April 2021 Newsletter
Chancellor Brown's Message on Fall 2021 Planning

Dear WCU Community,

It has been more than a year since COVID-19 transformed our university and our world. Although initially there was much uncertainty about how to navigate a global pandemic, I have been so impressed by the way our students, faculty, and staff demonstrated their strength, resilience, and creativity. Despite the challenges we faced, WCU continued to exceed all expectations. There is so much to reflect upon - so much to process, so much to understand, and so much change to absorb. Yet, this is also a time to look ahead with hope for the future.

During the past year, there has been no documented transmission of COVID-19 in our classrooms, and that is a direct result of our public health protocols and strong adherence to our Catamounts Care Community Standards. Additionally, vaccinations become available to all members of the WCU community on April 1, which will allow all of our students, faculty, and staff to be vaccinated over the next few months.

With that understanding and as we look ahead, our top priority is to resume a fully in-person residential program for the upcoming fall semester. Residential, in-person instruction, and support services are cornerstones of the WCU mission. We want students, faculty, and staff fully integrated into campus life so that teaching and learning can return to our classrooms, studios, and labs. We also want students engaging in as full a residential life program as possible, taking part in extracurricular and co-curricular activities that allow them to learn and build community.

To accomplish this goal, we are committed to bringing all WCU students, faculty, and staff back to campus for the fall 2021 semester to fully engage our vibrant learning community. In order to best position ourselves to meet this goal, the time for planning is now. To facilitate the planning process and based upon current trends and the guidance currently available to us from the UNC System, you should expect the following:

- Undergraduate and graduate students should plan to be on campus for in-person instruction for the fall 2021 semester.
- Faculty should assume a return to in-person instruction on campus for the coming academic year.
- Staff currently working remotely will be expected to return to campus on a rolling basis, beginning this spring and continuing through the summer, as determined by the operational progress and needs of their division. All staff members should anticipate being back at work on campus no later than the start of the 2021-2022 academic year.
o Any exemption from in-person teaching or onsite work will require appropriate documentation and approval through a formal request process. Contact your supervisor or Human Resources for more information.

o Students, faculty, and staff will be expected to continue to adhere to all health and safety guidelines outlined by the university, the CDC, and local and state health officials to ensure that the transition to being on campus more frequently is done in a safe manner.

o As guidelines evolve, information will be shared with the campus community and updated on the Catamounts Care webpage.

I know that many of you have continued to work on campus throughout the pandemic and I want you to know that your commitment has not gone unnoticed or unappreciated. Thank you for your dedicated service. And thank you to those who have diligently worked remotely to ensure our university remained open and operations continued.

As we plan for our future, I encourage grace, flexibility, patience, and empathy for overall wellbeing as we take steps to fully integrate everyone back to campus. Additional guidance around workforce planning (to include scheduling and leave guidance) will be provided by Human Resources within the next few weeks.

Please be assured that we will continue to closely monitor conditions and continue to set our policies based on guidance issued by the CDC, the University of North Carolina System, and the State of North Carolina.

I am confident that WCU can safely return to the residential, in-person education that has long defined and elevated the campus experience for our students. Thank you for your collaboration and dedication as we pursue this goal.

Sincerely,
Kelli R. Brown, Chancellor
The Western Carolinian

Your source for news at WCU since 1933. The Western Carolinian provides coverage of news, sports, entertainment, and culture relevant to current themes, topics, and trends within our community.

Online Articles
The Tunnel of Oppression program is an interactive, immersive presentation meant to raise awareness and explore different types of oppression. Started at WCU in 2016, the Tunnel of Oppression is designed and produced through the collaboration of ICA, campus partners, and our amazing students.

Concerns for actors and participants during the pandemic challenged Intercultural Affairs to create a virtual format for the Spring 2021 semester, while still maintaining the impactful and immersive experience of former face-to-face versions. Beginning on April 6th, 2021, ICA is proud to bring a Virtual Tunnel of Oppression - PANDEMIC PERSPECTIVES. This tunnel will present oppression through a Covid lens by exploring how the global pandemic has affected marginalized people. Perspectives include Global Impact, Loss, Sacrifice, Division, Stigma, and Despair.

A self-guided virtual tour takes participants through each perspective in a 3D gallery exhibit. The tour finishes in the Room of Hope with links to support resources. Also in the Room of Hope participants can reflect on their experience and emotions in a live, private, zoom breakout room with trained university representatives including trained counselors from Counseling & Psychological Services.

The 3D gallery tour can also be experienced in virtual reality. Just choose the VR option when entering the tunnel on your phone, then watch using VR goggles. Visit Dsa.wcu.edu/tunnel
Campus Activities

- The DCA Marketing Team is hiring a Marketing and Promotions Coordinator and a Videographer/Photographer for the fall semester.
- *Miracle @ WCU* held their Main Event. The fundraising total is tentatively over $10,600. Congratulations to all on this great achievement!
- LMP will host a new *Superhero* theme week this week. The listing of events is on Engage.
- The first meeting of SGA will be held on Monday, May 3.

Auxiliary Enterprises

- Residential Living is working on a move-out plan for spring and a move-in plan for the fall semester.
- Catamount Dining is preparing for summer projects with several facility upgrades underway.
- Electronic Door Access is kicking off a new upgrade project for doors at the UC, Telco Huts, and Killian Annex.
- Printing and Mailing are conducting a process review to enhance efficiency.

Health & Wellness

- Health Services volumes remain steady with patients experiencing
COVID symptoms. Early weekdays are the busiest testing days.

- April is Alcohol Awareness Month. *Safe Spring Fair* will be April 12 - 15 on the UC lawn from 12 - 1 pm each day.
- CAPS Doctoral Interns, Olivia and Savana collaborated with SGA to provide outreach on Mindfulness and Self-Compassion.
- CRW has been busy interviewing students for various staff positions.

- Jane attended the Compliance and Risk Enterprise Council meeting.
- Jane is serving on the search for the Vice Chancellor for Advancement position.
- Carol is serving on the University Graphic Designer search committee. They are inviting candidates for interviews.
- Carol attended the University & College Designers Association virtual conference on March 23 - 25.

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**Dean of Students**

- DSCE has officially migrated the *Responsible Computing* Workshop to Canvas. They also welcomed 4 new hearing board members.
- The Xi Sigma chapter of Kappa Sigma Fraternity is now a recognized student organization and member of the Interfraternity Council.
- ICA partnered with Campus Activities, to host the final Whee Lead speaker in the series.

**Undergraduate Enrollment**

- Admissions closed the application for first-year students for summer/fall 2021. High School students who wish to apply post-deadline will need to petition to seek approval ([admiss@wcu.edu](mailto:admiss@wcu.edu)).
- Undergraduate Enrollment directors (Trina, Brenda, Mike, and Josh) teamed with Marketing to host a live stream event in March: 133 views | 117 chat messages.
- Dr. Dana Patterson hosted mock interviews for the Lead 444 Capstone course.
- Ryan hosted a program on scholarships and how to pay for college for SCC Early College in Macon County.
- Orientation is awaiting IT approval on a Canvas course for parents and guests.

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**Student Government Association**

**Election Results**

- **Rebecca Hart**
  - 2021-2022 President-Elect
- **Susannah Lester**
  - 2021-2022 Vice President-Elect

**S.A.L.T.**

The Student Affairs Leadership Team met on Tuesday, April 6 via Zoom.
Nominate a Colleague

The purpose of the Division of Student Affairs Annual Awards is to recognize the work and contributions of individuals and programs that make our division exceptional. Please consider submitting a nomination for a colleague or program that exemplifies excellence. Nominations will be accepted through **May 1st** and recipients will be announced on **May 26th**.

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**Enrollment Update**

Beginning with the Spring 2022 term for Transfer and then Fall 2022 Freshmen, WCU is moving away from the 2-deposit system we’ve been using to one deposit. We plan to call it an “Enrollment Deposit.” There will no longer be a tuition deposit and housing deposit. It does not matter if a new, resident-credit undergraduate plan to live on campus or off. New first-year and transfer students will be required to pay the one fee.

If you have literature, websites, or electronic communication that refer to tuition and/or housing deposits, those will need to be edited. As with any transition, we are looking now to try and smooth all of those out. For the 2022 cycle, the AT and AH coding will not be used. Students will go from their A code to an S code, and you should not see any AT or AH stages once the transition has occurred.

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**WCU Parents Society**
In partnership with Student Affairs, Western Carolina University’s Office of Alumni Engagement is excited to present the WCU Parents Society. Western Carolina University’s Parents Society’s mission is to foster extraordinary relationships between the University and all WCU families. Western Carolina University’s Parents Society promotes and cultivates student success while engaging parents and families with the University. Throughout the year, Parents Society members will have the opportunity to host, attend, and volunteer at several events to improve student and family experiences, deepen family connections with WCU, and help WCU achieve its mission and goals.

If you have any questions or would like more information on the Parents Society, please contact Elizabeth Qualls, Coordinator of Affinity Programs, at equalls@email.wcu.edu or 828-227-3766.

2021 Family Weekend
Family Weekend will be held on September 18, 2021. Visit with families, enjoy campus activities, and cheer on the Catamounts as they face Samford in football. More information will be available on the Family Weekend website soon.
DSA IT Committee Update

Are you having an IT issue? Are you in a zoom meeting or on the phone and you can't call the Help Desk? Don't wait, why not browse the IT Service Catalog? Find the solution to common problems and reported issues as well as other helpful tips.

IT Service Catalog
arts, crafts &
STRESS RELIEF
April 23 | 1:00-2:30pm
Meet us physically distanced in Intercultural Affairs (ICA) in the UC!
Supplies will be provided, but you're welcome to bring your own.

Western Carolina University
Sponsored by Counseling and Psychological Services and Intercultural Affairs
SHOW US HOW YOU CLEAN-UP!

Between April 19-April 23, take a photo of yourself in your chosen location with the trash you collected.

Stop by the CRC front desk to show your trash collection photo. The first 300 participants receive a free t-shirt!

*Don’t forget safety protocols including wearing masks, social distancing guidelines, & washing your hands after collecting trash!

For more info: tuckcleanup.wcu.edu
I LOVE WCU

Leave a legacy of love on the Catamount Legacy Walk.

SHARE YOUR CATAMOUNT SPIRIT WITH A LOVED ONE!

Purchase a custom brick paver that will be placed by the Alumni tower. Donations to the legacy walk support the student emergency fund. To purchase using payroll deduction, or for more information visit:

legacywalk.wcu.edu
Social Wellness

THOUGHTS OF GRATITUDE
- Spend time thinking of the positives in your life. Then, write a gratitude note and send to that person.

CALLS OF LOVE
- Take some time to call a loved one to express how much they mean to you.

Scan here to access these technique videos!
Email Signature Generator

The University Communications and Marketing website team developed an email signature generator to create university branded email signatures.

Signatures can be personalized to include pronouns, cell phone numbers, or the last line of free text. Once created, the signature can be copied, pasted, and saved as your Outlook email signature.
Remember to visit the COVID-19 website for the latest campus updates and resources.

COVID-19 RESOURCES

Important Dates

April 23 - Faculty & Staff Excellence Awards
May 7  - Last day of classes
May 8-14 - Final Exams
May 14-16 - Commencement Ceremonies

Campus Events