.

"(Me and a good group of friends) kept our training up throughout the whole time even though we had no meets," DeAngelo said. "We were hopeful that when school would start back up, there would be more meets eventually."

As Dread returned to practice following the offseason, his team faced strict social distancing protocols, including putting two athletes to a basket and having two separate locker rooms. In addition, the Nittany Lions faced uncertainty following the resignation of coach Pat Chambers.

"I'm a very extroverted person," Dread said. "Not being able to hang out with my friends the way I normally would and even just be around my teammates the way I normally would isn't something that I would've anticipated in my college career."

But for DeAngelo, his high school didn't rush the process as much as Penn State, and he was still left training on his own until the track season was underway.

"I had a group of friends who we wanted to keep training so we would sneak in the school after hours and we'd practice on the track alone until we got kicked out," DeAngelo said. "I want to be

fast and instead of being down about (the pandemic), use it to be lazy and do nothing, I can use it to utilize that time as best as I can to make myself better."

Dread's season began in November, a slightly postponed start from a normal basketball season, and even saw its first game against Drexel postponed.

As he and his teammates took the court, they were still without the roar of the crowd they were used to from pre-pandemic days. Instead, things looked much different in the Bryce Jordan Center.

"It was definitely my teammates and my family for sure (that helped me get through this)," Dread said. "We weren't allowed to have a giant number of fans, but we were allowed to have our own ticketed fans. My family always came to the games and made sure that they made sure I knew they were there to support me."

While things slowly went back to normal over the next year around the world, the young athletes with only so many years of opportunity to play their sport struggled to stay motivated through it all.

However, many chose to look on the bright side and take advantage of the issue being presented.

"We all just tried, me especially, to look on the bright side and use this time off from school to get more training in," DeAngelo said. "Once school kind of got back in, it was like, 'OK, I'm gonna work.'"

Dread looked at the pandemic as an opportunity for each athlete to make the best of it and compared the struggles to that of an injury.

"I mean, hindsight is 20-20, right," Dread said. "It's very easy to say that one thing could have led to another, but I'm very much an advocate for people being in control of their own destiny. It was just something that we had to overcome."

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Column | We need to talk

By Jadzia Santiago
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

When I was asked to write this column, the first thing I thought was, *What on earth do I write about?*

Do I share my high school experience? Do I mention the hum in the air that day, the squeak of my locker as I shut it for the last time?

Do I write about the years after, the things that happened to me that, nearly six years later, I haven't fully learned to cope with? About the two times I caught COVID-19, through no fault of my own, and the suffering it caused?

What about who and what didn't survive? Even if I got past that, I wondered, *What would I even say? How do you encapsulate all of that accurately, in a way that makes room for both the pain and progress?*

It's not like I have guidance anymore, with many guidelines thrown away, the COVID-related pages serving more as ghost towns than resources and the phantom outlines of social distancing stickers on the floor.

Even with things lingering in my life, like the phrase "no-contact delivery" when I order food, it feels like there's a collective act going on. It's as if I'm just supposed to ignore the memory that crawls up my spine like a spotted lanternfly and pretend that these new presences in our lives came from nowhere.

There it is. I realized that I can't tell my story without acknowledging the fact that we've stopped telling the main one. Because, since quietly slipping "back to normal," we've been acting like COVID-19 doesn't exist or perhaps never did.

There's a pandemic-shaped hole in most of our conversations, and when those conversations do acknowledge it, it's as something that's "over" now, that we live in a time "after," that we're tired of, have moved on from and are no longer affected by.

It's a non-issue, not a factor in our lives anymore.

I say "most," because although I'm not seeing it in my daily, young, able-bodied life, vulnerable communities are still talking about it.

You know it, the groups that we've sacrificed to our fear of a "new normal"? The elderly, the immunocompromised, the chronically ill and disabled, who are at risk every time they step outside, especially since we let down our mask mandates?

Or, if we still ignore them, what about communities *made* vulnerable, like those still struggling with how COVID-19 tore through their bodies and left them with long COVID or

another illness?

What about the 7.1 million dead worldwide, according to the World Health Organization? The 1.2 million in the United States alone? The countless families including mine? All those white flags in Washington, D.C., when the memorial went up in 2021, each one signifying a loss that numbers just can't quantify?

Do we remember them? These people don't have the privilege of forgetting or even living long enough to. And, despite how much we like to pretend, neither do we.

In March of 2020, our daily lives were uprooted by something we had no control over. We were ripped away from our jobs, our schools, our loved ones.

Some of us picked up hobbies, and varying forms of art. Others, like myself, just made do.

All the while, we watched from the screens that we were glued to. We watched the time pass by, the cars disappear from the streets and celebrities upload tactless covers of John Lennon's "Imagine."

We kept our eyes on a world that had the potential to get just a bit kinder ... and then didn't. No forget *didn't* — refused.

I look at the numbers now. I can name a few people in that 7.1 million, and it's possible you can too. And in my head, my high school classmate still shouts, "Coronavirus isn't real!"

Because my audience is Gen Z college students, I speak to you specifically: watching your life get tossed about as the world turns its back on the sick and dying is life-altering for anybody. But we were kids, just learning about the world and how it works.

And now that we're young adults about to fully enter the world, we're pretending none of it happened. That it didn't affect us at all, that we're not plagued by cynicism, despair and violent fear. That it's not part of what's rotting our generation's empathy from the inside.

To say that our collective experiences were anything less than scarring is an understatement. We need to start talking about it, about what happened and is happening still, because even if we don't, we'll still hear something in the silence.

We'll hear the voices of newscasters and politicians, our lockers slamming shut for the last time, our peers turning on each other. I'll hear my wheezing breaths as I keep myself from crying from the vicious chills shaking my body, since I can't afford to block my nostrils with tears.

And in the distance, there it'll always be — the sound of thousands of white flags, flapping in the wind.

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'IT MEANS A LOT'

THON holds annual 5K at Bryce Jordan Center

By Jonathon Chiu
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN



Samantha Oropeza/Collegian

The Nittany Lion hypes up the crowd during the THON 5K outside the Bryce Jordan Center on Oct. 26, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

and see all the families show up — (it's) the first time seeing them for almost a year now," Tanabe, a fourth-year studying finance, said.

"I've gotten to see my co-captains in previous years plan and execute the 5K, and I just

knew that's something that I definitely would love to do."

Hallie Milligan, the THON dancer relations/intra-committee liaison, has been involved with THON for the past 3 years. She said she chose to attend the 5K to interact with families that are supported by and interact with THON.

"I wanted to get even more involved and get to know more families than I did before I became a captain," Milligan, a fourth-year studying elementary and early childhood education, said.

Milligan said she was "so happy" with seeing the registration line wrap around as people signed up to participate.

"This is such an exciting event for the special events captains and the 5K is always such a special thing to bring the THON community together," she said. "It's so amazing to see."

The THON 5K began at 11 a.m. with thousands of participants crossing the starting line.

Water was provided at stations set up along the 5K's route, passing by buildings like the

HUB-Robeson Center and Pattee and Paterno Library.

McKayla Orewiler, the other 5K/development captain, said she thought of the 5K as being unique amongst other THON events. She said she was thankful for having been given the opportunity to organize this year's run.

"I had the opportunity to run the 5K in the years past, and I feel like the 5K is so much more than just a race — it's all of the little events that go into it," Orewiler, a fourth-year studying broadcast journalism, said.

Angelina Aviles, the president of her THON organization, Ohana, said she chose to participate in the 5K with her group as she considered it a fantastic event to support.

"I love anything THON related because the community is just so amazing and everything that we do is just so beneficial and amazing," Aviles, a fourth-year studying marketing, said. "It's just a great way to get out, to talk to people, to be active while supporting the cause."

Aviles said she considered the 5K as a way to meet new people

and celebrate the start of Dream Forward.

The participants began to return at 11:18 a.m. with the final participants arriving back at the Bryce Jordan Center around 12:20 p.m. Following the end of the 5K, an announcement was made signalling the launch of the Dream Forward campaign with the goal of raising \$1.25 million.

Hannah Steinberg, the THON teen and adult family coordinator, said she loved seeing the high involvement in the 5K.

"Dream Forward is such an important campaign for all of us. It's such a great way to kind of kick off...our major fundraising and everything all together," Steinberg, a third-year studying political science, said. "All these events are great to have everybody coming out and showing their support for everything, and it means a lot."

Steinberg said participation in events such as the 5K help THON reach its year-long fundraising goal.

Olivia Nilsen, who participated in the 5K with Science Lionpride, said she considered THON to be a good way to bond with other members of the organization.

Nilsen, a second-year studying chemistry, said she thought THON to be a big part of Penn State culture and the 5K as a good way to get involved in it.

"It's just a great way to support THON," Nilsen said.

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Samantha Oropeza/Collegian

Members of THON families run during the THON 5K outside the Bryce Jordan Center on Oct. 26, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

'Meatball Monday' Madness



Megan Miller/Collegian

Cars pass by McLanahan's Downtown Market on Sept. 1, 2025, in State College, Pa.

By Jocelyn Bilker
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Every Monday morning, the lines at both McLanahan's stores on College Avenue and Allen Street start forming before 10 a.m. with students eagerly awaiting the \$4 meatball sub.

"Meatball Monday" is a State College food tradition, bringing together locals, students and loyal customers who swear by the deal.

"It's been running for at least 15 or 16 years, maybe longer," said Adam Tilghman, assistant manager at McLanahan's on Allen Street. "I used to work here 15 years ago and it's just as popular now as it was then. Everybody knows about it."

Tilghman said the sub's enduring popularity comes down to two things — price and community.

"It's definitely one of the cheapest ways to get food, especially on a Monday," he said. "It's kind of like a collective. Everybody gets in line and just waits with all their friends."

Tilghman said he's noticed people enjoy doing things as a group with their friends, especially in this town.

"Even if they don't all get a meatball, they still like to do things together," Tilghman said.

According to Raymond Agostinelli, the College Avenue McLanahan's owner and manager, the weekly rush has become a predictable but welcomed challenge.

"It's been going on for about 20 years," Agostinelli said. "You have kids coming in, word of mouth spreads. Everybody celebrates it. It's cheap, good and easy, and you're not finding anything for four dollars anymore."

Preparation begins days in advance. Staff count and thaw hundreds of rolls, slice pounds of cheese and warm trays of sauce and meatballs for the rush.

"We usually make between 400 and 600 subs on a Monday," Agostinelli said. "Toward the end of the year, when new students find out about it, it spreads like fire. The most popular time for purchases is just around noon."

Agostinelli recalls when a group of three students tried to set the record for the most subs eaten in one day.

"They made it to eight," he said. "But the record is still 10."

Behind the deli counter, Jack Finkelstein, a McLanahan's employee, said Mondays are "the best kind of chaos."

"The line gets insane, especially around noon," Finkelstein, a second-year studying marketing, said. "Last week, we sold 500 meatball Subs. When I first started, it was more like 200 or 300, but it's definitely grown in popularity. Everyone knows it's the best deal in town."

Finkelstein said preparation and teamwork are key.

"You can never run out on a Monday because that's criminal at McLanahan's," he said. "So we

prep everything the day before. Sauce, cheese, meat, we're always ready."

Even with the pressure, the energy is high with celebratory T-shirts.

"Everybody on the staff is fired up," Finkelstein said.

For Dylan DeCelle, the tradition has become a weekly ritual.

"I've been coming every Monday for the last three years," DeCelle, a fifth-year studying mechanical engineering, said. "It's not the craziest meatball sub you've ever had, but it's probably the best deal you've ever seen in your entire life."

He first heard about the special through word of mouth, and once he tried it, he was hooked.

"I heard people talking about it, figured I'd try it and I've been coming ever since," DeCelle said. "It's cheap, it's good and everyone's here for the same reason."

From the early-morning prep to the late-day sellouts, Mondays at McLanahan's are a tradition that shows no signs of slowing down.

"It's definitely our busiest day," Tilghman said. "The line, the crowd, the energy is all part of what makes Meatball Monday special. It's something people look forward to, and that's what keeps it going."

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50 million Penn State Health donation

By Brennan Kramp
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Penn State Health and Penn State College of Medicine announced a \$50 million donation from philanthropist Tom Golisano on Tuesday.

The donation will also come with the renaming of the Penn State Health Children's Hospital to the Penn State Health Golisano Children's Hospital, associated with Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center.

The donation will align the Penn State Health Golisano Children's Hospital with nine

other institutions around the country in the Golisano Children's Alliance, according to Penn State Health News.

The Alliance's mission is to expand pediatric care through services, collaboration and quality, according to the Golisano Foundation's webpage. The Alliance was announced by Golisano on Oct. 28 and will consist of six new and four existing Golisano Children's Hospitals.

Golisano's contribution comes as the largest single donation to Penn State Health in over 60 years.

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THIS WEEK IN HAPPY VALLEY

MONDAY, NOV. 3

- Creative Journaling for Well-Being: 4 p.m. at White Course Weston Community Center
- Women's Basketball vs. Bucknell: 5 p.m. at Rec Hall
- Men's Basketball vs. Fairfield: 7 p.m. at Bryce Jordan Center

TUESDAY, NOV. 4

- The Joyfull Soles of Duende Edition: 6 p.m. at Alumni Hall (HUB-Robeson Center)
- Salsa Lessons: 6 p.m. at Municipal Building, 2nd floor

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 5

- Community, Power and the Search for Indigenous Identity: 2 p.m. at Schlow Centre Region Library
- Disney Karaoke Night: 7:30 p.m. in 106 Wartik Building
- Soles of Duende "Can We Dance Here?": 7:30 p.m. at Eisenhower Auditorium

THURSDAY, NOV. 6

- Oz for a Cause Wicked Gala: 4:30 p.m. at Juniper Village at Brookline
- Garden and Gallery Book Conversation: 6 p.m. at Palmer Museum of Art

FRIDAY, NOV. 7

- Downtown State College Farmers Market: 11:30 a.m. on Locus Lane
- Women's Basketball vs. Cincinnati: 7 p.m. at Rec Hall
- Men's Soccer vs. #13 Michigan: 8 p.m. at Jeffery Field

SMITH TALKS MENTALITY

By Lyle Alenstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Terry Smith is now one game and one bye week into being the interim head coach, adjusting to the routine of what it takes to lead a program.

Part of that routine for Penn State is a weekly press conference that goes down every Monday. For the first time since his introductory press conference as interim head coach, Smith returned to the podium in the Beaver Stadium media room to speak.

Here's what he had to say.

Ohio State

Penn State has not defeated Ohio State since 2016. It's been longer since it has beat the Buckeyes on the road, with the last win being in 2011.

During the preseason, this matchup was anticipated to be one of two of the best teams in the country. Instead, Ohio State is No. 1 while the Nittany Lions have spiraled, but the opportunity for Penn State remains one of substantial magnitude.

"We have a tremendous opportunity here on Saturday to go to Ohio State," Smith said. "They're a very well coached team, very talented. Coach (Ryan) Day has done an amazing job with those guys."

On a national stage, nobody expects Penn State to hang with the Buckeyes, but the challenge that Ohio State presents remains one that the Nittany Lions can capitalize on.



Mack Leach/Collegian

Terry Smith gives insight about the upcoming Ohio State game during the media presser in Beaver Stadium on Oct. 27, 2025 in State College, Pa.

"This is why you come to Penn State for this big stage," Smith said. "Playing games like this and be able to compete against the No. 1 team in the country and have an opportunity to beat those guys."

Smith's future at State

When Smith took the stage two weeks ago for his introductory press conference, he made it clear that he loves Penn State. He cited his family members that have graduated from there, him playing wide receiver for the Nittany Lions and being on staff for the past 12 years.

He was asked about his future with the program, whether he wants to stick around after the

2025 season, whether the opportunity as head coach presents or not.

"We just don't know what's next," Smith said. "So I'm grounded in my feet right now, and my job is to lead this team the rest of this season and we're just worried about beating Ohio State."

Smith was referred to as a "truth teller" by James Franklin during training camp, and that is exactly how he attacked that question — he simply didn't have an answer as to where his future lies.

"I am known in the building as the truth teller," Smith said. "You guys probably can tell because I tell you the truth as well."

QB situation

Ethan Grunkemeyer made his first start against Iowa, where he showed flashes but also showed the inexperience of a redshirt freshman in that position.

"The next step for him is, we got to put him in position to succeed," Smith said. "We can't ask him to go out there and throw the ball 45 times and be effective and win that way. We got to create the run game. We've got to be able to give him some throws that are one or two read, type throws and not over complicated."

The backup to Grunkemeyer is Jaxon Smolik, who went down with injury against the Hawkeyes

and didn't return. Smith provided no status updates on Smolik, but 3-star freshman Bekkem Kritza, who dealt with injuries during camp, is cleared to play if needed.

"The game plan will be very similar," Smith said. "We'd have to keep it simple for him to have success, and not demand a lot from him and the other guys have to step up."

Injury updates

In addition to Smolik and Kritza, Smith provided an updated status of several players that have been banged up.

Following Smolik, he addressed the health of defensive end Zuriyah Fisher, who didn't play in the second half against Iowa. He had some sort of supportive equipment on his left leg on the sideline and was not seen during the media viewing session of practice last week.

"Zuriyah should be back this week," Smith said.

He then addressed starting left guard Vega Ioane and rotational guard Cooper Cousins. Ioane was out against the Hawkeyes, while Cousins was active but didn't play after being out against Northwestern the previous week.

"Both of those guys will be available this week," Smith said.

No question was asked about defensive end Jaylen Harvey, who was inactive against Iowa and not at practice during the viewing session a week ago.

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Drew Allar returns

By Lyle Alenstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The last time Drew Allar was seen inside Beaver Stadium, he was down on the turf being tended to.

Since then, he's undergone surgery for a broken left ankle. He got back up, and has found himself back in the Lasch Building.

"We have great leadership in the locker room, even a guy like Drew Allar has been around and been very, very present," interim head coach Terry Smith said on Monday. "He stopped in to see me this morning and asked, 'how can he help support?' We have that type of leadership."

Allar was briefly away from the program, getting surgery following his injury. He was not seen for the road matchup with Iowa.

Despite this, he stayed in touch with his teammates. He texted Ethan Grunkemeyer every single day in the lead up to his first collegiate start against the Hawkeyes. Now, Grunkemeyer has the player he learned from and became close friends with back by his side ahead of a matchup with No. 1 Ohio State.

"He's been super helpful so far, just kind of talking about what they do on defense, kind of what

he sees," Grunkemeyer said on Zoom. "We've talked back and forth on that end, and then how to go into this week preparation wise."

During his three years as a starter for Penn State, Allar has shown promise as to who he can be as a player, but has also shown why he hasn't lived up to the hype as a former 5-star prospect out of Medina High School.

What won't be questioned about Allar's time in Happy Valley is the impact he made as a leader. He was a two-time captain, and will have everyone in the program speak to how much he bleeds the blue and white.

"That's just a testament to him as a player, him as a leader and him as a teammate," assistant quarterbacks coach Trace McSorley said on the Penn State Coaches Show on Thursday. "He loves this team and he loves this university. He loves his teammates and it's just a testament to him."

Penn State's season has spiraled with it once being the preseason No. 2 team in the country — now it's 3-4. While the Nittany Lions have had their campaign spiral, the same can be said for Allar.

Yet, he's rounding out his final season in State College by going

through the thick of it with the team that he committed to in March 2021. As McSorley put it, Allar is "still a part of this brotherhood."

"He's still a leader here," McSorley said. "He's going to do everything he can to help this team win games on Saturdays."

Allar's presence on the program was made clear when athletic director Pat Kraft broke down in tears talking about what he means to Penn State after his injury against Northwestern.

He won't be on the field anymore for the Nittany Lions, but Allar will be with the team for what seems like the foreseeable future, doing anything he can do to make an impact.

"Drew is still going to be Drew. He's such a leader and such a good guy off the field," wide receiver Trebor Peña said on Zoom. "So even if he can't play, he's still going to contribute in ways that he can, just being around the guys, encouraging guys and helping out wherever he can. So thankful to have a guy like him in the locker room."

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Herley Gong/Collegian

Linebacker Amare Campbell (24) shoves linebacker Cam Smith (26) at the Penn State football practice in Holuba Hall on August 12, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

LB search continues

By Lexie Linderman
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Linebacker was a position with question marks the entire offseason. Amare Campbell's transfer eased some of the depth concerns, but once Tony Rojas went down with a long-term injury, those worries popped right back up.

Since Rojas' injury, Dom DeLuca has been playing the majority of the snaps at the WILL alongside Campbell, and it hasn't been working out in Penn State's favor. The run defense has been gashed constantly, allowing 158.7 yards per game on the ground this season, which is the third-worst mark in the Big Ten.

So, when will it be time to give some younger guys a shot? Terry Smith said Monday that true freshman Alex Tatsch will likely see more snaps going forward and also highlighted another true freshman in Cam Smith.

"Cam Smith is another kid that has an opportunity," Terry said. "Alex has had a good start to his freshman year. He's a talented kid. He's big, strong, fast. He's learning the system as they all are, and we just have to create more depth at the linebacker position."

After Rojas' injury, James Franklin highlighted Tatsch and Cam as guys who could play more as a result, but the two never really saw any meaningful snaps while he was still the head coach.

With Terry at the helm, that will likely change due to his willingness to play some unseasoned guys as long as Jim Knowles is on board. The praise for Tatsch has been there, though, with Knowles saying in the middle of September that the Nittany Lions have been trying to get the young backer into the mix.

Campbell, one of the veterans in the linebacker room, also had plenty of praise for Tatsch while speaking with reporters Tuesday on Zoom.

"His physicality and his speed (stand out). He's a big kid. He's only a freshman, and just how physically plays," Campbell said. "He knows where he has to be ... He's a gift of kinds. He'll be great."

That praise from Campbell extended to Cam as well. The St. Joseph's Prep product has appeared for just one snap at Penn State, coming in against UCLA when DeLuca briefly left the game with an injury.

Despite the small sample size, Campbell is confident in Cam's abilities moving forward as he's possibly entrusted with a bigger role in the Nittany Lions' defense.

"His movement, definitely (stands out). He moves in the box very well," Campbell said. "He's coming along. He's starting to understand the schemes, and he's a good pass coverage linebacker. His movement is very (good). He can move fluidly throughout the box."

The difficult part of seeing the field for these young linebackers is understanding Knowles' scheme. Terry said last Wednesday the defensive scheme is like math and it takes intense studying to understand it.

Campbell said that's the reason guys like LaVar Arrington II haven't been given the chance to make an impact. But once they have the scheme down, some of the young linebackers in the Lasch Building could potentially be the next faces of "LBU."

The first step to getting linebacker play back on track, however, is stopping the run at Ohio State on Saturday.

"We're just searching for some answers to be able to help the defensive line, to stop the run game, which is critical in this game," Terry said. "If they get going in the run game, it'll be a long day. So we got to be able to protect that front seven."

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Where does Penn State, top candidates stack up as coaching carousel hits full swing?

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PSU to 'chop wood'

By Lyle Alenstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Since taking over as the interim head coach for Penn State, Terry Smith has had his fair share of quips and philosophical teachings to get messages across.

He revealed another one on Wednesday evening after practice, saying his team is going to "chop wood" when it clashes Ohio State on Saturday.

"We've got to be able to chop a redwood tree until it's done," Smith said. "It's a hard task and it's one chop at a time. We have to believe in those chops that it will eventually break through for us. That's what our belief is for Saturday."

Penn State has always prided itself on being a team with a blue-collar identity. It's about being hardworking, resilient and valuing toughness with everything that you do. During the preseason, the offensive line wore matching overalls to embody that.

For starting right tackle Nolan Rucci, it's about honing in on that mindset of a being blue collar from here on out despite what the season has turned into — it starts with cutting down trees.

"One chop at a time. It means going out there, giving it your all every single play no matter what the results are, no matter what happened that play," Rucci said. "You go ahead and chop again because that's all you can do. So just keep chopping at that tree until it comes down."

The tree, in this case, is Ohio State, who is currently 7-0 and the No. 1 team in the country. The



Kevin Cheng/Collegian

Cornerback Zion Tracy (7) celebrates after his pick six against Ohio State on Nov. 2, 2024, in University Park, Pa.

wood that the tree is built around is the best wide receiver in the country in Jeremiah Smith and arguably the best defensive player in the country in safety Caleb Downs. The wood is a Buckeyes' team that is firing on all cylinders right now.

Ryan Day isn't underestimating the Nittany Lions, as he said this week he feels like it still has the feel of a top-five matchup. Penn State, despite being 20.5-point underdogs via DraftKings, isn't shying away from Ohio State and its success in 2025.

"I don't think the mindset changes," tight end Luke Reynolds said. "It's just another game week. Another week of preparation. Focus on going 1-0. I think the bye week last week helped us stay fresh and feel confident when we're going out there."

During the preseason, Penn State was No. 2. The Buckeyes were No. 3. Now, Ohio State is No. 1 and the Nittany

Lions are unranked. James Franklin said at local media day he doesn't frame the preseason rankings and hang them in his basement, but he still probably didn't imagine he would be fired or his now-former team would be unranked.

Penn State hasn't beat Ohio State since 2016. It hasn't beat the Buckeyes on the road since 2011. The odds are stacked against the Nittany Lions on Saturday, but if they break out the axe and chop, chop away at that redwood tree, maybe the mighty Buckeyes will fall.

"We not really ranked right now, so we don't really pay attention to team rankings or anything like that," defensive tackle Alonzo Ford Jr. said. "We just go out there. Our next opponent is what it is and we just got to be prepared for it."

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'We are' sad sometimes

Best places to cry on campus



Samantha Oropeza/Collegian

A sad fan looks down during the Penn State football game against UCLA at the Rose Bowl Stadium on Oct. 4, 2025 in Pasadena, Calif. The Bruins beat the Nittany Lions 42-37.

By **Ryan Hummer**
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Penn State is a great place for self-discovery and fostering life-long friendships. The "Happy Valley" moniker was given with sincerity, but can sometimes be an ironic statement for students who are just having "one of those days."

There's plenty of places on campus for students to have a crying session — we all know a good cry is just what we need to get us through rough times.

Having a bad day in Happy Valley seems to extend beyond students. Lately, Beaver Stadium



Jacob DeLuca/Collegian

Students sit in chairs at the Arboretum at Penn State on April 20, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

has become a common place to cry — especially in the past month.

The prices of concessions must finally be getting to the dedicated Penn State fans.

The stress of midterms linger and the presence of finals is approaching, culminating into a time for the waterworks to start flowing.

Many take the opportunity to cry in the shower, especially with the accompanying acoustics of the dorm hall bathrooms. A harmony can even be achieved if equally struggling students decide to join in, in their own separate stalls, of course.

A scenic sobbing spot is the Arboretum, with a diverse range of plant life and picturesque places. The Arboretum was established to ease the minds of students and those who visit it, and offers a welcoming environment for a good crying session.

Make sure you plan to go on a sunny day, unless you want to be in sync with the rainy weather and act like you're the main character of your own movie.

If you are capable of a silent cry, the Stacks, located in the Pattee Library, surrounded by dim lighting, total silence and bookshelves blocking any view of those around you is a perfect choice.

You might start to question if you're crying because of external problems, or the eerie location you find yourself in.

The Old Main lawn is perfect for recreational frisbee, volleyball and uncontrollable sobbing.

The open field allows everyone to see how bad of a day you're truly having, and may encourage others to come and offer a helping hand. Activities like having a picnic with your closest friends can be a huge pick-me-up on a hard day.

A good late night pick for a solitary sob is on the top of almost any parking deck on campus, particularly the West and East parking decks, being soothed by the view of campus and getting a good look at this place you call home.

The silence of your thoughts and the towering feeling you have over the campus can improve your headspace greatly.

Last, do not be afraid to cry in front of or with your friends that you've made on Penn State's campus.

The culture welcomes moments and bonding opportunities like these, sharing hard times with those you get along with.

This blog is not meant to paint the picture that Penn State itself is a common crying place, or that me, the writer, has personally experienced all this tragedy.

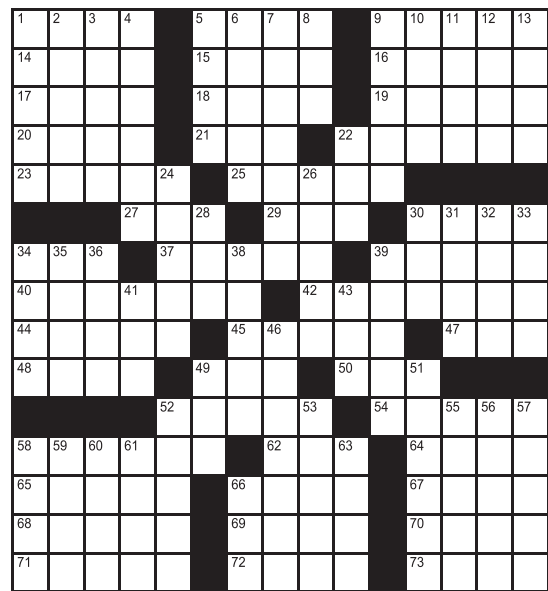
A bad day is common, and the campus has plenty of resources to help turn your frown upside down.

To email reporter: rsh5497@psu.edu.

Crossword

Across

- 1 New Jersey hoopsters
- 5 Schools of thought
- 9 Indigent
- 14 Crude group?
- 15 Mixed bag
- 16 Part of a TV feed
- 17 Unit of pressure
- 18 Shipshape
- 19 Lively
- 20 Light beige
- 21 It's the law
- 22 Mollify
- 23 Mine passage
- 25 Barbeque dish
- 27 Taradiddle
- 29 Farm butter
- 30 Reddish-brown
- 34 Egyptian cobra
- 37 Halloween costume
- 39 Rice with raw fish wrapped in seaweed
- 40 Public-service corporation
- 42 Breakfast staple
- 44 Lukewarm
- 45 Get up
- 47 Batiking need
- 48 Like some columns
- 49 Be mistaken
- 50 Chop down
- 52 Search engine
- 54 Chain of hills
- 58 Arrange
- 62 Roofing material
- 64 Mountain goat's perch
- 65 From the top
- 66 Stubborn beast
- 67 Cabbagelike vegetable
- 68 Imbibe



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- 11 Do magazine work
- 12 Satellite receiver
- 13 Oxen's harness
- 22 Uncle ____
- 24 Not bold
- 26 Louisiana sight
- 28 On the other hand
- 30 Coke's partner
- 31 Employed
- 32 Open carriage
- 33 Mah-jongg piece
- 34 Garage occupant
- 35 Put one's foot down
- 36 Snowman prop
- 38 Biblical gift
- 39 Direct
- 41 Jar part
- 43 Cigar residue
- 46 Pear-shaped
- 49 Chow down
- 51 Cricket equipment
- 52 NY team
- 53 Anointed
- 55 Golden Hind captain
- 56 Strong winds
- 57 Discharge
- 58 Rages
- 59 Cruel person
- 60 Parade spoiler
- 61 Take care
- 63 Kind of wire
- 66 Cultural Revolution leader

Down

- 1 Office memos
- 2 Notable period
- 3 ____ firma
- 4 Back of the neck
- 5 Letter before kappa
- 6 Deft
- 7 Student's worry
- 8 Kind of sauce
- 9 Wealthy one
- 10 Dollar rival

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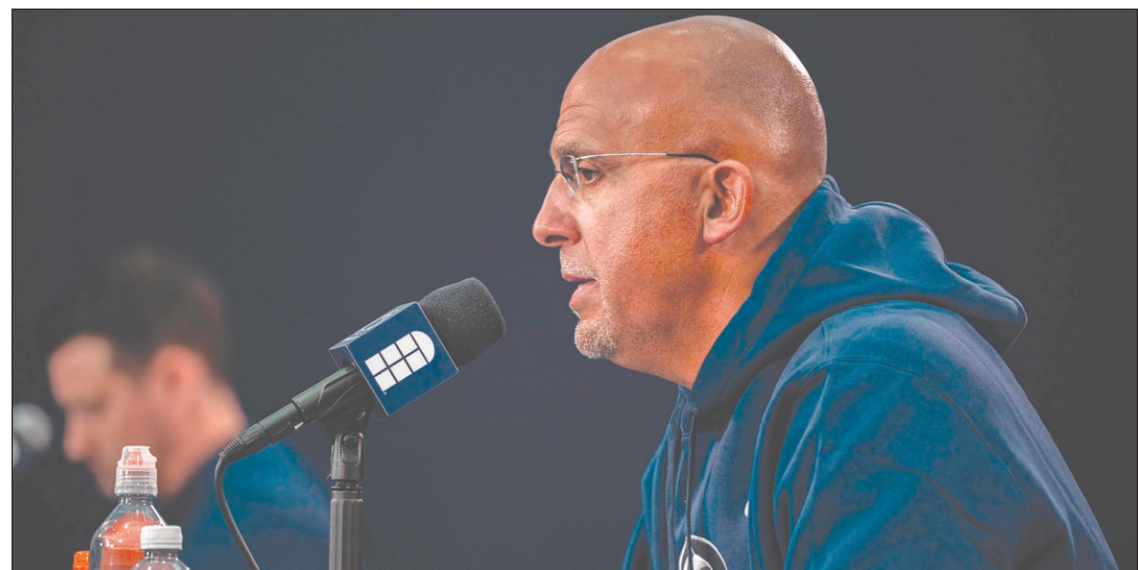
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Satire | Franklin Replacements



Sawyer Hadlum/Collegian

Penn State football head coach James Franklin answers a question at a press conference in Beaver Stadium on Sept. 8, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

By **Justina Geosits**
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

A dark season for the Nittany Lions is in session, but the question still looms overhead: who could replace James Franklin?

We scoured the best of our world's entertainment, technology and culture icons to find the next great Penn State coach. You're welcome, athletics department. We did your work for you.

Here are our top candidates:

Beyoncé

She can do it all — pop, country, run the illuminati, why not football? She'd revolutionize the program just by being there.

Imagine the music during the halftime show, and the glittering pom poms from the stands. Plus, the team could benefit from the players taking some group bonding lessons.

But there's a catch — you don't lose under Beyoncé. You wouldn't dare. One bad game, and the team's career might somehow end up in the gutter because you crossed her.

Kris Jenner

Momager to all. She's been managing empires since the 90s.

Every player gets a brand deal, a docuseries and matching tracksuits.

Post-game interviews? Sponsored by SKIMS. Winning is mostly optional, any publicity is good publicity when

she's involved — so long as the engagement rate's high.

ChatGPT

AI is already on track to take over your job, why not Franklin's?

A coach who knows every play in the book and every team's weaknesses. Sign us up.

It's got data-driven confidence and knows more about the players than the players know about themselves.

Sure, there's always the risk the internet cuts out mid-game and the playbook gets replaced by Wikipedia, but as long as the internet holds, we're golden.

The football

No coach. Let the ball roam free — go where it wants, be who it wants to be. Let the ball guide us to victory.

The purest choice, obviously. A metaphor for inner peace, and makes the game interesting.

The kind that wins hearts, not games. Grounds us a bit — maybe taps into that intuition. We would probably be winning more games than we have this season actually.

Elon Musk

What letter would he rename the team? Maybe "Z?" He already turned Twitter into "X."

Maybe we need a rebrand anyway.

Expect every player to have their own Cybertruck, and uniforms decked out with some weird technological enhancement.

After each touchdown, a rocket

blasts instead of fireworks.

The playbook would consist of payouts and strategies that he bought from other teams. Would we win? Yes. Would it be ethical?

Probably not, but at least it would be interesting.

The Willard Preacher

He'd be the wild card. He's already got the volume, conviction and fear factor.

Imagine that whole persona put into football. The man has been giving unsolicited pep talks for ages — he's ready — he's been waiting.

He'd probably give the players an innate spiritual fear if they drop the ball. Tell them something will possess them if they don't win.

But hey, we'd win. That's all that matters.

Punxsutawney Phil

Simple system. If the players see their shadows, they run. If not, we punt. Each play would be a gamble, even the players would be on their toes.

Every game depends on sunlight and a little superstition — which honestly sounds more reliable than our current red zone offense.

Sadly, I can confirm he would deny the offer, his current job attracts better media attention and a sick reputation.

To email reporter: jbg6080@psu.edu.
Follow her on X @[justinagosits](https://twitter.com/justinagosits).

WORD SEARCH

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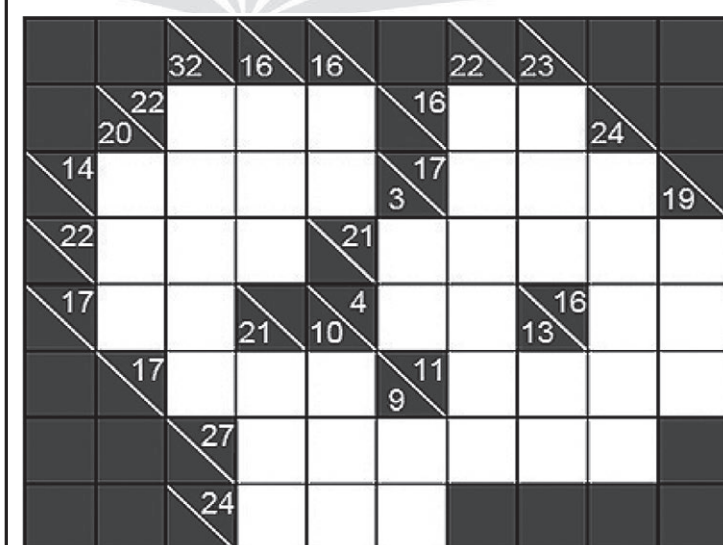
Valleys of the World



- Carson
- Cerco
- Danube
- Death
- Douro
- Fraser
- Glen Coe
- Hells Gate
- Hunza
- Indus
- Kaghan
- Kalalau
- Khumbu
- Loire
- Napa
- Nile
- Olympic
- Panjshir
- Rhone
- Rio Grande
- Romsdalen
- Sedona Verde
- Shenandoah
- Sonoma
- Valley Of The Kings
- Willamette
- Yosemite

Kakuro (Cross Sums)

The rules are easy to learn: A number above the diagonal line in a black square is the sum of the white squares to the right of it. A number below the diagonal line is the sum of the white squares in the sequence below it. You may only use the digits 1 to 9, and a digit may be used only once in any sequence.



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No tricks, just British treats: Reflections on foreign candy

There are certain necessities that I'm choosing to live without as a study abroad student. It feels wasteful to purchase everything I'm used to, like cutlery and dinnerware, just to dispose of it at the end of a three-month stint.

Instead of a proper bowl, I have a plastic Halloween bucket I bought at Tesco. I use it to make my salad and eat my pasta, but very soon I'll be using it for trick-or-treating.

I don't have a costume yet, but I will not let anything stop me from getting free British candy.

In general, I have quite the sweet tooth, and I think it's genetic. It's my dad's fault that I will never pass up a sweet treat, but it's Haribo and Cadbury's fault that I am itching for Halloween this year. Their products are so much better in the U.K. than they are at home. I'm not entirely sure why,

though. The differences might be because of varying food standards in different countries or because of where the companies are based. All I know is that my taste buds are more than okay with eating British candy this Halloween.

I haven't been able to try everything yet because the candy selection spans multiple aisles at my local grocery store, but here are some treats I'm most looking forward to on Friday.

Maynards Bassetts Jelly Babies

I love gummy candy, and particularly the treats with more waxy textures like Sour Patch Kids, more so than a typical gelatinous gummy bear. I also like gumdrops, but I find that by the time you maneuver them from the package to your lips, they've already gone stale.

In the 19 years leading up to this moment, I've longed for a candy texture that falls on the gumminess spectrum right between a Sour Patch Kid and a

gum drop. Jelly babies are exactly that.

They're sweet, smooth on the tongue and the perfect consistency. They're gummy, but they're soft, and I don't feel like I have to chew on them for millennia to avoid a Heimlich-necessary situation.

Cadbury Dairy Milk

On Friday, I will preemptively jump for joy at any sight of a metallic, purple wrapper because it's likely going to be a Cadbury chocolate treat.

I like chocolate at home, too, but it's just so much better across the ocean because they make milk chocolate with milk. Given the titles, it sounds like we should be doing the same, but most American factories make chocolates with milk powder instead of real milk.

The UK recipe just makes chocolates a little bit creamier, a little bit richer and a lot more satisfying.

Squashies

Before I left for my semester abroad, I was on the Squashies

and Clinkers side of TikTok, and I wanted both in my mouth as soon as my plane touched down. I've recently discovered that Clinkers are, unfortunately for me, from Australia, but I have been investigating different flavors of Squashies. Raspberry and milk flavor, but I really want to try the strawberry and cream. For whatever reason, my local grocery store doesn't sell that flavor, so I'm hoping a bag will land in my trick-or-treat/salad bucket this weekend.

Haribo Giant Strawbs

These are not available in the United States, to my knowledge, so I may have to stockpile some in my suitcase to bring home.

If there is a strawberry-flavored candy, it is probably my favorite. I do love real, fresh strawberries, but strawberry candies with faint flavors that taste like the strawberry might have rolled 20 miles from the factory are also delicious in their own right.

So when I saw a bag of large strawberry-shaped gummies at the grocery store, I knew I had

to try them.

The Haribo Giant Strawbs are delicious flavor-wise, but they also have a great texture. I've noticed that most Haribo treats are softer and more chewable here than they are at home. A bag of soft, strawberry sweetness hates to see me coming.

I hope you get lots of your preferred treats this Halloween while I'm hunting down my new favorite foreign confections.

Alli Satterfield is the abroad columnist for The Daily Collegian. She is a second-year studying journalism. Email her at ams1258@psu.edu.

Take a look

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MY VIEW | Julia Frederick

Lost connection in online classes

Anyone who knows me is well aware that I'm a huge Beatles fan. From my first concert (Paul McCartney at Hersheypark Stadium in 2016) to my most recent concert (Ringo Starr at the TD Pavilion at the Mann this summer) to my very name (see Side 2, Track 9 off "The White Album"), my life tends to revolve around all things Fab Four.

You can imagine my sheer joy when I found out that Penn State offers courses on the Beatles. Freshman year, I made a vow to myself (and to my academic advisor, who laughed nervously) that I refused to graduate without taking a Beatles class.

After many failed semesters of clicking furiously on Lion-PAATH when my enrollment window opened, I finally added Music 109: The Music of the Beatles to my Fall 2025 schedule. I have never been so excited to take a class in my entire academic career (sorry to all of my wonderful English professors, it's nothing personal).

As happy as I am to be taking a class on something I'm so

interested in, I can't help but feel a bit disappointed about the experience.

Don't get me wrong, I love the class. The course's author and instructor are very passionate and I'm certainly learning a lot. Overall, it's very well constructed.

However, it's fully online. Aside from weekly emails from the professor and discussion boards, there isn't much contact with others in the class.

Thus, the class constantly feels like it's on the back burner. Though I love the subject matter, it's easy to forget about.

I've taken fully online classes before, out of convenience more than anything. As a humanities girl, the in-person microbiology or chemistry classes that were left by the time I got to enroll weren't appealing for my general education natural sciences courses. I opted for the online meteorology and forensics courses instead (METEO 3 and FRNSC 100 for those curious).

However, I can't help but wonder what is lost with online courses.

This might stem from having lived through the COVID-era Zoom classes I sat through from my bedroom in my pajamas, but there's nothing quite like a physical classroom.

Being face-to-face with an instructor and engaging in

group discussion with fellow classmates makes a class so much better. Especially with a class on music, where there is so much room for interpretation and conversation, being in the same room creates an incredible learning environment.

Not to bash Zoom or online classes, but sitting in Willard or Sarks or even Hammond (though the constant construction makes it a little less pleasant) has such a collegiate feeling. I feel more

"Classes can become communities for students, allowing people to bond over a shared interest."

Julia Frederick

invested in what's being discussed.

There's something to be said about the routine of getting up, walking through campus and sitting at a desk with other students. It creates a distinction between home and school. It can be hard to shift into student

mode when I'm on my laptop in bed.

It also creates an avenue for connection. Classes can become communities for students, allowing people to bond over a shared interest. With fully online classes, you can't exactly strike up a conversation with the person sitting next to you. Though I know I can email the instructor, being fully asynchronous can be isolating.

I understand the benefits of remote asynchronous classes, and there are definitely some logistical factors at play when deciding what mode of instruction a course is. However, sometimes we sacrifice the impact of being present with one another for convenience.

We cannot underestimate the power of learning while being surrounded by others doing the same.

Disclaimer: Don't let this deter you from taking Music 109. It's still "guaranteed to raise a smile."

Julia Frederick is a columnist for the Daily Collegian. She is a fourth-year student studying English with a minor in technical writing, concentration in creative writing, and a certificate in business. She is also enrolled in the Penn State Department of English BA/MA Graduate Program in Creative Writing. Email her at jmf7052@psu.edu.

and solicit advertising for them.

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Freshmen off to fast start

International duo transitioning well under Jeff Kampersal

By Dominic Megats
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Penn State is off to its best start in program history, beginning the season with a 10-0 record. The strong start is powered by a talented group of players recruited by coach Jeff Kampersal and his staff.

Kampersal has rebuilt the women's hockey program from the ground up by studying players, both international and local, and assembling a successful team.

"Because we're at the school that we're able to get out to other places and try to make the hockey world smaller," Kampersal said. "We are able to bring the best from all over the world into Penn State."

While communicating with players from other countries could raise concerns about language barriers, Kampersal said he's "insanely impressed" with how they've adapted to the fast-paced environment at Penn State.

Since 2017, Kampersal has added 19 international players to his team, with athletes from Sweden, Austria, Italy and Canada.

"Probably the best hockey area is southern Ontario, so we would get a lot of Ontario players," Kampersal said. "More recently, there's been an influx of European players."

In addition to the yearly Stony Creek tournament in Ontario, Canada, Kampersal works with his staff to get scouts on a two-week camp in the Sweden area during the summer.

This year, assistant coach Makenna Newkirk was able to get in contact with new recruits.

"Makenna was the one who



Sawyer Hadlum/The Daily Collegian

Forward Matilde Fantin (20) lays a hit during the women's ice hockey game against Mercyhurst in Pegula Ice Arena on Saturday, Oct. 18, 2025 in University Park, Pa. The Nittany Lions defeated the Lakers 6-1.

was over there last time and had spotted Matilde Fantin in that camp," Kampersal said. "She was able to talk to her that day and get a head start with her."

Kampersal continued to bring in elite international players with three this year, two of which are off to strong starts.

Both Italian forward Fantin and Canadian defenseman Danica Maynard had an impressive series in their young careers in which both players had four-point games.

Their performances earned them AHA Forward of the Week and AHA Defenseman of the Week in early October.

Fantin, one of the more recent European additions, played her career prior to college with HC Lugano in the different age groups. Apart from playing for her club, the freshman played for her country in the most recent IIHF Division 1 Women's World Championship.

"It's always an honor to represent your country and for me it was awesome," Fantin said. "It's what I always dreamed about when I was younger and having the chance to play was really great."

Leading her team in points and becoming the top scorer, Fantin helped secure gold for team Italy before joining Penn State.

With her club in Switzerland, the 5-foot-7 forward showed off speed and patience with the puck, while playing bigger than her frame.

Fantin said she wants "to bring more of a European style of play" to Penn State. Her physical play stems from playing for HC Lugano, an all-boys team known for its constant physicality and body checking.

"I have always been used to playing boys hockey in Switzerland," Fantin said. "It's my first time playing an entire season with a women's team, so

"Just being able to look out for each other, I think that's a really good spot for us. It's great that we room together so we have that bond."

Danica Maynard
Defenseman

the physicality is what I struggle with a little bit."

Maynard is a gold medalist for team Canada in the 2025 U18 Women's World Championship. The Lake Country, British Columbia, native is one of the elite blue-line, two-way prospects and roommates with Fantin.

Having another new international player as a

roommate has helped both Fantin and Maynard adjust immensely as they transition into college life in the U.S.

"Just being able to look out for each other, I think that's a really good spot for us," Maynard said. "It's great that we room together so we have that bond."

The roommates share a unique experience, having both represented their country and won gold. Maynard said she was speechless when she received the call to play for her country in Finland.

"I think just playing with players on my team there, that got me ready to come to college and play for Penn State," Maynard said.

Maynard is looking to adjust her game to a more team-oriented approach.

The two-way defenseman is coming from a background where players played "end-to-end" hockey, skating the puck alone to create a scoring chance for themselves.

"(In college) you have to move the puck and join the team on the rush," Maynard said. "That's definitely something I have to improve and change around with my game."

Maynard currently leads the AHA in points with 13, showing signs of adjusting her game and becoming an elite recruit for Kampersal.

Penn State was on the radar for both Fantin and Maynard due to its global and the resources it provides.

"We have such a great group that everyone has brought me in and taught me things," Maynard said. "The coaching staff has been really amazing, as well."

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Dig Pink Match success

Penn State women's volleyball shows out in the team's annual match



Herley Gong/The Daily Collegian

Players cheer up for winning during the Penn State women's volleyball game against Rutgers at Rec Hall on Friday, Oct. 24, 2025 in University Park, Pa.

By Andrew Mercer
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Fueled by the story of coach Katie Schumacher-Cawley, No. 18 Penn State hosted Rutgers on Friday night for the annual Dig Pink

Match. The Nittany Lion faithful packed Rec Hall in pink and black, as the players themselves donned fresh jerseys, battling in a scrappy meeting between Big Ten foes.

Dig Pink is a fundraiser organized by The Side-Out Foundation, that is dedicated to raising money for cancer care and treatment research. The money raised by the foundation through the events such as the Dig Pink Match are donated directly to supporting the research of breast cancer.

"It was great to see all the pink," Schumacher-Cawley said. "Everyone's affected whether it's breast cancer or another sort of cancer. It's great to recognize that and to continue to raise awareness. The money that we can raise to help research, we need to keep pushing so that the medicines are better. I'm happy that we're able to support this cause and help people along the way."

Last September, Schumacher-Cawley was diagnosed with breast cancer. Since then, the Dig Pink Match has been more than just a theme. It became a personal fight for the Nittany Lions, and more recently, a celebration

of Schumacher-Cawley's victory over the illness.

"Coming here, it's a really family-orientated culture that Penn State has. So everyone's doing it. (Schumacher-Cawley) isn't going to talk about herself, so I'm going to talk about her," middle blocker Jordan Hopp said. "People are doing it for her. We love to see the support that we get from everyone."

On Friday, it was all smiles as Penn State defeated the Scarlet Knights in three sets. The Nittany Lions hit .413 as a team, featuring right-side hitter Kennedy Martin with 16 kills, hitting .517. In middle blocker Gabrielle

"Everyone's affected whether it's breast cancer or another sort of cancer. It's great to recognize that and to continue to raise awareness."

Katie Schumacher-Cawley
Head coach

Nichols' first-career start, she tallied 10 kills, with a .421 hitting percentage.

"It was a magical experience," Nichols said. "My mom was in the crowd so I had a lot of butterflies. I was ready, and enjoyed all the butterflies and all the excitement that came with the start."

The energy inside of Rec Hall

was high, as Penn State went on a 10-2 run to win the first set 25-23, making up for a shaky start to the match. Then, it was all pink and black, as the Nittany Lions dominated the second set, winning 25-19.

Penn State similarly took the third set by storm, sealing the sweep, 25-13.

We have the best student section in the world," Nichols said. "Their energy really does help us, and we don't take that for granted."

The players earned a round of applause for the debut of their new pink jerseys, designed at the top with tear marks and black lettering.

"(The jerseys) are pretty cool," Hopp said. "I like them. I hope we can get to wear them another time, so I'm definitely a big fan of the pink."

At the end of the third set, multiple players came off of the bench to help the Nittany Lions cap off the special night. Alexis Ewing, Lexi Gin and Ava Jurevicius all got to step on the court in the closing points.

"Our freshmen have done a great job competing and getting better and pushing themselves and their teammates to be better," Schumacher-Cawley said. "It's nice to get some people some playing time and to be comfortable because we're going to need everyone in order to be successful."

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Column | Exhibitions needed

By Myles Hannak
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

With a revamped roster and mixed expectations for the 2025-26 season, Penn State men's basketball is about to start its first official game of the year on Nov. 3.

Before the regular season begins, the Nittany Lions played a pair of exhibition games against Dayton and Shippensburg, with one contest at Bryce Jordan Center and one away from home.

Exhibition games, despite the clear risks — fatigue, injury, and limited tangible rewards — are a testament to the Nittany Lions' determination. For one of the youngest rosters in the Big Ten, the benefits of these games far outweigh the potential dangers, showcasing their resilience to improve on the court.

These contests aren't new; coach Mike Rhoades has scheduled exhibitions each year since arriving at Penn State in 2023. But what's different this season is the increase to multiple tune-ups before the opener.

Rhoades' teams had a 3-1 record in these games, with the first loss this year against Dayton, 78-62, and the game against Shippensburg ending decisively in the Nittany Lions' favor, 86-67.

Despite this year's loss, the exhibitions gave Penn State what it needed.

With wing Josh Reed as the lone senior on the squad, this roster's inexperience makes every minute together crucial. The exhibitions allow Rhoades' team to learn during games, not just in practice, and to improve as a collective unit.

It also allows Rhoades to showcase his top-ranked Big Ten recruiting class, tied with Rutgers for the most freshmen in the conference at seven.

Rhoades has demonstrated his knack for recruiting through a clear philosophy driven by his coaching ideals. Now, he needs these initial successes to convert into tangible results.

Although they appear minor, these exhibition games could be the first dominoes to fall in this process.

But it isn't just games that help the coaches, as these players also gain valuable in-

sights into what Penn State basketball is building during this preseason period.

For players, the exhibitions focus on trust and rhythm, providing opportunities to test chemistry in real competition, which the Nittany Lions need to develop to match the level of more experienced teams across the nation.

Additionally, for the Penn State players about to debut in college, it elevates the competition to the next level smoothly, without overwhelming them immediately. This approach can boost their confidence and momentum even before star recruits like Kayden Mingo score their first collegiate basket.

For top recruits like Mingo, and four-star forward Mason Blackwood, these games serve as live-fire training. They provide an opportunity to learn from mistakes, adapt and build confidence ahead of Big Ten competition.

Playing away from home gives Penn State an early taste of road intensity and prepares them to build the composure required to handle it.

Dayton's crowd numbered more than 13,000, underscoring that even exhibitions can mirror the pressure this young team will face all season away from home. These games may not count in the standings, but they mean plenty to everyone involved. In comparison, the attendance at the Bryce Jordan Center last season was around 7,000 people throughout the season.

Ultimately, the preseason exhibitions are more than placeholders on the schedule and serve a larger purpose in the grand scheme of things.

If fans can graciously accept this growing period and unite to support the Penn State team on the hardwood, it's clear it will achieve its full potential and bring success to Happy Valley. The team needs the fans' support now more than ever, and together, they can overcome this growing period.

Wins may be scarce in the winter, but improvement won't be. For Penn State basketball, it all starts with exhibitions that matter more than the scoreboard ever will. These games are not just about the immediate results, but about laying the foundation for the team's future success.

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