

COLLEGIAN

April 22, 2020

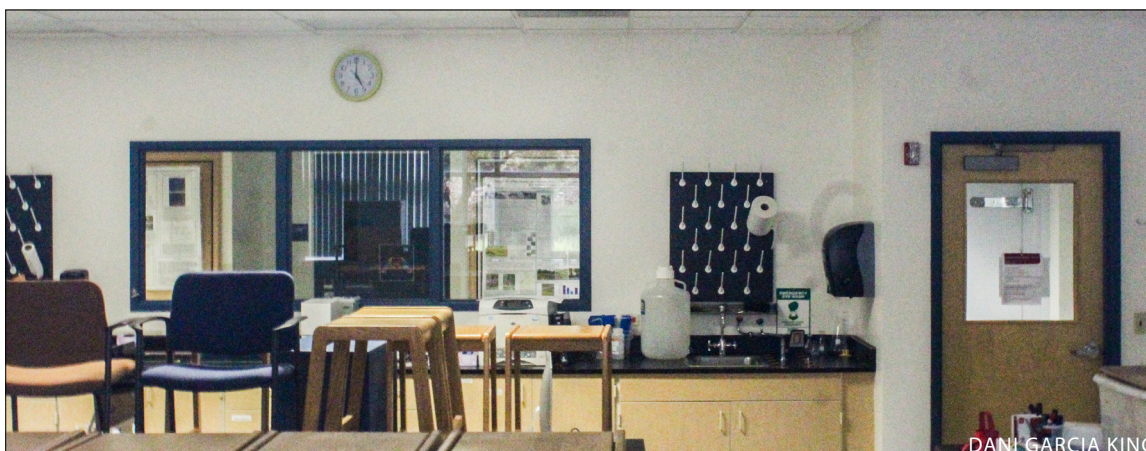
Issue 24 • Vol CXXXII

How STEM students are adapting to online learning


OLIVIA FRENKEL
STAFF WRITER

The switch to online education has not been an easy transition for most. From shaky internet connections to lapses in motivation to the awkward two seconds between when the professor says goodbye but hasn't clicked "end meeting," students everywhere are learning to adapt to learning remotely. However, some of these adaptations entail more changes and frustrations than others. Many students pursuing STEM majors have left behind research projects and lab proposals and are now pursuing their education in different ways.

One of these students is Daniel Fang ('21), a chemistry major with a focus in biochemistry. In his experimental biochemistry class, he explained, "We've been learning about what the general experimental procedure would have been like by using previous years data to simulate the actual data analysis." However, since he is not doing the actual experiments himself, he said that the quality of education, though it is the best it can be considering the circumstances, does not equate to the practical knowledge he would have otherwise gained. **AT-HOME, 4**



Above: A darkened lab in Olin Science Center, empty and locked to most students.

Below: Olin Science Center from outside.



Colins, which houses many of Willamette's science departments, now closed.



DANI GARCIA KING

Shoes for thought: WU players on cleat maintenance and exploding shoelaces


OLIVIA FRANKEL
STAFF WRITER

Nearly all sports played at Willamette require some type of specialized footwear. The student-athletes who wear these shoes put them through so much strain that they often rip apart at the seams and explode at the shoelaces.

Before anything else, the student-athletes need to obtain their shoes. Different sports have different methods, which is usually determined by the coach's discretion. In some sports, like football, the student-athletes choose their own footwear. For others, that's not the case: senior softball player Jocelyn Glasgo said, "We are able to choose a size and then the coaches order them... We don't really get a say."

SHOES, 5

Opinion: Be forgiving of online shopping during COVID-19


NOAH DANTES
MANAGING EDITOR

There are several valid reasons why people have to shop online during this time: many items that are hard to find at physical stores right now can be purchased online, people who are struggling financially need to find the best deals possible wherever they may be and many people have pre-existing conditions that make it especially risky for them to go to a physical store. Online shopping during the pandemic, on any legal site, Amazon or otherwise, is ethical if the shopper is obtaining essential items. While it is easy to cast judgment on those who shop for nonessential items online, this is a time that calls on us to be as forgiving and understanding of others as possible—we are all impacted by COVID-19 in different ways.

While some may question the business practices of companies such as Amazon, this is not the time to be promoting boycotts or condemning customers of such online businesses. COVID-19 is an existential threat to many, and people who are struggling, be it financially, with their health or otherwise, have enough problems on their plate without the additions of boycotts and social judgment. The online retailer Amazon, for example, has a larger and more diverse stock

of items than its retail counterparts, and offers many discounts and deals for its customers, according to Forbes. Without the services of online sellers such as Amazon, many shoppers would be left without essential supplies. Ethical debates about online shopping should be encouraged in a normal world, but in the face of a pandemic, it is important to carefully weigh what debates are necessary in the face of the crisis before engaging in them.

The treatment of essential workers, including employees of online retail companies, is certainly one such necessary debate. A March 31 Washington Post reported, "In recent weeks, workers, unions and attorneys are seeing a dramatic rise in cases they say illustrate a wave of bad employer behavior, forcing workers into conditions they fear are unsafe, withholding protective equipment and retaliating against those who speak up or walk out." These concerns are real and widespread, but that doesn't change the fact that the services many companies, including online retailers, are providing right now are necessary. Even if we avoid boycotting exploitative or unsafe companies right now, we can continue to advocate for their workers by pushing for legislation ensuring workers' protections, creating petitions and more. However, given these companies' essential

role, ethical debates concerning the existence or use of Amazon, Target and other large online retailers need to wait.

Because it can be ethical to shop online during this time, we should avoid any outright protest or shaming of online shopping choices without considering a person's reason for their purchase. The issue then becomes a question of which purchases are ethical and which aren't. However, the line separating what is essential and what is not can be hazy—needs vary from person to person. While some people may be quick to shame the online purchase of items commonly considered nonessential, such as video games, fashion products and more during this time, there are workers who rely on these products for income, such as YouTubers, influencers and more. Maybe one needs the newest headphones for work, or a new book for school. Generalizations concerning what is essential and what is not is harmful to many groups of people, beyond these specific examples. We should carefully look at each individual situation before making any judgment.



DANI GARCIA KING

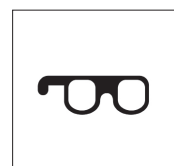
OPINION, 5

The Amazon lockers by Willamette University's still active mail center

**NEWS**

Willamette Events Board continues to offer activities and online events.

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**LIFESTYLES**

Seniors discuss their last year at Willamette amidst COVID-19.

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**NEWS**

Recent awards and honors in the Willamette community

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Willamette Events Board continues to offer entertainment for students

JASPER JONES
NEWS EDITOR

The Willamette Events Board, a student-run organization that plans numerous events and activities throughout the year, is still dedicated to providing entertainment even though many students have left campus. Recently, WEB has distributed paint-by-number activities and Harry Potter themed stuffed animals and activity kits to students living in Salem.

“Our goal is to keep students engaged and motivated by providing different activities to express themselves,” said WEB President Cynthia Ramirez (‘20).

Ramirez also reported that most student employees have returned home or are living off campus, but a few are still on campus. Those students can help by distributing items around campus and by tabling at Goudy. WEB also plans to offer essential oil roller balls in five different scents as well as lavender sprays. They will also begin providing blue light glasses to students.

“We also thought it was important to provide blue light glasses for students because staring at a screen can be really tiring on the eyes. We have about six different designs that are super cool and trendy,” said Ramirez.

Ramirez also said that they are working on community events, like Kahoot and Jackbox games.



COURTESY OF JESSIE EVANS

A student’s completed paint-by-number activity, provided by Willamette Events Board.

All of these ideas were brainstormed and organized during their weekly Zoom meetings.

Here, they have also continued the discussion of planning for StarJam, an event that was supposed to happen for the first time this spring, but is now moved to September, along with planning other events that will take place in the fall.

Ramirez wants the student body to know that students who live on campus are welcome to pick up the items they are offering, and if anyone has suggestions on how to make these items accessible, to let her know.

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Willamette students and professors receive fellowships, grants and honors

JASPER JONES
NEWS EDITOR

While campus has transitioned to distance learning and remote work, many students and professors have received awards, scholarships and grants for a myriad of achievements and research opportunities. Here is a list of these people and their accomplishments:

Elizabeth Larson (‘21): Portland Section scholarship from the American Chemical Society

The Willamette website explains this award by writing, “This prestigious regional award supports promising undergraduate chemistry majors in their senior year of college.”

Claire Verstrate (‘20): U.S. Student Fulbright

The program’s website writes, “The Fulbright U.S. Student Program provides grants for individually designed study/research projects or for English Teaching Assistant Programs.” Verstrate will be traveling to Japan for the program.

Nicole Kates (‘20): Coro Fellow

“The Coro Fellows Program develops emerging leaders to work and lead across different sectors by equipping them with knowledge, skills and networks to accelerate positive change,” the program’s website writes. The program offers its fellows positions in multiple disciplines, like nonprofit work or political campaigns, to achieve these goals.

Professor Stephanie DeGooyer: Burkhardt Fellowship

Next year DeGooyer will conduct research at UCLA, receiving a \$95,000 stipend for her work. She will be finishing her book, “Acts of Naturalization: Immigration and the Early Novel.”

Mark and Melody Teppola Prizes for Creative Writing

Students were given the opportunity to submit one poem, creative nonfiction or fiction piece to be judged by a professional writer. A different judge was assigned to each genre. Winning students were awarded a cash prize.

Poetry:

1st: “Darling” by Lani Southern

2nd: “Sunday Night” by Jasper Jones

3rd: “At risk of making this a poem about my mother” by Dawn-Hunter Strobel

Nonfiction:

1st: “To Bask in the Unknown” by Ryleigh Norgrove

2nd: “Breath” by Michelle Doty

3rd: “Dear Rosa” by Elyssa Morales

Fiction:

1st: “Every Little Thing” by Claire Alongi

2nd: “What Would Simon Say?” by Mason Kelliher

3rd: “Cracks in the Silence” by Lily Painter

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WEEKLY REPORT BY CAMPUS SAFETY

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF

April 15, 8:50 a.m. (Botanical Gardens): Campus Safety was contacted by the Grounds Department after an employee discovered a tree that had been cut down by an unknown individual or perhaps by a beaver. A report was filed.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY/PERSONS

April 10, 5:52 p.m. (Mill Street): Campus Safety received a call reporting two individuals fighting and yelling on the street. An officer responded and found both individuals leaving campus.

April 11, 12:27 a.m. (guest parking lot): While on patrol, an officer encountered an individual going through the dumpster. The officer made contact with the individual who then left campus.

April 11, 1:38 a.m. (Mathews parking lot): While on patrol, an officer encountered a suspicious individual going through the dumpster. The officer shined a spotlight on the individual who then fled off campus.

April 11, 3:52 a.m. (Haseldorf Apartments.): While on patrol, an officer found a suspicious individual looking at the fire escape on the building. The officer drove near the individual who then left the area.

April 12, 6:30 p.m. (Doney Hall): Campus Safety received a call from a student reporting an unknown individual had followed them into the building. An officer responded and found the individual who stated they were leaving campus.

April 13, 10:48 a.m. (Sparks Field): Campus Safety re-

ceived a call reporting a suspicious individual loitering near the building. An officer responded and met with the individual who stated they were waiting on friends. The individual was informed that the campus is closed to visitors and would have to wait elsewhere.

April 13, 10:48 a.m. (Law School): Campus Safety received a call reporting skateboarders on campus. An officer responded and the individuals were informed that the campus is closed and promptly left campus.

April 13, 1:46 p.m. (Eaton Hall): While on patrol, an officer encountered an individual drinking a beer in the rose garden. The individual was asked to leave campus.

April 13, 3:01 p.m. (University Services building): While

on patrol, an officer encountered a suspicious individual walking through campus. The officer kept a visual on them as they passed through campus.

April 14, 2:52 p.m. (blue parking lot): While on patrol, an officer encountered a suspicious individual sitting at a bench. The individual was informed the campus is closed to visitors and then left campus.

April 15, 8:59 a.m. (green parking lot): Campus Safety received a call reporting two suspicious individuals in the area. An officer responded, but could not locate anyone in the area.

April 15, 4:06 p.m. (Hatfield Library): Campus Safety received a call reporting a suspicious individual sitting

on a bench near the building. An officer responded and met with the individual who was informed the campus is closed to visitors. The individual then left the campus.

April 16, 11:58 p.m. (Winter Street): While on patrol, an officer encountered a suspicious individual slowly walking along looking at buildings. An officer responded and checked on the individual, who was found to be intoxicated. The officer kept a visual on the individual until they made it off campus.

PLEASE CONTACT
CAMPUS SAFETY IF
YOU HAVE ANY
INFORMATION
REGARDING THESE INCIDENTS.
(503) 370-6911

Remote theses, cancelled Commencement and careers cut short: seniors discuss mourning and hope amidst loss

DAWN-HUNTER STROBEL
LIFESTYLES EDITOR

All Willamette students have had to adjust their expectations for the end of their year with the switch to online learning, but one group that has been hit particularly hard by the changes is the cohort of graduating students in the middle of their thesis classes. For many, the switch to online learning has been a significant obstacle to getting work done, but all who were interviewed believe they will be able to complete a finished product in time for the end of the year. Alongside the stress of thesis, seniors also reported mourning the loss of their final few months at Willamette.

Joya Biebel ('20) is a film major in the studio art thesis class who will no longer be able to present her work in the Hallie Ford Museum of Art at the end of the year.

"After having worked on it for six months and having it be just completely cut off so close to the end was really heartbreaking," she said. "Losing our studio spaces was really sad. We had to pack all that up. It's just really unsatisfying. I know my parents are really bummed that they won't be able to go to a show. I had a whole bunch of family that was going to come."

Biebel's work has had to change format from an in-person installation to an online showcase, where most of her work is shown through videos on a website that the class is building. The class is still planning

to have an in-person installation at some point over the summer or next spring, but the details of what that will look like have yet to be finalized.

Yaakov "Koby" Wood ('20) is a history major whose thesis requires him to work with physical archive collections in the library. However, as the news came out about switching to online classes and that the library was closing, he made electronic copies of everything he needed from the archives.

"It took like two and a half days of just sitting in the library and taking pictures of everything. [With the library's machine] you have to load it up and scan it over and over. But I'm glad I did that, because now I have access to that digitally here [at home]," he said.

Wood's lack of access to the library has prevented him from accessing books that other historians have written about the time period he is researching. "A big part of a history thesis is placing your thesis within the context of the greater historiography of that subject, and I can't really do that because I don't have access to that other literature as much," Wood said. "What really matters is where I'm placing it between all the books that I need to place it between, and I don't really have access to books, so that's the biggest hindrance."

For Reagan Dreiling ('20), most of her experimentation for her biochemistry thesis was done before spring break, so losing access to the labs did not fundamentally change her work. However, she said, "My situation with my experiments aren't the same as every-

body else's. Some could have been working on them sooner and some later, or maybe were counting on this time to do it."

All seniors interviewed reported difficulty working once online learning began. Natasha Milligan ('20), a Japanese major, reported not working on her thesis for three weeks after online classes started.

"It was terrible. Everyone's feeling a lot of different things right now, but I personally was very worried and very anxious and very stressed. So I kind of hit a roadblock with my thesis. Even though we had class on Zoom... I don't even know what I did in that hour period, to be honest. I was just so stuck," she said.

Jasper Jones ('20), who works for the Collegian, reported a similar experience with her creative writing thesis. "I didn't do any work for two weeks. Creative work in general can be really stressful. You get in your head a lot thinking that you're not good enough or that this will amount to nothing. Some days waking up and feeling totally fine and other days waking up just knowing that there's gonna be no way you can get yourself to get up and work."

Wood reported running into difficulty putting effort into his thesis because of a lack of access to Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) medication. "I've switched healthcares to the school healthcare option and that means that I have to go to a doctor who has to recertify my prescription, but I can't go to a doctor to get my prescription recertified [because of COVID-19]," he said. "It would be so great if we just had universal healthcare and I could just go in and go 'Hi, I have ADD, these are my records, please give me a prescription.'" This situation has

resulted in Wood having to calculate which days to use his medication in order to have medication during the times he needs it more than others.

Despite the difficulties, these seniors said they felt supported by their advisors. Biebel noted that she was very grateful for Professor Alexandra Opie's support in the midst of all the other work she has to do as the chair of the studio art department.

According to Wood, his advisor Seth Cotlar has been "really accommodating and very understanding and very pragmatic about the realities of the pandemic and what all of his students, not just me, have access to."

Dreiling said one of her professors talked with her over Zoom for an hour to help her download data analysis software onto her computer that she otherwise would have been able to access in Olin.

Though all who were interviewed reported feeling that they would be able to finish their theses on time, many expressed sadness about their time at Willamette ending as it is.

Jones said her experience with thesis has been wrapped up in a lot of grief. "I wanted to have graduation and those events that celebrate me and my accomplishments because I feel like we all deserve to be celebrated, and a lot of that was wrapped up with my thesis for me. I've been waiting to have the chance and the space to be able to create something like this." She then added, "I'm doing this task that is definitely the hardest thing that I've ever done on top of going through the hardest part in my life."

Dreiling said, "Sometimes I'll be scrolling through Facebook and see one of my professor's profiles or a picture of everybody from when we were all living in the dorms, and it'll hit me again that I don't get to have the

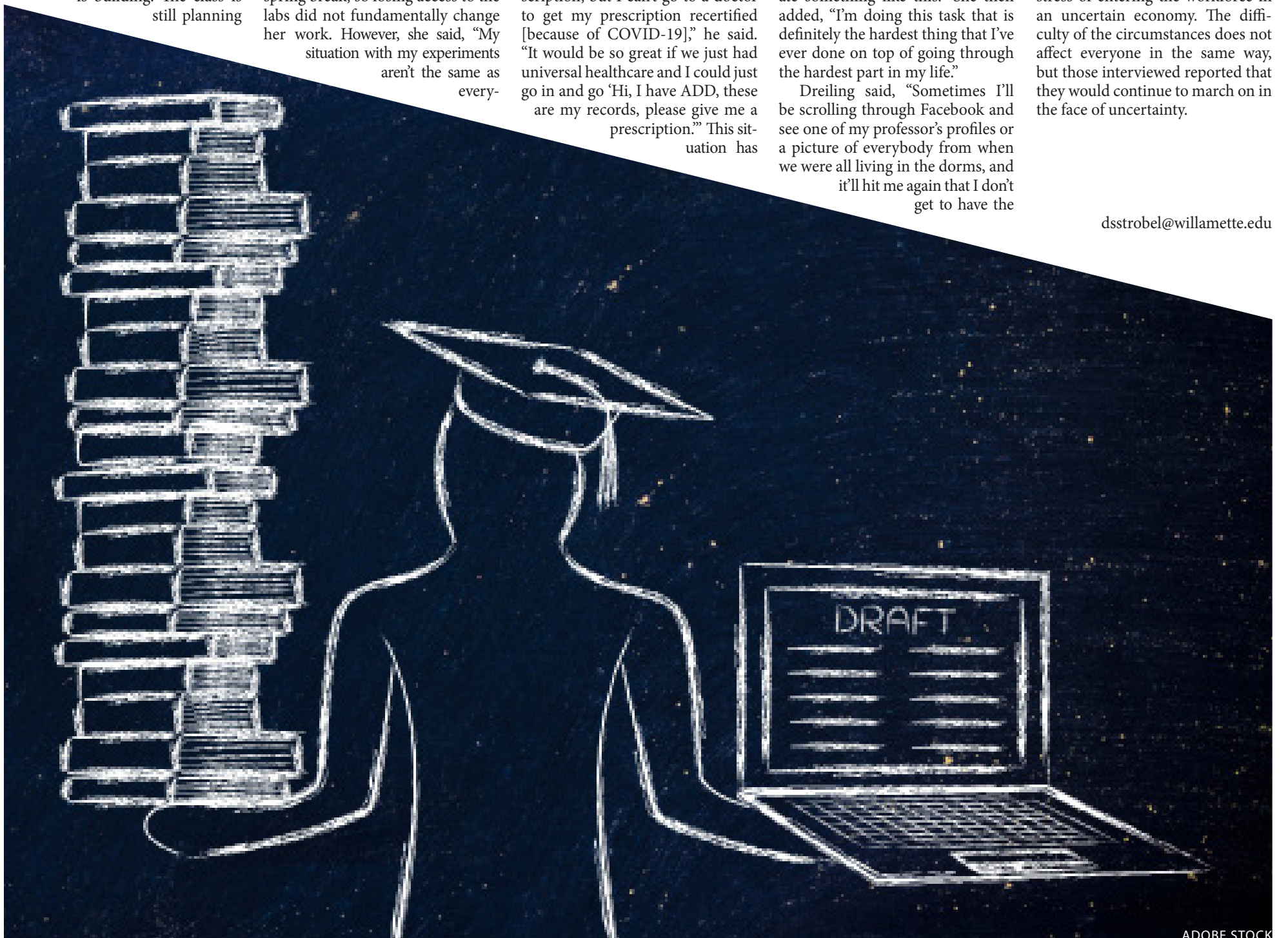
quality goodbyes to these people that I would like to have. I don't know when I'll see everybody again. I feel like all of our goodbyes got cut short." She added with a laugh, "I didn't know my last Bistro cookie would be my last."

For Milligan, the cancellation of graduation was very sad because she is a first generation college student. "Graduation itself was a really big thing for me, and being able to have my parents come to my university and see where I've been living and see my professors was really a big thing for me, so not having that was really hard," she said.

For Wood, celebrating the end of his college career with his family and friends was also a big deal. "I was really looking forward to all of my housemates' families being here and all of us meeting each other, my parents meeting my housemates, and all of us hanging out and, honestly just drinking together and eating together and enjoying our last week celebrating together during that week after finals are over."

For graduating seniors, the task of completing a project that is meant to be the culmination of their time in college in the midst of a global crisis is no small feat. Many have had to work around lack of access to library and lab materials, as well as the end of year showcases that were intended to be the bulk of their thesis presentations. All seniors have had to juggle transitioning to working online with the stress of entering the workforce in an uncertain economy. The difficulty of the circumstances does not affect everyone in the same way, but those interviewed reported that they would continue to march on in the face of uncertainty.

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ADOBE STOCK

Graduating students face the challenge of completing their thesis projects, already a daunting task, without the resources and in-person support they had access to on campus.

At-home learning require creative solutions from STEM students

CONTINUED FROM COVER

For seniors working on their thesis, distance learning has taken an even bigger toll. Lauren Stiles ('20) is a graduating physics major who was in the process of completing her research lab and thesis experience. She had originally designed a 3D-printed flow cell that contained a metal sample that would be shot by a laser, which would create nanoparticles. However, the labs closed before she was able to 3D print.

"I have been using supplies I find

drag me to the library or physics hearth and just motivate me in general."

Despite her frustrations, she is appreciative of her professor's support. "My thesis advisor has started using Asana [an online project management service] to assign us tasks which has broken down the daunting process of writing and presenting a thesis into more manageable steps," said Stiles. "We have Zoom calls four times a week. I showed her my working design and know how excited she was, so that made me happy."

Lila Faust ('21) shares frustrations

and drawing pictures," Faust said. She had been studying newts for the last year. "I don't think I'm getting quality education just because of the kinds of classes I am taking," she explained. "It feels like I'm not really learning the material and I'm just doing the work for it."

Cameron Taggesall ('21) described the

For students everywhere, but especially for those taking classes in STEM, it has been understandably difficult to accept the changes that have come with distance learning. Walking away from lab experience and year-long research proposals is not something STEM students expected to do this semester, and by no means has it

"It feels like I'm not really learning the material and I'm just doing the work for it."

-Lila Faust

"I have been using supplies I find around the house and my completed design uses tupperware and cardboard boxes."

-Lauren Stiles

around the house and my completed design uses tupperware and cardboard boxes. The saddest part is not getting to test my design with the laser," said Stiles. She considers herself lucky that she was able to bring home supplies, but said, "I miss having the people around me that would

similar to Fang and Stiles. She was in the process of writing a white paper, which is an in-depth research paper on a specific area of science that is not well-known, and was unable to continue as she had hoped. "I've gone from working with a friend to study the reproductive behaviors of newts to researching alone by reading papers

changes made to their classes, but also emphasized the support of her professors in the physics department. "I'm in an advanced lab techniques class that used to be hours long in the labs with lasers," she explained. "Since we can't be in-person, the professors sent each student electric kits for us to work with." Though it is inherently more difficult to learn through the use of these small circuits, Taggesall said that the troubleshooting process has been made easy through the professors' hard work. "We have to show them our work through Zoom with bad camera angles and bad camera quality, but it really is the best it can be right now."

been easy. However, Willamette students, despite the difficulties, have found ways to adapt the best they can.

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DANI GARCIA KING

Olins and Collins, two academic buildings that house many of Willamette's science departments, are empty and locked to most community members.

Shoes for thought: WU players on cleat maintenance and exploding shoelaces

CONTINUED FROM COVER

Nearly all sports played at Willamette require some type of specialized footwear. The student-athletes who wear these shoes put them through so much strain that they often rip apart at the seams and explode at the shoelaces.

Before anything else, the student-athletes need to obtain their shoes. Different sports have different methods, which is usually determined by the coach's discretion. In some sports, like football, the student-athletes choose their own footwear. For others, that's not the case: senior softball player Jocelyn Glasgo said, "We are able to choose a size and then the coaches order them... We don't really get a say."

Unlike jerseys, however, student-athletes have to fund their own footwear. Senior football player Shaan Amin said, "Shoes are expensive. It's usually on the student-athlete to provide shoes." Those costs can run up as their shoes are put through the ringer. Amin said, "I have had my shoelaces explode and the stitching come apart on the shoe."

Glasgo said that for softball, "We get new cleats and turf shoes every season. A lot of times new shoes aren't needed for some positions, but for pitchers, their shoes get worn down a lot and they have to buy new ones each year. My pitching shoes rip open towards the end of the year and after every pitch they get filled with dirt."

Some student-athletes often utilize two pairs of shoes throughout the season. A lot of student athletes are like Amin, who have both practice cleats and game day cleats. Others have two pairs of cleats, each for different playing surfaces.

Glasgo said in softball, "We have



ADOBE STOCK

According to Willamette player Jocelyn Glasgo, softball athletes often wear cleats when playing on artificial turf or a wet ground.

turf shoes that we wear for indoor practices as well as practices when we are on the soccer field if it has been raining and the field is wet. And we have cleats for games or the practices when we are on our field."

Different sports require different equipment, and shoes are no exception. Sports like softball and football require spikes to move different directions. Amin, a football defensive back, described his needs for footwear: "I need cleats in sport in order to grip the turf while changing directions." Amin also commented on the spectrum of football cleats, saying, "Some specialized cleats emphasize support while others emphasize speed and agility."

Softball also uses cleats, though since the sport uses a playing surface than football does, Glasgo said their cleats differ a bit: "The spikes are usually metal but you can wear molded ones. [Right-handed] pitchers get the toe of their right cleat dipped in a rubber mold. This covering helps protect the cleat from the constant friction on the material when pitching."

With the standardizations of uniforms and the limitations of the NCAA, shoes are one of the only outlets for self-expression on the field. Some opt for a Sharpie personalization, as Glasgo described: "Some [players] write on the back of their cleats, but for the most part we have to stay uniform."

Some student-athletes clean their shoes, but others don't. Amin said, "Dirt and scuffs add character."

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Opinion: Despite COVID-19, online shopping is a necessity for many

CONTINUED FROM COVER

Beyond income, many use non-essential products to comfort and entertain themselves. Items used for comfort and entertainment are considered nonessential, but many of these items can feel essential. In the days of social distancing, many are facing anxiety and are feeling isolated. Such nonessential products can help people cope with the times, feel

to them in an empathetic way. Instead of calling out and condemning selfish and thoughtless shoppers, we should instead show them kindness and ask them to consider their purchase's impact without judgment.

The risk for mail center and delivery workers, while real, is mitigated by the actions of mail centers across the country. Mail centers, including Willamette's,

sent to be washed and sanitized by Facilities and keep a good supply of gloves and masks. They are no longer requiring signatures for package pick-ups.

Ames described the package pick-up process in the email: "We have placed blue tape 6+ feet from the two service windows and customers are asked to stay behind the line while we assist them with their mailing and receiving. We

and adaptive measures it is taking, many of which are similar to the measures the Willamette mail center has taken.

People are feeling nervous to go into public areas: according to Digital Commerce, online orders went up 52 percent from March 22 to April 4. Given the intensive safety measures taken by mail centers around the country and the fact that visiting a store

and considerate of this. However, there is no universal definition of what it means to be considerate in this situation: it is possible for someone not to order the newest computer, while someone else may need it for work. It is possible for someone not to order anything that requires a signature, while someone else may be forced to sign for a package carrying a prescription medicine, for exam-

"We should carefully look at each individual situation before making any judgment."

connected to others and increase their happiness. It is true that every package poses a unique risk to distribution, delivery and mail workers, and it is important for people to consider that fact before they make their online purchases, but any legal purchasing decision should be left to each individual to make free of harsh social judgment. There are certainly people who act without thought for others, such as those who have recently bought hundreds of rolls of toilet paper, but there are ways other than condemnation to get someone to change their ways. A kinder way to get someone to change their actions is to talk

are taking extraordinary measures to keep both their workers and those they serve safe. In an email, Willamette mail center employee Connie Ames said the mail center has reduced its hours and now only has one staff member on duty at a time, not including the work-study students working at the windows, when the mail center is not busy. While they have kept all their normal services open, including the Amazon lockers, all workers are wearing masks and gloves and are continually wiping down all of the work surfaces. They use disinfectant wipes, spray bottles with disinfectant, linens that are bagged and

place packages on the counter of the service window, then step back and let the recipient come forward past the blue line to retrieve their items, or to pay for their stamps/ mailing, etc."

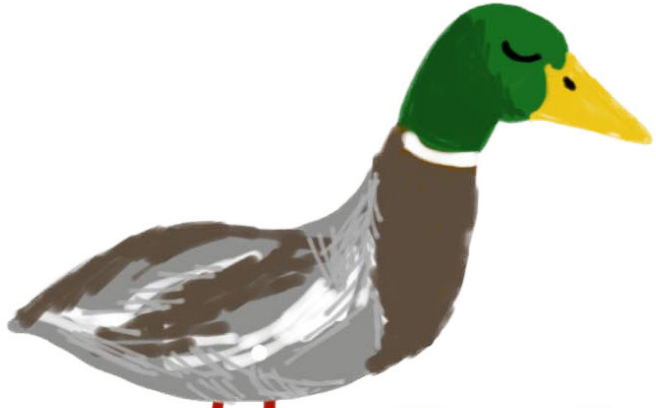
Willamette's mail center is not the only one keeping its employees as safe as possible. Many post offices now have stickers on their floors asking customers to stay six feet apart and take many cleaning and safety measures, as described in an April 1 Vox article. The United States Postal Service (USPS) has also released a statement regarding COVID-19 on its website. In the statement, the USPS detailed a long list of safety

in-person involves sharing space and air with many other individuals, ordering packages online can be safer than visiting a physical store.

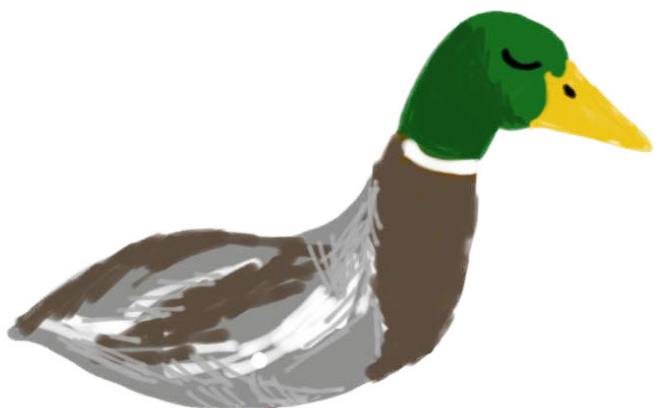
This is not to understate the risks that distribution, delivery and mail workers are facing. The risk they face is very real, and their services should be appreciated and respected. They are fulfilling a truly essential service during this time, for many people do rely on online shopping to receive items necessary for their survival. Mail centers everywhere are facing unique challenges and pressures, and individuals should do their best to be understanding

ple. Individuals should be able to decide what is essential to them without fearing harsh judgement. The people out there who aren't considering the consequences of their actions could use some advice, but that advice doesn't need to be judgmental or hostile. We are all trying to survive COVID-19, a situation unlike anything our society has ever faced before. Just as much as we need to be considerate and thoughtful of each other, we also need to be understanding, forgiving and supporting of each other during this trying time.

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