



4-9-2020

The Grizzly, April 9, 2020

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HOME

NEWS

FEATURES

OPINIONS

SPORTS

WEB EXCLUSIVE

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ARCHIVE ▾

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Photograph Courtesy of Rob Varney

Colleen Murphy

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Ursinus' transition to remote learning is nearing the end of "abnormalness" as we enter our third week of online classes. While students from all grade levels are experiencing different levels of stress, disappointment, and confusion, it's important that we recognize those that have risen to the challenge tremendously: faculty and staff. Through flurries of emails and updates, professors have restructured entire curriculums to adapt to the changing world, and they've done so with an admirable determination.

RECENT POSTS

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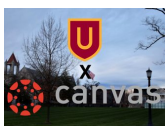
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The college itself has been extremely flexible with how individual professors decide to adapt their classrooms. Many have shortened class time or opted to withdraw remote meetings all together, instead allowing students to have entirely independent work-time. This has not come without its hardships. As we all know, Spring Break was extended by a week to allow faculty to re-work their lesson plans and explore possible platforms for remote learning, such as Canvas Conference and Zoom.

According to Dr. Rebecca Jaroff, Chair of the English Department, “Having to learn how to use the technology to teach my courses online was stressful, to say the least.” Many professors cite Christine Iannicelli and Diane Skorina as being essential to their transition, as they continued to be tech-wizard resources off campus as much as they are on campus. Additionally, Dr. Jaroff stated, “It is a time of anxiety and uncertainty, but none of my colleagues or students have shown anything but optimistic support and genuine care and concern for one another.” It’s extremely safe to say that this adjustment wouldn’t be possible if not for the kindness of the Ursinus community from all ends.

On top of having to deal with a new academic environment, professors also shared insight on how this crisis is personally affecting their everyday lives. Dr. José Eduardo Cornelio, a professor of Modern Languages, shared, “I have my family and several of the people I love far from me, and I know that probably I will not be able to see them until next year.” The pandemic has not only rearranged the lives of those close to us, but has also forced us to consider the hardships of our neighbors and perhaps even strangers. The complete uncertainty that COVID-19 has unleashed upon everyone has perhaps made us more reflective of the stability of everyday life.

In regards to his teaching, Dr. Cornelio expressed that he wants “to avoid ‘normalizing’ this situation, because it is not normal and that is important to acknowledge too.” This ability to recognize the stress and fear coming from students is common among the faculty and staff that have been eager to help us. There is something clear to admire about the attitudes of the people leading our college currently; and that is their unwillingness to give in to hopelessness. Through adaptation, sympathy, and kindness, our faculty and staff have risen to an occasion that none could have ever predicted, and that is something worth applauding.



« **PREVIOUS**
The Canvas
Commencement?

NEXT »
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OPINIONS

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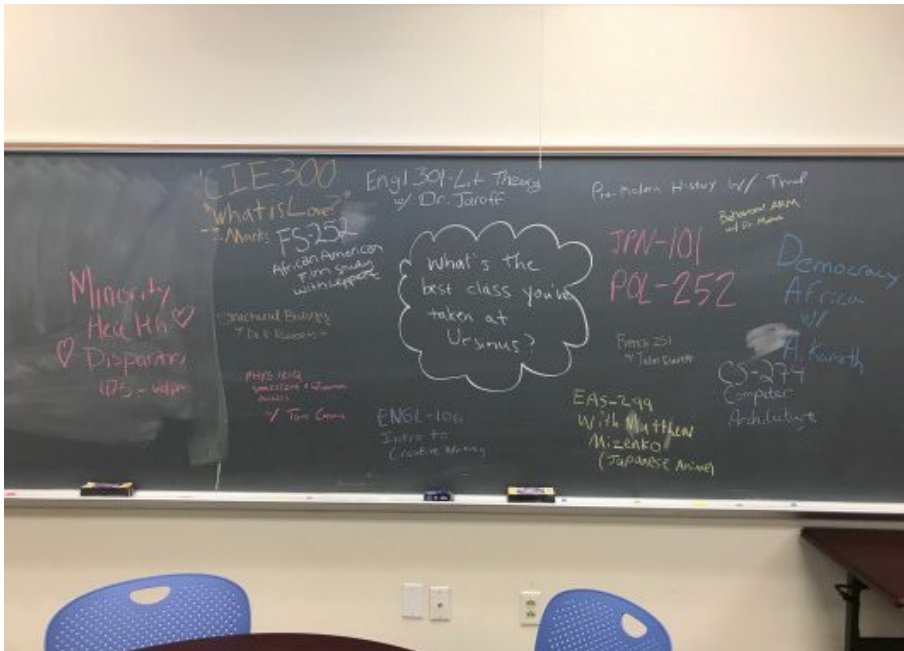
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Center for Writing and Speaking goes online

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Photograph Courtesy of Ursinus Website

Maddy Rodak

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Despite the transition to online classes, the Center for Writing and Speaking remains open. Instead of face-to-face appointments, however, the Center is utilizing two types of online appointments that students can choose between.

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Center for Writing and Speaking goes online

Lazer's historic start cut short

Covid infects Ursinus' record books

Faculty adjust to the Zoom life

TWEETS

Dr. Talia Argondezzi, the director of the Center, feels that so far the online appointment format has been going well. Argondezzi explained, “We have two options available: eTutoring appointments, in which students can attach a file to their appointment and the Writing Fellow sends them written feedback by the end of the appointment, and online appointments, in which both the student and the Writing Fellow log onto the system at the same time, look at a shared screen with the paper on it, and chat about it.”

So far, Argondezzi has seen positive outcomes with the online format. “I’ve been able to read the feedback the Writing Fellows are offering during each appointment, and I think it’s been extremely insightful and potentially very helpful as students revise their drafts,” Argondezzi said. “Our next step will be to collect some data on how students perceive the online service, and to find out how many students follow up with further questions or other clarifications after their eTutoring appointments.”

The switch to a digital format for Center appointments for the remainder of the semester has also allowed Argondezzi to further consider the possibility of continuing a variation of the online format in the future. “When Ursinus returns to face-to-face classes, I do think we’ll continue online support in some capacity,” Argondezzi said. “We’ve always hesitated to go online in the past because the face-to-face format is such a beloved part of the writing center experience. It’s not only more friendly, but often more efficient, to be in the same room at the same time as your Writing Fellow: then you can ask questions, clarify your meaning, and genuinely collaborate in the revision process. And the Writing Fellow can notice, in real time, when they make a suggestion that’s clear and when they need to rephrase or rethink what they’re saying.”

Taking into account the benefits of face-to-face appointments, Argondezzi also recognizes the positives digital appointments can bring. “But we’ve always been mindful that the in-person format presents difficulties to some students,” Argondezzi continued. “Some students have mobility limitations that make it challenging to get to Olin 302, mental health concerns or pragmatic communication disorders that make in-person consultations uncomfortable, or schedules that are incompatible with the Center for Writing and Speaking’s hours. For those students, we’d like to continue to make a limited number of online appointments available.”

“The ultimate goal is to make the Center for Writing and Speaking as nimble and accessible as possible,” Argondezzi stated. “We’d like to

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provide the highest quality consultations to our students without leaving anyone out.”

Students interested in making an appointment with a Writing Fellow can go to the link: <https://ursinus.mywconline.net>. For more information about the Center’s online options and how to make an appointment, students can visit the Center website:

<https://www.ursinus.edu/offices/center-for-writing-and-speaking/online-appointments/>.

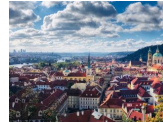


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NEXT »

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THE GRIZZLY

STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF URSINUS COLLEGE

HOME

NEWS

FEATURES

OPINIONS

SPORTS

WEB EXCLUSIVE

STAFF

ARCHIVE ▾

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Jenni Berrios

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Ursinus College had 46 students scheduled to go abroad this semester to Africa, Europe, Central America, South America, Asia, and Australia. Going abroad for many counts as their XLP/ILE. But students are mostly excited to take a journey to a foreign place and embrace a new culture and language.

RECENT POSTS

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Center for Writing and Speaking goes online

Lazer's historic start cut short

Covid infects Ursinus' record books

Faculty adjust to the Zoom life

TWEETS

Programs in China were canceled first because of the rise in cases of COVID-19 there, and a student scheduled to go to Shanghai never even left. Other students abroad weren't initially worried that they would experience that same cancellation. Then the disease spread to southern Italy, and then to the rest of the country. A student studying in Italy was asked to come back.

Millie Drury '21 was studying in Florence, Italy with CAPA. "I did not expect to be sent back early because I had spoken on the phone with [Director of International Programs] Paula Alvarez earlier in the week. My program had already sent options out where we could choose to either stay in Florence or leave and go home and I chose to stay in Florence after speaking with Paula and my family." Drury had hoped to be able to stay despite problems on the other side of the country.

"I was really surprised and upset when I found out I had to go back to the US. But since my program was shutting down I knew there was nothing I could do about it. I decided to accept it for what it was and enjoy the rest of my time in Europe," Drury said.

The rest of Europe seemed safe until the pandemic started hitting Madrid, Spain. Abby Friedman '21 was studying there through CIEE. "The thought [of leaving early] never crossed my mind until the very end," she said.

I was studying abroad in the southern part of Spain, far away from the initial danger, but I was still stressed about being pulled out. It felt like a game of roulette because other students from the program were being pulled by their schools, and I was just waiting for my turn. Paula Alvarez assured me that Ursinus would not pull me from my program until Spain was at a "level 3" health advisory. I was relieved, and then 7 hours after the call Spain was at a level 3. Things changed from one second to another. To complicate things further, Trump set a travel ban.

Under the ban, "you could only fly into 13 CDC approved airports in the US," explains Sophie Auerbach, '21, who was studying abroad in London with CAPA. This created some logistical difficulties. "I had to change my flight to go into one of those. Flights also were extremely expensive because everyone from mainland Europe was flying through London, since the ban was not in place for the UK at the time." Many UC students studying abroad had issues. Even overseas in Costa Rica, Mary Fuchs struggled to find a flight back home. "My program was so stressed out that they took it upon themselves to take care of the flights."

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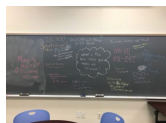
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Even though Latin America and Africa had few to no cases at the time, all abroad programs were shutting down, and ticket prices were high. Shayna Kushner, studying abroad in Morocco through CIEE, was worried she would not be able to leave the country. “The Moroccan government banned all international travel and then an hour later my program got cancelled. And I thought well this is it, I’m stuck here.” Thankfully, Kushner was able to get out and get back home to Massachusetts.

There is a lot of bad news in the world right now, and getting called home from a study abroad program is nowhere near the worst of it. But this is not the way students had hoped that study abroad would go.



« **PREVIOUS**
Center for Writing
and Speaking goes
online

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THE GRIZZLY

STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF URSINUS COLLEGE

HOME

NEWS

FEATURES

OPINIONS

SPORTS

WEB EXCLUSIVE

STAFF

ARCHIVE ▾

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Photo Courtesy of Kevin Leon

Jake Supran

jasupran@ursinus.edu

Once in while you hear someone say, “records are meant to be broken.” Well it’s true, they are.

Usually.

Ursinus’ class of 2020 had three athletes who solidified themselves as school greats, some of the best to ever play their sports here. Alex Mumme has broken several baseball records throughout his four years,

RECENT POSTS

Study abroad programs from all around the world get cancelled – and it hurts

Center for Writing and Speaking goes online

Lazer’s historic start cut short

Covid infects Ursinus’ record books

Faculty adjust to the Zoom life

TWEETS

becoming the most feared hitter to ever pass through the program. Dom Fiorentino became the prototypical centerfield lead-off hitter in his baseball career. Bobby McClure was the best scorer and most complete player to ever play Lacrosse at Ursinus College.

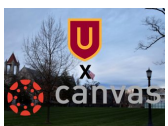
These athletes had the chance to break several records each and help lead their teams to the playoffs after impressive starts. The Ursinus College baseball team was 8-4 with a bright future, while the #6 lacrosse team was 7-0 and gearing up for conference play.

Mumme was an All-American and held several team career and season records. He holds team career records for home runs (30), runs scored (131), doubles (58), and slugging percentage (.737). He holds season records for home runs (14), runs scored (60), doubles (21), RBI (45), and is tied for most hits in a season with 65. If the season continued, Mumme was sure to break the career RBI record, being only 1 shy of previous record of 114. In addition, it was going to be interesting to see him try to break the all-time hits record of 198. He needed 30 more hits to do it.

Fiorentino is a two-time second team All-Centennial Conference outfielder. He shattered the triples record in a season with 10 and was 2 triples shy of being the career leader in the category. For other career stats, he ranked top 5 in home runs (13), RBI (89), doubles (34), and slugging percentage (.535). Aside from owning the season triples record, he was top 5 in hits (55), home runs (8), and runs (42).

Bobby McClure set himself atop the Ursinus College lacrosse Mount Rushmore as the main attraction. He held career records for goals (131) and points (205). With only 15 more shots, he would have become the all-time leader in that category as well. With 19 assists through the first seven games of this season, he needed 38 more assists to be the all-time assists leader. The team had eight games left, plus the playoffs. McClure also holds the single season record for goals (59), and points (81). His 19 assists set him up to possibly beat the single season assists record of 37.

Mumme, Fiorentino, and McClure were poised to lead their teams to the playoffs in their senior seasons. The records left unbroken and the seasons that ceased to be look like the biggest "what ifs" in school history.



« **PREVIOUS**
The Canvas
Commencement?

NEXT »
Lazer's historic start
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HOME

NEWS

FEATURES

OPINIONS

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Heather Lazer, Photograph Courtesy of David Morgan

Jake Supran

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This was Heather Lazer's year to cement herself as Ursinus Softball royalty. The junior infielder was on pace to sit on the Mount Rushmore of Ursinus Softballers.

Lazer had already earned her place in the Ursinus College softball lineup as an everyday starter. Coming in as a freshman with no promise of playing time, she shined in 26 of the team's 36 games, batting .328 with 5 doubles in only 58 at bats. After that season, Lazer knew there was work to be done. "I just tried to focus on being consistent," she said,

RECENT POSTS

Study abroad programs from all around the world get cancelled – and it hurts

Center for Writing and Speaking goes online

Lazer's historic start cut short

Covid infects Ursinus' record books

Faculty adjust to the Zoom life

TWEETS

adding, "I knew if I stayed true to our approach, I could be a real threat at the plate."

Softball head coach Samantha Campo knew Lazer would be an impact player as soon as she stepped foot on campus. "We could see it the moment she stepped in the cage and just in her work ethic alone." She was proven correct by Lazer's freshman year. Campo felt strongly that Heather would be a leader on this team following the 2018 season. "I think she led as a sophomore and you could see her confidence level just bloom throughout that season." Campo added, "She was able to become really comfortable at second base and know who she is and what she's good at."

In Lazer's sophomore year, she played in all 40 games as the team's sure-handed second basemen. She batted a solid .298 while leading the team in runs with 29. She solidified herself as a captain for the following season by being such an integral part of a team that made the playoffs.

Lazer was officially voted a captain by her teammates in May after her sophomore. She considered team chemistry to be the biggest thing the team needed to work on. "We lost six seniors last season, five out of six were starters, we had huge shoes to fill. We started from the bottom, we worked on building friendships with the freshmen and began to build a foundation for our team." She was confident that this would help the underclassmen be confident because "the upperclassmen had a chip on our shoulder, and we were determined to do anything it took to make a run this year."

Lazer was off to an amazing start in her junior year, boasting a .409 batting average and leading the team in doubles with 3. However, the most eye-opening stat was that she had 15 RBI in her first seven games! Sadly, she pulled her hamstring and she was sidelined for the next few games (and still had 9 more RBI than the person behind her!). She would have been ready to return to play following the spring break trip.

Campo has seen Heather grow over her three years into a trustworthy part of the team. "She has become extremely self-aware of who she wants to be and how she wants to get there." Campo further explained, "The team relies on her 'can't shake' energy because she always gives her best while always being happy and excited."

Lazer's extraordinary start to her season was cut short by the COVID-19 pandemic. This was an athlete that was on track to possibly beat the Ursinus softball single season RBI record of 43 that has stood since 1997. She was ranked sixth in the nation in RBI per game with 2.31. The

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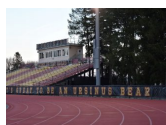
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global virus outbreak stopped the season in its tracks, thus preventing Lazer from bulking up any of her statistics and breaking records. Was this the season Heather Lazer was going to become the best softball player in Ursinus History? With 22 games left on the schedule, we will never know.

Heather will look to lead her team to the playoffs in her last season along with six fellow seniors. She is sure the Bears will be contenders in the conference next year, "Next season, if we continue to bring the same energy and dedication we had in Florida this season, we will be unstoppable next season." She hopes to capitalize on the extended off-season to ensure she leaves it all on the field next spring.

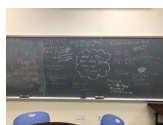


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