

COLLEGIAN

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Alumni Critical of WU's reopening plan

BY NAT FELTEN
STAFF WRITER

Note: On August 23, an individual who worked on campus tested positive for COVID-19.

It is not a question if there will be an outbreak of COVID-19 at Willamette, but when, according to Willamette alum Rebecca Alexander. "There will be an outbreak, 100 percent," Alexander said in an interview. She is one of many alumni who are criticizing the university's reopening—484 people, composed of mostly Willamette alumni and a handful of current students, have signed an open letter to President Thorsett and the Board of Trustees demanding all classes go virtual.

These critics voice their concerns out of love for Willamette and its principles of community and responsibility, which they believe the administration is

betraying, according to the open letter.

Alexander, class of '10 and winner of the Young Alumni Leadership Award, signed the open letter and wrote an article published on Medium.com asking President Thorsett to delay reopening, an article that has been republished on the Collegian's website.

Alexander admitted that she is not an expert on the transmission of COVID-19, but she pointed out that neither is anyone in the administration, "We know relatively little about this disease." She believes that due to the slow-moving processes that experts gather accurate information, experts will not be able to say anything definitive about safe college reopening strategies until colleges have already been open for weeks.

Alexander also raised concerns about issues not included in her



Image of Rebecca Alexander

IMAGE BY MICHAEL POLEY

article or in the letter. She believes that safety measures give students a false sense of security. "Social distancing is really important to do in conjunction with wearing a mask, and in a college environ-

ment that's unrealistic," she said. "Not only are you living with other students already—which I believe will be even more of a ground-zero than classrooms—but you're talking about students

who have been deprived of socialization for six months, and complacency is normal."

CRITICAL, 3

Students build reusable mask collections

BY OLIVIA FRENKEL
STAFF WRITER

The cultural connotation of the word "mask" has changed drastically over the last six months. It used to conjure up images of Halloween, supervillains and even skincare, but in recent months, face coverings have become synonymous with maintaining health and safety. The importance of wearing clean masks is undeniable as made evident by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and countless healthcare professionals.

The CDC recommends a mask with two or more layers of fabric that are snug on the nose and chin. Masks with exhalation valves are discouraged along with thin coverings such as bandanas and neck gaiters, commonly known as buffs. Neither prevent the spread of potentially viral particles. With this in mind, Willamette students have begun to build their mask collections in preparation for the new semester.

Paisley Leiske ('23) is one of many who have accumulated cloth masks from her hometown. One of her favorites is a floral blue, yellow, and green mask that she was gifted for free at a restaurant. She rotates between five masks, but has up to

ten at home. "I wish I could say I was stylish enough to match my mask to my outfit, but I don't, it mostly depends on what's clean!" Leiske said.

Some students, such as Ben Fritz ('21), are frequent users of disposable masks. "At the beginning of the pandemic, a friend's dad sent over a really large bag of disposable masks," said Fritz, "but I'm making the switch to reusable masks starting with one I may or may not have taken from my girlfriend."

The classic blue disposable masks are instantly recognizable and many were stockpiled at the start of the pandemic. Over time, the more sustainable option of reusable masks has become popular. A disposable mask is always better than having no mask at all, but be sure to clip the elastic straps when you throw it out to ensure that wildlife will not be entangled.



Paisley Leiske ('23)

OLIVIA FRENKEL | PHOTOGRAPHER



Ben Fritz ('21)

OLIVIA FRENKEL | PHOTOGRAPHER

REUSABLE, 5

Opinion: Opening Days isn't transfer student approved

BY EDIE MUELLER
STAFF WRITER

Every student has different needs, especially those with nontraditional educational backgrounds like transfer students. Not every transfer student is excited about getting involved at their school through an orientation program designed for first-years.

This is why Willamette has a "Speed Orientation" for transfer and international students. Speed Orientation, unlike the full Opening Days, is a one day program which this year took place on Friday, August 21. It is designed to prepare nontraditional students for life at Willamette. Though many transfer students only register for the Speed Orientation, some choose to immerse themselves in the full Opening Days experience. In Opening Days, Willamette has created an orientation experience that caters to first-year students and is insufficient for transfer students.

Willamette's website encourages transfer students living on campus and non traditionally-aged first-years to attend the full Opening Days in order to experience campus culture and become involved in the Willamette community.

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WU administrator says individual actions by students will drive success of COVID-19 protections

BY JAKE PROCINO
NEWS EDITOR

Many students came into this semester questioning why Willamette was opening at all, considering the disastrous reopenings of other colleges, such as the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Notre Dame. The questions have only increased after the Willamette University Reopening Committee informed the Willamette Community via mass email that an individual working on campus tested positive for the Coronavirus. President Steven Thorsett offered an explanation in his August 20 “Words from Waller” address: “So much of the magic that takes place at Willamette is through the connections made outside the classroom boundaries – whether with faculty, staff, or peers. There is lots of research that shows the importance of personal connection for retention and ultimate graduation.”

Willamette University’s reopening plan requires great responsibility from everybody involved in the on-campus experience, but this responsibility falls most heavily on the Reopening Operations Committee (ROC). According to Willamette’s COVID-19 response organization chart, the ROC is responsible for operational and budget decisions, and developing policies and procedures for managing the spread of COVID-19.

Director of Bishop Wellness Center and ROC member Don Thomson reiterated Thorsett’s remarks regarding the decision to reopen over email, saying: “There is a great deal of research that shows the importance of personal connection for achieving these outcomes, retention, and ultimately graduation. Secondly, we have to recognize the differential impact that COVID and remote learning

has had for many of our community members. Those without adequate technology, or whose learning style is better suited for in-person instruction, those who did not come from schools that prepared them for seminar instruction are all often disadvantaged by remote learning. Thirdly, although not least important, are the personal growth opportunities and identity exploration and formation that come from students going to school away from home.” He said that the University has provided education options for students to choose from, including online-only, hybrid and in-person learning.

Thomson also highlighted the advantages of Willamette’s small size brings: “Our size also allows us to adapt our instruction, support and services in ways that are more difficult for larger institutions.”

In attempting to make in-person classes safe for the Willamette community, Thomson said that Willamette is “following CDC (Center for Disease Control), OHA (Oregon Health Authority) and HECC (Higher Education Coordinating Commission) guidance for how to reopen for in-person instruction,” and that the ROC is contact with peer institutions sharing best practices. The manifestation of these guidelines can be seen in the Willamette policies of reducing density in classrooms, enhancing cleaning stations and requiring that face masks be worn in public campus space.

Although campus is closed to visitors and there are signs denoting such, members of the general public have been seen on campus grounds. While there is not an official policy listed on Willamette’s website, “We are encouraging the community to enact the motto ‘if you see something, say something,’” Thomson said, “Our suggestion is to be kind and direct: Assume [sic] best intentions, do not

shame, we are all learning to navigate this new environment.” He also suggested calling campus safety or filling out an incident report on the student affairs website if a Willamette community member does not feel comfortable confronting an outside visitor.

Willamette asked students to quarantine for 14 days before coming back onto campus, though the ROC decided not to strictly enforce this. Thomson pointed to the CDC and OHA not universally recommending or requiring quarantining. Thomson said, “a number of students have jobs on which they depend for income or are otherwise unable to comply with this request. To mandate this would potentially mean a loss of income for some students.”

Students are required to check their own symptoms every day, which can be done by using the Campus Clear app. However, the ROC has also decided against strictly enforcing students to self-monitor symptoms. Regarding this decision, Thomson said: “We’ve heard the call for the university ‘mandating’ compliance with a number of things. Things are very different on campus this year, and our returning students especially are experiencing that as somewhat jarring. If we are to successfully remain in residence this year, we must garner the collective support of our community to enact the dozens of mitigation strategies put in place. Certainly if there are policy violations, we want to know and will follow up appropriately.”

Although the ROC recently allowed students living on campus to attend some or all classes remotely, some students have reported faculty putting pressure on them to attend class in-person. “Faculty have been instructed that they must make allowances for remote attendance in all but a small number of classes,” Thomson

responded, “advisors may be making recommendations about which classes would provide a better learning experience in person...In all cases, though, this remains the student’s choice. If a student believes they will receive some kind of negative consequence for attending remotely they should share this concern with their respective Dean.”

COVID-19 disproportionately affects Black and Indigenous people and people of color, and the Willamette protocols for returning to campus states that this fact will “guide us in our reopening efforts.” Thomson said: “The decision not just to reopen but to offer a hybrid learning option for students is the ‘procedure that was selected’ that tangibly supports our most vulnerable populations.” He points to access to housing, food, internet, health care, a kind and caring community and the ability for people to be their authentic selves as “components of the Willamette experience that many take for granted when the reopening question is only considered from the perspective of the academic experience we provide.”

Concern was brought up by Willamette alumni in an open letter writing, “[T]he firing of custodial staff at the end of May casts doubt not only on the university’s ability to keep campus safe, but also their willingness to do so.” Regarding the current status of custodial workers, Thomson writes, “We are working with ACS (American Cleaning Solutions) to clean our facilities. They are focused on sanitizing and disinfecting surfaces and are prioritizing cleaning for health.” Regarding protections for the custodial staff Thomson says, “ACS provides the appropriate protective equipment for their staff.”

Another concern for many members of the community is the impact reopening Willamette will have on the greater Salem community. Ac-

cording to Shawn Hubler of the New York Times, towns surrounding college campuses have all seen COVID cases surge—places including Boone County, Mo., home to the University of Missouri-Columbia; Story County, Iowa, home to Iowa State; and Harvey County, Kan., home to Bethel College.” Regarding mitigating risks to the broader Salem community, Thomson said that one of the most important ways to stop the spread of COVID-19 is to stay home when you are ill. “Willamette has been in regular contact with Salem Health as a part of their Community Task Force since March,” Thomson continued, “Salem Hospital continues to have ample capacity in their hospital to manage any surge in cases.”

If someone tests positive for COVID-19, Thomson said that CDC guidance requires that person to isolate from others. “In the case that a student has a roommate or is otherwise unable to isolate in their current space, Willamette will prioritize the health of the student and the community by moving the affected person to a designated isolation space on campus set up to support them while ill,” Thomson said, “There are several isolation spaces identified on campus, each with the capacity to hold between 10 and 20 students.”

Though privacy laws require Willamette not to share any identifying information about a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, moving a student from a dorm area may result in the student’s privacy being compromised. Thomson said: “We ask that all community members be mindful of the privacy of anyone needing to isolate or quarantine throughout this process.”

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From the gallery to your screen: Art showings will be virtual as studio classes shrink in size

BY NOAH DANTES
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Willamette’s art department has made all public events this fall virtual, according to department head Alexandra Opie. The end-of-semester art show will be held over Instagram at @wustudioart. The Instagram account will also be used to show works-in-progress throughout the semester. The department had planned on hosting two visiting artist public events this fall, both of which have been moved to Zoom.

The department is holding a second art show, unique to this semester, displaying the thesis work of last year’s graduating art majors. This display usually takes place during the spring term. The show will run from September 5 to 19 in the Rogers building gallery and in the student gallery in the Art building. The students whose work will be displayed

are Bailey Dickey, Claire Read, Joya Biebel and Andrew Nelson.

The department made several changes in order to reopen safely. All art classes can be attended in-person—to do this safely, the department has shrunk class sizes. While fall class registration began before Willamette

shifted to distance learning in the spring, class sizes were reduced without removing students from rosters. One class closed registration before it opened for first-years, while others lowered the enrollment cap over the summer so that as students dropped, new class spots did not become avail-

able. The classes that remained too large to hold in-person were broken into two groups, with groups taking turns attending class in-person and attending virtually.

Bigger tables have been removed from classrooms and many spaces have been reoriented into

be displayed physically in campus buildings, though the official end-of-semester art show will be virtual.

Additionally, Opie has worked with physics professor Daniel Borrero Echeverry to test the air quality in classrooms. “He’s got a

very wonderful system for testing the air quality in terms of COVID-19 and safety and we’ve been making all the changes that need to happen [to ensure good air flow],” Opie said.

The department has made preparations in case Willamette

returns to distance learning. They have prepared work kits for students to take home with them, something they are continuing from spring term. Opie hopes that even if all classes go virtual, students will continue to have access to campus studio space. “There’s precedent for that at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, where their plan for the semester is that classes are not meeting in-person but students can go into the studios,” Opie said.

Art department students work with materials, which is different from many humanities classes, where the focus has mainly been on ensuring social distance. “Studio art classes are very space oriented—it’s been about creating safe spaces,” Opie said.

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“Studio art classes are very space oriented—it’s been about creating safe spaces.”

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Alumni critical of WU's reopening plan

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Alexander pointed to two widespread outbreaks on the college campuses of Notre Dame and University of North Carolina. Both these universities had safety protocols and methods of testing for the virus, but outbreaks occurred because a small subset of the students acted in what many people consider to be typical college student fashion: by making mistakes with their friends. "We do not look at a situation that

determine the best way to keep the university functioning and the people safe. To Alexander, these rules are primarily a way to comfort students and parents when the real danger lies in having people on campus at all. "Willamette is not a closed campus," Alexander said. "It is closed to visitors, but it is in no way closed. Faculty and students and staff, significant portions of them live off campus. They go to grocery stores and restaurants and doctor's offices, and then come back to campus!"

"Willamette is not a closed campus. It is closed to visitors, but it is in no way closed. Faculty and students and staff, significant portions of them live off campus. They go to grocery stores and restaurants and doctor's offices, and then come back to campus!"

REBECCA ALEXANDER

looks like fun and say, 'In two weeks I might pay for that.' That is not human nature," Alexander said. "People who broke the community guidelines will not be devoid of responsibility," she clarified, but added that putting the responsibility of preventing an outbreak on each individual student is unfair when "recklessness is inevitable."

Willamette has protocols to sanitize campus and keep students distanced, and the Coronavirus Taskforce has weekly meetings to

The situation frustrates Alexander and many others, who see Willamette's reopening as focusing on giving students a meagre taste of the Willamette social experience that existed in the past, rather than safely delivering the Willamette academic experience. To her, students should only have to worry about their grades, not their health. Alexander said: "It's a numbers game, and the numbers are not on our side."

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Wind instruments to go outdoors, strings stay indoors, singers to create virtual performances

BY NOAH DANTES
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The Collegian reached out to the music department chair, Marva Duerksen, this past week for information on the changes made this semester by the department. Duerksen provided the following statements over email from professors Agüero, Engbretson and Skovira.

Statement from Associate Professor of Music Héctor Agüero:

Instrumental ensembles that involve wind and brass players cannot safely play indoors. Hence, the majority of our playing will be done in smaller groups outside.

Band performances will be virtual. We will essentially be compiling pieces from individual video contributions to be released online.

Unlike wind instruments, strings can safely play indoors while masked and socially distanced. Therefore we will be meeting with minimal interruption to prepare live performances that will be filmed and uploaded online.

We are hopeful that the string orchestra in collaboration with Willamette Pro Musica will be able to contribute a performance to the theatre department's season pass as we have in past years. This performance would be prerecorded and will be accessed through the theatre box office in the spring term.

Statement from Instructor of Vocal Studies Chris Engbretson:

In a continuing effort to max-

imize student and faculty safety, and in light of mounting evidence regarding the dangers of aerosols, Vox and the Chamber Choir will be moving away from in-person singing during the pandemic. We will continue to explore the literature but will do so in a safe, online medium. Large-ensemble works will be compiled from individual student recordings and combined together into a virtual choir presentation. This will provide our students with a chance to explore new recording technologies, which are often a part of daily life for professional musicians. We will also be exploring an early-music unit this fall, where students get the chance to study and record small-ensemble works from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It will be an exciting opportunity for our singers to perform beautiful music - often one on a part - that they likely wouldn't have the chance to thoroughly explore during an undergraduate experience.

Statement from the Zeller Chair in Opera Studies Katherine Skovira:

In 1960, the NYTimes wrote: "Were the Thirties turbulent and adventurous in the creative arts or do they only seem so in retrospect to those of us who experienced them when we were younger and more euphoric? The [1937] production by the New York City Open of Marc Blitzstein's 'The Cradle Will Rock' reminds us that in return for our prosperity and security these days we have settled for sedateness and conformity."

In 2020, facing the spread and patterning of ongoing systemic racism and a global pandemic, The Cradle Will Rock could not be timelier. In the 2020-2021 season, theatre and opera companies, orchestras and musical presenters all face the same brutal reality: we cannot perform for our audiences in our traditional medium, on campus in person. The National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) and CDC [Center for Disease Control] have given 2020 guidelines stating that singing is too dangerous to occur in person. Faced with this scenario, with no hall that can house us or our audience in community together, with a political climate as caustic as the one facing Blitzstein's cast and production team, we innovate, we persevere.

In this class, we will stage a complete production of Blitzstein's The Cradle Will Rock virtually. We will rehearse, plan, storyboard and work through every particular of the production online together, protecting our performers and team and creatively bringing this product to our audience. The Zeller Family, Kurt Weill Foundation and EAM Publishers support this production and are eager for the results.

The DVA [Dramatic Vocal Arts] event will livestream on March 11-14, 2021 and include pre-recorded content and participation of remote and in person students, singers, actors and dancers.

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Students and alumni call for reopening postponement

BY NOAH DANTES
EDITOR IN CHIEF

On August 16, Willamette alum Rebecca Alexander published an op-ed on Medium.com calling for Willamette to postpone its reopening. Alexander, alongside nearly 400 other alumni and current students, signed an open letter asking Willamette to demonstrate "a commitment to the safety of its students, faculty, and staff by switching to full-time virtual learning." This open letter was sent to President Thorsett and the Board of Trustees on August 3. As of August 17, Willamette has not replied to the open letter, or Alexander's op-ed. Find below the full text of Alexander's op-ed on Medium.com:

Earlier this year I got some great news. I was selected to receive the Young Alumni Leadership Award from my alma mater, Willamette University.

I was supposed to receive this award in June at an on-campus ceremony during my 10th reunion weekend, but the festivities were postponed because hosting such a

gathering during a worldwide pandemic would have been immoral. While disappointed, I was proud that my alma mater acknowledged the severity of this pandemic and acted responsibly.

So imagine my surprise to learn that next week, with little to no progress in controlling the pandemic nationally or in Marion County, Oregon where my alma mater is located, Willamette University is preparing to welcome well more than 1,000 students and employees back to its residential campus for in-person instruction.

Currently, there is a 30% chance that in a gathering of 25 people in Marion County, at least one person will have the coronavirus. This is part of the reason why Marion County's public school district has postponed the in-person reopening of its schools until at least November 16. What will happen to these odds when hundreds of students fly in from coronavirus hotspots in California, Arizona, Idaho, and other states to start class at WU? Will Willamette's rush to reopen risk an even later reopening date for public schools in Marion County? It certainly will.

Willamette's classes will be conducted inside buildings. Students have been given the option of online learning, but most faculty are required to teach in person. Custodial staff must clean up and breathe in "droplets" from every single person who uses a bathroom on campus. Every person who moves into a dorm hall. And every person who spits ever-so-minimally onto desks while having 90-minute discussions that could absolutely happen over Zoom.

The university is limiting the number of people who will be in one room at any given time to 15 and requiring masks be worn, but Willamette is a residential campus and even the best-laid plans will likely result in unintended death — either of students, faculty, food service workers, janitorial staff, or family members of any of these groups.

I wrote about Willamette's motto, "Not unto ourselves alone are we born," in my application essay to Willamette 15 years ago. I lived this motto as a student at Willamette and I've lived it every day of my life since I graduated, always working to improve the

lives of my friends and neighbors. Tens of thousands of my fellow alumni do the same.

Our alma mater is betraying our legacy of community service and its mission to care for others by reopening in person this fall. President Thorsett, as a Young Alumni Leader to you, the ultimate leader of this university, I beg you to do the monumentally difficult, but morally required thing: Delay in-person reopening.

In the absence of effective federal leadership, community leaders like yourself are our nation's only hope to slow the spread of this deadly and debilitating virus. According to a recent Forbes article, the following universities moved to online-only learning just last week:

- Columbia University
- Princeton University
- Johns Hopkins University
- University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Howard University
- Loyola University Maryland
- Smith College

It is not too late for Willamette.

My life will be forever changed because of the education I received at Willamette. It would not have been the same if it occurred over Zoom. It is not fair that today's Bearcats will have fewer of these in-person moments when they look back on their college years, but this is their "Not unto ourselves alone are we born" moment. And it is yours as well, President Thorsett. Please press pause on in-person reopening until it is safe. Keep students where they are. Don't make this pandemic worse for your employees and others who live in Marion County.

With hope,
Rebecca Alexander
College of Liberal Arts '10
Willamette University

P.S. — I and hundreds of other WU alum have signed an open letter requesting Willamette take several actions to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, including moving to online-only instruction in the fall. The letter was originally offered by @WUAlumniForVirtualFall2020

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Oregon offers an abundance of nature marvels and hiking trails for visiting

BY OLIVIA FRENKEL
STAFF WRITER

Oregon is known for many things. Portland's idiosyncrasies, the robust fungus hunting community, the lack of sales tax and the gas station attendants are a few of the many quirks and items of interest that the state has to offer. With that being said, Oregon is perhaps known best for its abundance of natural marvels. The state teems with mountains, rivers, and lakes that beg to be respectfully explored by both visitors and locals. Salem and the surrounding area is no exception and has so much to offer for outdoor enthusiasts of all walks of life.

Dome Rock

This hiking spot remains as somewhat of a hidden gem to those who live in Oregon. The 10.5 mile trail is dog friendly and provides sweeping views of the Detroit Reservoir and the Cascades. The hiking entrance is located just off Highway 22 over Detroit Lake at the Dome Rock Trail #3381. At the east end of the lake, hikers are rewarded with a view of the 100 foot waterfall (a shorter version of this hike begins at Tumble Trailhead on Road 2223). This spot is popular year round, though extra experience is recommended to those who hike in the winter.

Silver Falls

Silver Falls is a state park that spans more than 9,000 acres and includes over 24 miles of hiking trails, 14 miles or horse trails, and a four mile long bike path. The hike to the falls and swimming spot is about 8.5 miles long and is considered to be of moderate difficulty. This spot is about 20 miles east of Salem and is incredibly popular among students at Willamette.

Three Pools

Three Pools is one of the most popular swimming holes in the Pacific Northwest. Its beauty attracts more than 15,000 people a year, so wear a mask! If it becomes too crowded to enjoy the scenery, use caution and choose one of the other many natural spots Oregon has to offer! The Three Pools hike is 12 miles long,



IMAGE BY STATESMAN JOURNAL

Silver Falls waterfall outside Salem (Top). Cape Kiwanda on the Oregon coast (bottom left). Tamolitch Falls, otherwise known as Blue Pool (bottom right).



IMAGE BY THOMAS SHAHAN

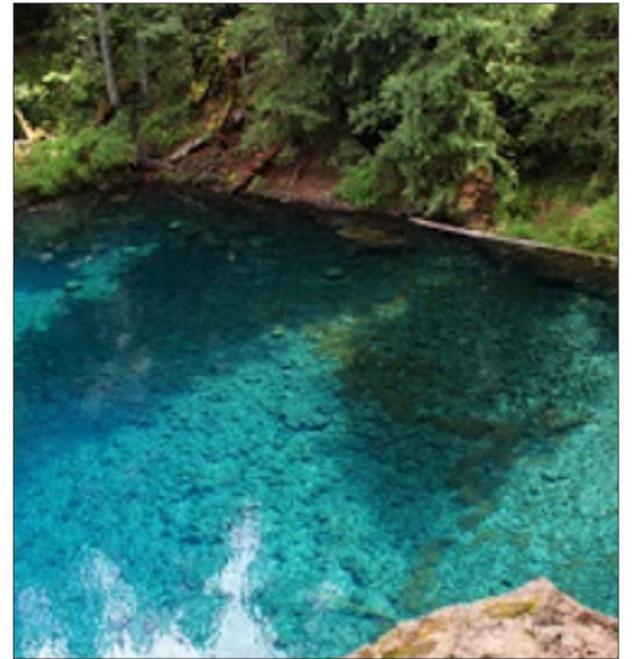


IMAGE BY RICHARD HIKES

but the crystal clear swimming holes and cliff jumping spots are worth every step. Camping along this hike is available, but limited to 12 campsites a night. Three Pools is approximately an hour away from Willamette and is highly recommended by Willamette students and staff.

Cape Kiwanda

The Oregon Coast is another spot frequented by Willamette students during the last few weeks of summer. Specifically, Cape Kiwanda State Natural Area in Pacific City is home to the Three Capes Scenic

Route, which provides expansive views over the Pacific Ocean. Boutiques, antique shops, restaurants and cafes line the oceanfront. Surfing is incredibly common around Cape Kiwanda for beginners as well as seasoned surfers. Though the water averages about 55 degrees, this spot has so much to offer for anyone who visits.

Iron Mountain

This mountain is located within the Willamette National Forest and a mere thirty minutes away from campus. The 6.6 mile loop trail rewards

hikers with a beautiful 360 degree view of North, Middle, and South Sister along with Mt. Bachelor and Mt. Jefferson. Due to its central location to Bend, Portland, Salem and Eugene, it has become a tradition for many Oregonians during the spring. Between May and early June, purple larkspur, pink penstemon, Washington lily and 300 other species of flowering plants bloom quickly, covering the mountainside with bright splashes of color.

Tamolitch Falls

Tamolitch Falls, commonly known as Blue Pools, is about an hour and 45

minutes from campus just outside of Bend. The 3.7 mile trail leads hikers to a waterfall as well as a water hole. The pool's crystal clear turquoise waters are a product of a lava flow that occurred over 1,600 years ago. The river seeps through the porous lava which allows for the highly pigmented water. Though it may seem inviting, the water temperature averages about 37 degrees Fahrenheit, so swimming and cliff jumping are not advised. Regardless, the water and surrounding evergreens are worth the drive and short hike.

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Resources and clever food alternatives for students beyond the Goudy options

BY PIPER LEHER
STAFF WRITER

Along with everything going on at the current moment, one area of life that incoming students may be unsure about is food options in the Salem area. Incoming students may find themselves wondering what their options are if they don't want to go to Goudy, either because they don't want to risk contact with others or because the dining hall is on the opposite side of campus from the east side dormitories. Avoiding Goudy is not a new experience for returning students, and several were more than happy to share their favorite alternatives.

Junior biochemistry major Devyn Mandala recommended Rick's Cafe in the law building. Though it seems like an obvious option, many students living on Willamette's main campus forget

that it exists. She also recommended the restaurants Fuji Rice Time, Adam's Rib Smokehouse

area with appreciable vegetarian options are: The Ram, The Sassy Onion, La Margarita, Fuji Rice

your own room. "If I'm not looking to walk to downtown, but also don't want to eat at Goudy, a lot of times I'll have a frozen meal from Trader Joes or Safeway," Barton said.

The dormitory kitchen areas do not only exist so that one can make intricate meals every once in a while. Many students make use of the microwave and toaster by stocking up on items like Hot Pockets, Waffles, Uncrustables, TV Dinners and the like.

Besides frozen food, Rowan also said: "on the weekends I like to cook if I have time, so my roommate and I will occasionally get a meal subscription box from something like Sun Basket or Hello Fresh to make together. That's a lot of fun because it's a good way to spend time with friends and also add some variety to your diet."

For students seeking yet another convenient way to make

food from the comfort of their own room, some kind of hot water maker is a must have. Whether it's a dual coffee maker, hot water dispenser or a standard kettle, hot water will allow you to make instant products including oatmeal, ramen, tea and hot chocolate. Like frozen food, instant food is efficient and cost-effective.

Finally, be aware that the UberEats app has the residence halls in its database. Typing "Willamette University" as the destination will give the driver directions to the campus in general. Specifically entering "Matthews Hall," or any other campus building, is a more accurate instruction.

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"On the weekends I like to cook if I have time, so my roommate and I will occasionally get a meal subscription box from something like Sun Basket or Hello Fresh to make together.!"

-Rowan Barton ('22)

and India Palace. Rowan Barton, a junior and a double major in archaeology and classics, recommended the restaurants Birdies Bistro, Wild Pear, Ritter's Housemade Foods and Tiga Sushi. Additionally, restaurants around the

Time, India Palace, Bo and Vine and Ritter's Housemade Foods.

But restaurants are not the only option for students seeking an alternative to Goudy. There are a couple of ways you can make food from the comfort of

Students build reusable mask collections as pandemic marches on

BY OLIVIA FRENKEL
STAFF WRITER

The cultural connotation of the word “mask” has changed drastically over the last six months. It used to conjure up images of Halloween, supervillains and even skincare, but in recent months, face coverings have become synonymous with maintaining health and safety. The importance of wearing clean masks is undeniable as made evident by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)] and countless healthcare professionals. The CDC recommends a mask with two or more layers of fabric that are snug on the nose and chin. Masks with exhalation valves are discouraged along with thin coverings such as bandanas and neck gaiters, commonly known as buffs. Neither prevent the spread of potentially viral particles. With this in mind, Willamette students have begun to build their mask collections in preparation for the new semester.

Paisley Leiske ('23) is one of many who have accumulated cloth masks from her hometown. One of her favorites is a floral blue, yellow, and green mask that she was gifted for free at a restaurant. She rotates between five masks, but has up to ten at home.

“I wish I could say I was stylish enough to match my mask to my outfit, but I don't, it mostly depends on what's clean!”

–Paisley Leiske ('23)

Some students, such as Ben Fritz ('21), are frequent users of disposable masks. “At the beginning of the pandemic, a friend's dad sent over a really large bag of disposable masks,” said Fritz, “but I'm making the switch to reusable masks starting with one I may or may not have taken from my girlfriend.” The classic blue disposable masks are instantly recognizable and many were stockpiled at the start of the pandemic. Over time, the more sustainable option of reusable masks has become popular. A disposable mask is always better than having no mask at all, but be sure to clip the elastic straps when you throw it out to ensure that wildlife will not be entangled.

Willamette Housing has also contributed to the mask collections of those who live on campus. Free, black Willamette masks were given to first-years at the commencement of Opening Days and are some of the most common masks seen around campus. Professors have also handed out homemade masks to provide further protection from



IMAGES BY OLIVIA FRENKEL

Students wearing their reusable masks amidst the pandemic. (Clockwise from top) Jenna Harris '23, Corinne Pierson '22, Paisley Leiske '23 and Ben Fritz '21.

the virus. “Professor Fisher made masks in all different sizes and laid them out for us to take at the end of class,” said Jenna Harris ('23). “When I grabbed mine she said, ‘not a lot of people like the Peppa Pig ones.’”

Matching masks have also become increasingly popular among students. Corinne Pierson ('22)

has about ten masks at home, but is particularly drawn to a maroon mask with an embroidered pair of swimming goggles. “I live with three other housemates and when we all moved in, one of their moms bought us matching masks because we're all swimmers on the varsity team here.”

Though mask collections are

seemingly vast already, it's never a bad idea to accumulate more. Don't forget to wash them frequently and to keep sustainability in mind when you choose a mask in the morning. Stay safe and smart, Bearcats!

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Six nonintuitive dormitory necessities

BY PIPER LEHER
STAFF WRITER

During the first couple of weeks of school, it is common for students to realize that either they forgot to bring something to campus, or that certain items they initially disregarded are more useful than they predicted. This can be a trial and error exercise for some, but in order to help incoming students save some time, below is a list of nonintuitive items to consider.

1. Handheld vacuum.

Communal vacuums are full-length. These can be cumbersome, and are inefficient in clearing hard-to-reach corners. Additionally, during move-in, move-out and near holidays, one might have to wait for others to finish using the communal vacuum. Though they can be somewhat pricey, a handheld vacuum is something that can be handy even after one moves out of the dormitories.

2. Silverware, plates, bowls, cups, etc.

It is easy to think that one's room is only for eating snacks, not full meals, but this is often not the case. Whether it's because Goudy is too disagreeable, or because one is too swamped with work to have a sit-down meal, it is common for students to eat ready-made meals in the comfort of their own room. This is especially true for this year, since the dining halls are taking precautionary measures to limit the amount of people allowed in at once. To make this endeavor more cost-effective, paper silverware can be found in bulk at most grocery stores. Paper silverware is also beneficial because one doesn't have to wash them afterwards.

3. A small desk fan.

While most months of the school year are cool, a small desk fan is nice to have when it is needed. Hot days can be common during the beginning and ending months of the school year. Additionally, if water spills on loose papers, a fan can help dry them faster.

4. A small pair of headphones.

Listening to content around campus can be more enjoyable with earbuds. This is because it can get annoying to lug bulky over-the-ear headphones to and from destinations. Earbuds typically fit into pockets better, and are easier to hear out of when talking to Goudy or Bistro servers.

5. A pair of sweatpants.

A pair of sweatpants that look presentable but that are still comfortable are a very practical article of clothing for campus life. They can double as both a lazy day outfit for lounging around the dorms, as well as a pair of pajamas.

6. Bed risers.

Bed risers can drastically increase the amount of space in a room. Though if one is short or lazy, consider buying small or medium-sized risers, as it can become a chore to climb up and down the bed if it has risers that are too tall.

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Opinion: Protests and activism must continue even if Biden and Harris are elected

BY AVINASH NAIDU
STAFF WRITER

Black lives matter. 2020 has witnessed protests, activism and demonstrations from people across the world in support of the movement to end police brutality and systemic racism, with the goal of creating changes within the institutions that have upheld the racist, discriminatory standards America was built upon. In recent months, many people have changed their thinking and educated themselves on the topic of systemic racism, such as learning what “defund the police” actually means, why Black Lives Matter (BLM) is an important movement and about what changes must be made in order to dismantle institutional oppression. Much of what is being fought for are specific policy changes at the local, state and federal levels. Examples of these policies include ending qualified immunity for police officers, reallocating funds from the police towards housing and education in poorer, overpoliced communities and decarceration. President Donald Trump has not enacted a single policy on the federal level indicative of the progressive steps forward BLM is ad-

vocating for. However, those fighting for and protesting for BLM should understand that this fight must continue regardless of who wins the 2020 presidential election.

On August 11, Joe Biden, former vice president and 2020 Democratic presidential nominee, announced that his running mate for this year’s election will be Senator Kamala Harris of California. Just because both politicians are members of the Democratic Party does not mean that they will fight for the changes advocated for by BLM. While the Democratic Party possesses a slew of progressive politicians that are avid supporters of the changes BLM calls for, Biden and Harris lie on the moderate end of the party. While Biden and Harris do believe Black lives matter and police brutality needs to end, they are not as enthusiastic in their support for the policies BLM promotes, such as defunding the police. In fact, two of the more progressive Democratic senators, Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, were both beaten out by Biden for the nomination. In picking a vice president, Biden opted for the more moderate Harris as opposed to the more progressive Warren. While Biden and Harris are not

as likely to publicly speak against BLM as President Trump has, their political history shows that BLM is actually fighting against policies Biden and Harris have enacted and voted to uphold.

Biden wrote the 1994 crime bill that has contributed to the bolstering of a racist legal system which sees Black and brown individuals incarcerated at higher rates and given worse sentences than white people (Vox). Much of what people today are protesting for concerns the unjust mass incarceration of Black and brown people and the discrimination that lies within the justice system and by legal entities. Biden’s bill increased policing in inner city areas already dealing with poor housing options, underfunded education programs and less access to jobs, higher education and healthcare (Vox). These inner city areas that experience higher crime rates are often victim to police brutality and racial profiling. Harris has not enacted progressive reform to the justice system either—her record as an attorney shows that she incarcerated individuals of color more harshly and at higher rates. As California’s Attorney General, Harris avoided getting involved with cases deal-

ing with killings committed by the police and as a senator supported locking up people too poor to post exorbitant bail (NY Times). These are only a few of the many instances in which Harris upheld the discriminatory mass incarceration of colored people. Due to pressure from the public and the more progressive wing of the Democratic Party, they are likely to progress incrementally in the direction BLM hopes to move in. Nonetheless, Biden and Harris have a lot to atone for before receiving acclamation from progressives. Hence, this fight and this movement must continue regardless of who is elected this November.

Willamette University has spoken out in support of the BLM movement and is committed to being an inclusive space for people of all races (Willamette OMA). While diversity is something Willamette says they are committed to, they are certainly not yet at this goal as the student population is roughly 64 percent white (CollegeData.com). While this is a fairly representative of their share of the US Population, diversity should span beyond these figures within a school. By demonstrating inclusivity through the actions and mindsets of the

student body, Willamette can become more of an attractive destination for students of color. This would, in turn, lead to a student body with more even distributions of various races. As a school that is majority white, besides continuing to fight for an end to police brutality and systemic racism, students need to understand how they can be better allies to those of different backgrounds. Self-education is one of the most important ways to do this. Social media, as well as sources on the internet, can provide a plethora of information on how to be anti-racist and be a better ally. Changing things you say, how you speak, the behaviors you exhibit and holding the people you hang out with accountable in not being discriminatory against any group are all actively anti-racist actions. This is how Willamette can play its part in the national conversation of being anti-racist. In comparison to a protest or lobbying, such steps may seem small, but they have significant impact in the long term for you and for individuals of different backgrounds, as they help create a truly more inclusive space.

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Opinion: Opening Days isn’t transfer student approved

CONTINUED from Page 1

However, much of the language in important documents and email blasts regarding Opening Days is exclusionary towards transfer students. For example, the “How to WU: Class of 2024 Next Steps for First-Year Students” guide was sent to transfer students via email. In an email sent to transfer students, Transfer Colloquium Associate Rachel Urner noted that the guide is “put together each year with first-year students in mind” and “may have sections that aren’t relevant to all of you,” but much of it was valuable information for any new student, not just the class of 2024. This type of “first-year centric” language is a pervasive theme in orientation publications from the university.

One vital aspect of Opening Days for first-years is their involvement in their colloquium classes. These classes are taught by professors from many different disciplines and cover compelling topics like “Harry Potter and the Ethics of Difference,” “The World We Want,” and “Enemies, Friends, Allies? The Path of Nonviolent Resistance.” First-year colloquium classes provide an introduction to Willamette’s rigorous coursework as well as give first-year students opportunities to interact and build a relationship with their advisors. Though transfer students are similarly new to campus, they are not given these same opportunities. The transfer colloquium group sometimes struggled to fill the time and often ended up playing the same handful of bonding games. While this may help transfer students cultivate meaningful relationships with each other and their Opening Days leaders, it doesn’t provide first-years and transfer students with a comparable experience. Too little thought was put into how transfer students would experience Opening Days compared to the first-year Opening Days program.

As mentioned before, the alternative to participating in the full Opening Days program for transfer students is Speed Orientation, a half day dedicated solely to transfer students and providing them with information about campus resources. This year’s program consisted of three presentations by university faculty members followed by lunch and a campus tour. For students who opted to partake in only the Speed Orientation, these presentations could not possibly have given them a full picture of how to succeed at Willamette. Obviously, it would be impossible to prepare transfer students for every challenge that might come their way, but a couple of hours spent discussing general course requirements, academic support and resources available through Hatfield Library is not enough to adequately prepare students for a major change in their lives.

Opening Days, as it should, caters mainly to first-years, but even the Speed Orientation, which is specifically designed for transfer students, is not sufficient as it is. By organizing transfer students who have made the transition to Willamette in years prior and who can relate to the transfer experience, Willamette can create a more inclusive Opening Days program for transfer students. Communicating with transfer student representatives in order to establish a program that thoughtfully caters to the needs of transfer students is vital in sustaining a welcoming environment for new students at Willamette. All students should feel welcome on campus and transfer students deserve to feel that their Opening Days experience is valued by the University.

Note: Edie Mueller transferred to Willamette this year as a member of the class of 2023.

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BENJAMIN BURTON | PHOTO EDITOR



BENJAMIN BURTON | PHOTO EDITOR

Above are photos of incoming students and Opening Days leaders during the 2020 Opening Days.

Opinion: Want people to wear masks? A smarter conversation is needed

BY DAVID FLANAGAN
OPINIONS EDITOR

This article is about COVID-19 mask politics. It argues that fostering collectivist spirit is not an effective way to culturally combat the pandemic in an individualist country like the United States of America, and institutions like Willamette should shift their rhetorical strategy to one that praises individual choice and action instead of prattling off warnings and punishments.

Willamette University is a place that, by most standards, supports freedom of expression in the interest of the personal growth and development of its students. However, as seen by the development of strict mask-wearing policies and social distancing guidelines in the wake of COVID-19, the University is willing to lay down the law and force in-person students to wear masks under penalty of banishment from campus. Go to your Willamette student portal, however, and you'll get a different message: Blitz the Bearcat trying to apply a mask in a variety of rakish ways, and statues scattered around campus donning masks of their own despite no need to breathe. Willamette is torn between encouraging collective action via social pressure and threat of punishment and by pushing the narrative that mask wearing is something everyone in the university community should be choosing to do.

This latter approach is essentially correct but our execution leaves more than a bit to be desired. The process of creating a common enemy and presenting a united front to combat it has drawn individualist cultures like that of the United States together before, and will do so again. Willamette University has a duty to its students, staff and the surrounding Salem area to shift the narrative around social distancing and mask wearing away from threatening individual punishment towards encouraging responsible choice on a personal level. However, the way to do this isn't by copying the strategies of more collectivist countries, as tempting as that may be due to those countries' smoother handling of the pandemic.

Every spring semester since 1989, Tokyo International University students have arrived at Willamette as part of their American Studies Program. Mores and means of communication vary so much between Japanese and American culture that

resident advisors undergo specific training in order to best help ASP students integrate into social dorm living. Frequently—even before the pandemic—many ASP students could be seen wearing facemasks while traveling or while sick around campus. Japanese culture, speaking broadly, tends to understand the individual as not independent but interdependent, a cultural convention brought about by centuries of urbanized living and galvanized by public health campaigns following the wars and pandemics that shook the nation in the 20th century.

A Japan Times article published July 2020 further elaborates that Japanese culture has long been aware of the benefits of face coverings, starting with religious rites in the 1600s which required the covering of the face with paper or sakaki leaves. Eventually, mask wearing became widespread in industrial and sanitation work, before political programs during the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918 cemented the practice in mainstream culture. For those who could not afford masks, “newspapers began giving instructions on how to make them at home, much like the online mask-making tutorials that flourished during Japan's latest mask shortage.” From then on, mask wearing trickled into mainstream culture, to the point where some Japanese beauty pageants judge contestants on how they look while masked, and people walking on the street who believe themselves to be sick may wear a mask and not receive a second glance.

Willamette University boasts a nudist campus. That is to say, by submitting forewarning 24 hours in advance of their nudity to Campus Safety, any Willamette student may legally galavant about the campus with nothing but their birthday suit and a backpack. The staff can't tell you how to dress, how to study, or how to learn. Freedom and personal expression are of the utmost value to American culture, and are often preserved in a legislative capacity in a variety of amusing ways.

American culture has remained fixated on the idea that the lone individual can bring about instrumental change by defying societal expectations. This “maverick” trope has existed since our early colonial days where our heroes (think Paul Revere or the Boston Tea Party) were explicitly anti-authority, and has contributed to a cultural ideal that a tremendous weight rests upon each individual's shoulders

to take care of themselves first and foremost. This is not some antiquated fixation, but a living and incredible part of American culture; it just doesn't help us right now in a health crisis. Nor, to be fair, has this attitude been especially helpful in the past: History.com reports that efforts made by lawmakers nationwide to combat the Spanish Flu outbreak of 1918 were often complicated both by lack of enforcement of mask ordinances and the circulation of pictures of lawmakers in public areas refusing to don the coverings as well. The same American spirit that encourages defiance and standing up to corruption has an unfortunate tendency to foster contrarian action at times when it's not beneficial to the public interest.

American propaganda posters during the first and second world war often exploited imagery invoking American exceptionalism and individuality while using slogans that promoted collective effort. Perhaps the most famous image—that of “Rosie the Riveter”—explicitly draws attention to individual strength and connects it with a communal message (“We can do it!”) Other slogans share this same spirit, such as comparing factory workers to soldiers due to their common goal (“Together we can do it!”) and emphasizing individual choices as instrumental to the war effort (“Loose lips sink ships.”) The aim is not to minimize the role of the individual, but to entice them into acting a certain way by connecting generally positive characteristics with actions that can't otherwise be enforced. This as opposed to the current response: performative threats. Framing the directive to wear masks and socially distance as an individual choice that contributes to a cohesive whole will tap in to the justified pride of the American people and reorient the conversation away from what one must do to what a patriotic American should do. This is not meant to suggest that this public campaign should take cues from other “wars” the United States has taken part in as of late, like the War on Drugs or War on Terror. Rather, we should co-opt the rhetoric of unity and free will to reframe the current inflammatory discussion about mask-wearing and social distancing.

All that is in the past. So what is to be done to encourage mask wearing on the small scale, and bolster faith that collective measures can and should be taken in the inter-

est of public welfare on the large scale? Clearly, the same measures that have worked in more collectivist countries have failed to work in the United States due to cultural differences. While the concept of rapid culture shift can be enticing, especially for political radicals, it's not clear that pushing for it would be a productive use of governmental resources, especially during an already tumultuous political epoch like our own. If practices that rely on collectivist understandings of public health aren't universally enforceable in this country, what are we to do?

We as a country must use what we already have in spades: our already blatant individualism. We must treat COVID-19 not as an inconvenience to day-to-day life, but as what it is: a common enemy that can be beaten by unity and strength. Elected leaders, national health officials, news anchors and other visible public figures should be presenting a united front that unequivocally supports the wearing of masks and the absolute necessity of social distancing. Similarly, public health initiatives distributing quality masks free to low-income citizens or citizens otherwise struggling to procure them must be implemented immediately.

While such measures might be useful in the abstract, currently they are asking quite a lot of our at best mismanaged and worst intentionally disruptive public health services. Our floundering federal response has done real and permanent damage to citizens across the nation. We can no longer passively rely on the federal government taking the initiative on matters of this magnitude, at least for the time being. Willamette University sits directly across the street from Oregon's capitol building. Recent protests have spilled over onto campus, and as political dissent continues to spread, it seems that Willamette will continue to be visible in these political demonstrations, whether we like it or not. Pretending that our actions are inconsequential or too minute to have an impact on the minds of people near campus is frankly irresponsible, and a convenient way to shrug off the role educators—and those becoming educated—have across the country. The onus has fallen on smaller and more intimate institutions, and as one of those institutions, Willamette University should not sit complacent.

What might these programs look like specifically for Willamette?

For Willamette University, changes in how COVID-19 precautions are discussed are essential. The aforementioned cartoon of Blitz struggling to bemark is one example of suggesting that Willamette is working as a whole to combat the pandemic and that precautions are something to be integrated into daily life. Regular and publicized video announcements from University officials would serve to create an accountable face with which both students and staff could interact as well as present that all-important unified front. Slogans and messaging (e.g. “Wear a mask—it's what Bearcats do!” or “Make the right choice”) that bring attention to the individual's choice, while implying that actions that put health in jeopardy are personally irresponsible, would be easy to design and promote via posters and on the Willamette website. These three suggestions (levity with the mascot, video updates from University officials, slogans and images that promote personal choice) would be straightforward in their implementation and pave the way for other schools and institutions to improve their messaging as well. An institution that's experimental enough to allow for nude students could at least make the effort to try these suggestions.

None of this is to say that this political issue—how to incentivize citizens to wear masks without trodding on individual liberty—has a simple cause and effect, or clear solution. Direct and trustworthy medical advice and a competent federal administration, for example, might have nipped this pandemic in the bud back in March. But it's well worth it to examine the inherent cause of this issue to further understand it, and to make sense of other political concepts that also revolve around the importance of the individual versus the importance of the system around them. The battle between those who defend their right not to wear masks and those who insist that public health can supersede the rights of individuals is a battle between individualist mentalities and collectivist ones. It's not a new battle, nor is it likely to be resolved anytime soon. In the meantime, it's up to us—the students, the scholars and the voices of the future—to take concrete steps to fight our own worst impulses.

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Letter from the Editors

Date: June 15th, 2020

The Collegian aligns itself with the Black Lives Matter movement and its struggle for justice and the safety and freedom of Black people. We denounce the discriminatory violence that this country's police force inflicts, as well as the oppressive, white supremacist structures that uphold this violence.

The Collegian also supports the work of Willamette's Alum of Color and Black Alum and Students Against Police Brutality & White Supremacy, two groups that are advocating for anti-racist agendas and policies at Willamette University. We recognize that this university was built on a foundation of violence, and continues to fail to protect and uplift its students of color. We assert that Willamette University must do better to actively protect and uplift its Black students, its Indigenous students and its students of color, as well as its trans and LGBTQ+ students of color.

This assertion cannot be made without also an acknowledgment of the Collegian's own responsibility to help dismantle oppressive systems. As leaders of a newspaper meant to give a platform and voice to all students, we have an obligation to amplify the voices of the university's students of color. The Collegian is committed to learn, unlearn and grow from past mistakes, and urges the University to do the same.

Do you have thoughts you want to share? We encourage you to write a letter to the editor or guest opinion piece for the Collegian. Send submissions or questions to collegian-editor-in-chief@willamette.edu.

Black Lives Matter.

In solidarity,

Collegian executive team

Sophie Smith, Editor-in-chief, 2019-2020

Noah Dantes, Editor-in-chief, 2020-2021

Kathleen Forrest, Managing editor, 2020-2021

