To the Class of 2025:

I've never written a piece for the Nexus purely from my own perspective before. As a news reporter and editor, my voice is only behind the scenes. I take the stories and insights of others and share them with all of you, but I've never been a part of the story myself.

Now, as I enter my senior year at UCSB, I'm writing directly to you.

I'm Katherine Swartz, the editor-in-chief of the Daily Nexus, and a global studies and film and media studies double major. While the Nexus and school take up most of my free time, my other hobbies include discovering new hiking trails and spending way too much time at the movie theater.

This letter and mail-home print edition are normally targeted toward new freshmen and transfers, but I'm writing to so many more this year.

Sophomores and last year's transfers have yet to set foot on campus. Juniors have only been in person for two quarters of their time at UCSB.

So while this letter is meant for freshmen, I'm writing now to everyone who calls UCSB and Isla Vista their new home, not knowing much about what that home is like.

It's impossible to find a person among UCSB's 26,000-person student body whose life hasn't been touched by the COVID-19 pandemic in one way or another. Even though we weren't together, we all physically and emotionally lived through something that changed us.

Now, we're closer than ever to being "back to normal" (whatever that means). But we're not quite there yet.

As I write this at the end of August, masks are once again required for students, faculty, and staff. Most classes are in person, but many will be hybrid with some online instruction.

A lot can change between now and Sept. 23. It's impossible to know what's to come in the next month — and the months after that — as we head into the unknown of in-person learning. Those answers are out of our control.

But through it all, the Nexus' values remain the same. Remote or in person, the hundreds of writers and editors that make up our staff have continued working tirelessly to share the stories of UCSB and Isla Vista with all of you.

Our news team has been busier than ever tracking the spread of COVID-19 in Isla Vista. Sections usually reliant on in-person reporting, like Sports and Artsweek, quickly transformed their coverage for a remote setting. And Nexustentialism still brings us the satire we need more than ever, with headlines like "Despite Record Levels of Nostalgia, Campus Still Ugly."

For the first time in a year and a half, our doors are once again open! Stop by, pick up the paper and get writing. We need your voices now more than ever.

Even if joining the Nexus isn't for you, the best advice I can give you as you begin your journey at UCSB is to get plugged in. Find a club or other organization that fits your interests, and you'll make some fast friends along the way. There are hundreds of opportunities to get involved at a school as large as UCSB, so take advantage of it.

Keep your heads high, don't sit on the curbs and, above all, wear a damn mask.

Katherine Swartz
Editor-in-Chief 2021-22
eic@dailynexus.com
The forecast for today is hot and musty. The freshmen parading around campus donning tank tops and muscle tees don’t know how to properly apply deodorant yet, so be sure to dodge those suspect scents!

Tomorrow’s Forecast: Cloudy with a waft of Axe Body Spray plus a hint of garlic breath and unbrushed teeth.

Dear Incoming Students:

We are thrilled to welcome our first-year and transfer students to UC Santa Barbara! After years of hard work and preparation, you have reached this incredible milestone moment— the beginning of a lifetime of personal growth and intellectual adventure. We look forward to your educational journey with us, and to learning, exploring, and engaging together.

Over the past year and a half, you have faced many challenges and been called on to sacrifice significant rites of passage for the greater good of public health. Already you have impressed us with your ability to adapt to an evolving situation, and to find opportunities for growth amid the many changes. The upcoming academic year may still hold some unknowns for us in light of the ongoing pandemic, and we will all have to remain understanding and flexible amid a fluid situation. Despite the unique circumstances, we are eager and excited to invite you in to our university family.

At UC Santa Barbara, you are joining a strong campus community that values academic excellence and diversity. We are currently ranked No. 6 among the top public universities in the country by U.S. News and World Report. We are also ranked No. 9 worldwide for producing Nobel laureates in this century, according to Times Higher Education in London.

Paramount to the academic achievement and excellence at UC Santa Barbara is our commitment to diversity and inclusiveness. We are a Minority-Serving Institution, and the first member of the prestigious Association of American Universities to be recognized as a Hispanic-Serving Institution. Newsweek has ranked us the No. 1 Hispanic-Serving Institution in the country, and we are ranked by the New York Times College Access Index at No. 2 among the nation’s top colleges most committed to economic diversity.

As a university dedicated to educating the leaders of tomorrow, and learning from each other, we encourage one another to foster a community free of intolerance and discrimination, and to promote a campus climate that is respectful, civil, supportive, and safe. These core values allow us to provide a learning environment where we can all pursue our dreams and reach our highest potential.

My wife, Dilling, and I are proud and honored to have you at UC Santa Barbara. We cannot wait to start seeing you around campus in the coming weeks, and send you our best wishes for the upcoming fall quarter.

Sincerely,

Henry T. Yang
Chancellor
Anium Shuda  
San Bruno Arounagh  
Asst. News Editors

As universities across the country return to in-person instruction for the first time in March 2020, many are facing housing shortages—such as at Santa Barbara in no exception.

For the defunding and abolition of police from college campuses. Under Drake’s new plan, UC campuses will utilize a multidisciplinary team, including mental health professionals, campus police, social service providers, police accountability boards and other personnel so that the most appropriate responders are deployed to meet our community’s specific needs with tailored resources and services. “This integrated, holistic approach to safety and security is a significant cultural shift for UC, and one that will require all of us working together with open hearts and minds,” Drake wrote in the letter.

In addition to the multidisciplinary team, UC campuses will each have advisory boards and dashboards dedicated to “accountability and transparency” in how UC approaches campus safety.

“Those improvements do not represent the end of this conversation at UC. This campus–community-driven plan is designed to be a living document that we will continue to update and adapt together, taking into account the latest information and data,” Drake said.

Drake added that he asked “every UC employee, student and community member,” to join in the conversation at UC. This is a smaller group, this isn’t an entire UC community, including local roots, understanding of and support for the community’s basic needs. The Farmacy’s future Pardall Road dispensary, The Farmacy also ranked first in its neighborhood compatibility. For the community’s basic needs. The Farmacy’s future Pardall Road dispensary, The Farmacy also ranked first in its neighborhood compatibility. For the community’s basic needs.
The construction of UCSB’s new Classroom Building will continue into the 2021-22 school year. The building is set to operate with state-of-the-art digital media and design to facilitate a modern learning environment.

The building will increase the campus classroom seating capacity by 2,000 seats, or 35%, and will create an efficient, safe, and sustainable facility that serves the needs of the campus functionally and physically.
The University of California refuses to disclose information regarding Accellion data hack.

Sindhu Ananthavel  
Asst. News Editor

The University of California refused to release public records pertaining to the December 2020 data breach.

The hack, which targeted a vulnerability in the Accellion file transfer appliance used by the UC, leaked personal information such as social security numbers and personal addresses of students, staff, faculty and applicants across the UC system.

In accordance with California’s Public Records Act (CPRA), the Nexus submitted a request to both the UC Office of the President (UCOP) and UC Santa Barbara CPRA offices on May 10, 2021, asking for the offices to provide any and all internal university communication that discusses or mentions the UC Accellion data breach. Both parties refused to comply with the request.

The UCOP CPRA office responded to the Nexus’ CPRA request on May 11 and declined to provide records.

The office cited exemptions that “disclosure of the record would reveal vulnerabilities to, or otherwise increase the potential for an attack on, an information technology system or network” and that “public interest served by disclosure of the record clearly outweighs the public interest served by disclosure of the record.”

According to UCOP’s response, the university could not provide records as the integrity of the University’s IT security systems and to protect against future threats to gain access to systems by withholding the records.

The UC first acknowledged the attack on March 31 in a memo released by the UCOP that stated that the UC, along with other universities, had subject to a cybersecurity attack targeting the Accellion file transfer appliance (FTA). Students were first directly notified of the data breach on April 2 in an email sent by UCOP to the UC-wide community.

Frequently following the memo, the UC published a public release that asked students that personal information like social security numbers, student numbers and addresses from students, staff, faculty and applicants were exposed as a result of the Dec. 24 hack, and those whose information had been leaked were directly contacted on June 30 and July 1. Additionally, the UC was led to an FBI investigation and the Office of the President announced they were “transitioning to a more secure solution” regarding cybersecurity.

Those public statements from the university — the FAQs, the notice of breach and the emails sent to the UC community — are currently the only university-provided records regarding the hack.

Kelly Aviles, an open government and media attorney based in Southern California, disputed UCOP’s claim of public interest and the claim that disclosures of records would reveal vulnerabilities.

“I think they are exaggerating the security risk of disclosing information, and I think, it’s really important to keep from embarrassment about the breaches to begin with,” Aviles said.

“It would be highly unlikely that you had a data breach and that any information you disclose about the data breach could create problems. They could disclose information about the data breaches and what they’ve done to correct it without disclosing technical information that could pose that problem,” Aviles continued.

“All this information wasn’t disclosed before and they still have this problem, so it’s not like keeping things secret is the answer to preventing cyber attacks,”

The Nexus replied to UCOP on May 24, disputing the public interest exemption and asking that the office provide the records, but narrowly redact any documents that contain sensitive information.

On May 28, Public Records Act (CPRA)/Conflict of Interest (COI) Coordinator Dan Scannell responded to the Nexus, stating that both cited exemptions still applied as the university continues to “resolve the matter” and that due to the active FBI investigation, “the University is generally prohibited from disclosing certain records related to an ongoing federal investigation.”

However, Aviles says the latter exemption cannot be applied because the UC is not a law enforcement agency.

“CPRA differentiates between law enforcement agencies and what they can withhold and what non-law enforcement agencies can withhold when it comes to investigations,” Aviles said.

“(The requested information) may be relevant to the FBI investigation, but it is not their investigation. They’re doing an investigation to figure out what happened and how the data breach occurred, it’s not an investigation for legal prosecution purposes. I don’t think they’re correct in asserting that exemption.”

In the same email, Scannell said that “once the FBI investigation is completed and the IT security issues are resolved, additional records will then be disclosed” and said to submit a new request in several months. The UC has not yet communicated if the investigation is complete. The Nexus recently resubmitted the original CPRA request on Aug. 20 and has not yet received a response.

The Nexus filed a request to the UCOP CPRA office on May 20 and received a response on May 13.

Monica Dussert, the paralegal coordinator for UCSB, declined to provide records citing attorney-client privilege — an exemption protecting communication between attorney and client — and deliberative process privilege — an exemption protecting communication that would expose an agency’s decision-making process.

Dussert’s response stated, “much of the internal university communication would be attorney-client privilege communication.”

CPRA law requires agencies to conduct a thorough search in response to a request, and though Dussert’s response acknowledged the existence of responsive records, she did not provide enough information to confirm that a thorough search had actually been conducted.

The Nexus responded to Dussert on May 24, asking for a number of responsive records to be provided to confirm that a thorough search had been completed, even if said records could not be released. Dussert responded a month later, saying that they “have conducted a review of files and determined that any responsive drafts, sources, and internal communications regarding the UC Accellion breach are exempt from disclosure on the basis that they fall under attorney-client privilege and/or are part of the deliberative process.”

She did not provide the number of responsive records and deemed the records request closed.

Aviles maintains that the dispute is ongoing and that he has been specifically regarding the cost of the investigation to figure out what happened. “This is not an investigation, it is a ‘typical’ response but does not give them the right to withhold everything,” Aviles said.

Additionally, Dussert’s response stated, “much of the internal university communication would be attorney-client privilege communication.”

According to the CPRA Law, the University of California, which is currently undergoing a new file system transfer with enhanced security controls, declined to provide records to the Nexus.

In the same email, Scannell said, “We are in the process of transitioning to a new file system transfer with enhanced security controls, but during their May meeting, the UC Regents chose to not increase expenditures in cybersecurity.

Aviles said the decision to not invest more money is hard to justify with such a glaring lack of context, and adds that very reason that the university needs to provide records on a timely basis.

“Honesty would tell us what they’re investing is sufficient, but is it sufficient? That is the question. What was the failure and why was the failure happening? Is there something we should have information about how they’re handling this, so that students, the public and people affected by this can have a say about where they’re going forward.”

Aviles said.
Brand said that for the upcoming fiscal year, the LCSB has set aside money to study the planning and housing issue in I.V.

Brandy, who spent his second and third year at UCSB living in a garage with four roommates, said he is well acquainted with difficult housing situations in I.V.

"For years, students have been cramming more and more people into smaller and smaller spaces to make ends meet, and at the same time, rent seems to perpetually rise. This impacts people’s quality of life, their mental health, their academic performance and erodes the safety of our community as well," Brand said.

The housing shortage is personal for third-year communications major Devon Tumulak as well, who is still actively applying for available leasings in I.V. and is on the UCSB housing waitinglist.

"I feel like I’m occupying this strange liminal space, and I think a lot of people who are in similar situations can say that," Tumulak said.

As a student in the Disabled Students Program, Tumulak described the difficulty of finding places to live in I.V. that are wheelchair accessible.

"It’s pretty difficult to find places that are wheelchair accessible or handicap accessible, or at least having somewhere that is within walking distance of campus," Tumulak said. "My experience is much different because I have kind of recovered, but for people who have long-term disabilities, it’s much more difficult to find places that are accessible and close to campus."

Tumulak emphasized that the burden of not being able to secure housing due to miscalculations by the university should not be placed on the students.

"People shouldn’t be struggling to pay their tuition and also struggle with basic needs, it doesn’t make any sense."

Second-year pre-sociology major Alyson Solis has secured housing for the upcoming year but cited a multitude of issues within the housing search process. Solis is a financially-independent veteran student, which presents its own challenges to making an income that matches the requirements of renting a unit, she said.

"I’m a fully independent student, and you have to make three times the rent of a place, and it was a lot to try to make $4,500 a month as a college student just to pay rent," she said.

Additionally, the reality of most leases starting in June, instead of September, has caused Solis to be responsible for two leases, with her old lease not ending until August and her new lease having started in June. This has resulted in her paying $5,600 in rent for the past three months.

However, Solis emphasized that despite these difficulties, she is better off than some students who still have not secured housing for the upcoming school year.

"Even though I’m now in debt, at least I have housing, and that’s more than a lot of students can say now," she said.

To voice these student concerns, a petition was published on Aug 12 to UCSB, asking the university to provide adequate and affordable housing for incoming students this fall by possibly negotiating with nearby hotel chains. The petition had 1,729 signatures as of Aug 24.

The petition suggests that the university look toward hotels as a possible solution for housing incoming students that have nowhere else to go and asks people to sign "to place public pressure on UCSB to take action and negotiate affordable housing with local hotel chains."

The petition also references an email many members of the campus community received from the university administration that asks staff and faculty to house students if they have an "extra room in their home." According to the petition, it is the university’s only attempt at a solution to the housing crisis to date.

UCSB spokesperson Andrea Estrada confirmed that the university sent emails to the campus community asking them to house students in light of the shortage.

"As we have done in past years, we communicate with our campus community to explore options for students seeking housing accommodations," Estrada said in a statement to the Nexus.

Estrada added that the university is planning on maximizing campus housing and is "exploring several options to assist students who are facing a difficult time finding housing."

"These options have not yet been shared."

According to Brand, ultimately, the bulk of the shortage lies upon a “failure of leadership to provide an adequate supply of housing.”

"To be in a position where you have to choose whether you have in-person classes at the college you’re enrolled in, or you have to live in another part of California or take all your classes online, is not a decision that any student should have to make," Brand said.

The storefront, which accepts both state-issued medical marijuana cards and all 21+ customers, has received overwhelmingly positive reactions.

The storefront, which accepts both state-issued medical marijuana cards and all 21+ customers, has received overwhelmingly positive reactions.

"Everybody loves The Farmacy downtown. I think everybody’s gonna love The Farmacy I.V. It’s such a perfect fit," Farrar said. "This is our hometown. We’ve been out in I.V. for 38 years, and now to be able to show up and bring something to it, we’re excited about it."
Santa Barbara County COVID-19 Data Metrics

Santa Barbara County is seeing a rise in cases as the delta variant spreads far and wide, nationally and globally. As cases are on an upward trend once again, the Nexus compiled charts showcasing several aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic over the last 18 months in Santa Barbara County.

On Aug. 3, both the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (SBCPHD) and UC Santa Barbara instituted a mask mandate in response to the variant – in both public and indoor spaces, regardless of vaccination status. Isla Vista had a seven-day sum of 49 cases between July 30 and 31 – the first time cases neared 50 since last February. Since then, cases have been on the decline again, with a seven-day sum of 25 cases in I.V. as of Aug. 16. The peak of cases in I.V., however, was during the winter surge when I.V. recorded 31 new cases in a single day – Jan. 19. By Jan. 25, I.V. had reached its peak seven-day sum of 122 cases. Since then, with a few fluctuations here and there, I.V.’s cases had been on a steady decline until July of this year.

Within the 93117 zip code – which contains I.V., parts of Goleta, Gaviota, Naples and Capitans – 54.1% of residents are vaccinated as of July 20. This zip code has the sixth-lowest vaccination rate in the county. By contrast, Carpinteria has a vaccination rate of 100%, and on the other end of the spectrum, Casmalia and Antonio – within the 93429 zip code – have the lowest combined vaccination rate at 31.3%, according to zip code data from SBCPHD.

As for county-wide vaccinations, 61% of the county is partially vaccinated, while 54% of the county is fully vaccinated, leaving 8% of county residents having not yet received shot two of the two-shot vaccination.

Throughout the county, 50 to 64-year-olds have the highest vaccination rate at 87.1%. The demographic with the second-highest rate is 65 years and older at 86.4%. Individuals aged 18 to 49 have a vaccination rate of 66.3%, and 12 to 17-year-olds have a vaccination rate of 55.1%. In the beginning of April, 50 to 64-year-olds had a vaccination rate of 76.1% while 18 to 49-year-olds had a vaccination rate of 50.6% – a difference of 25.6%.

As cases begin rising once more, both the university and SBCPHD continue to work – both independently and together – to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vaccination rate of 18-49 year olds lags behind 50+ in Santa Barbara County

Santa Barbara County COVID-19 Vaccinations Through August 2021

On Aug. 3, both the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (SBCPHD) and UC Santa Barbara instituted a mask mandate in response to the variant.

Santa Barbara County Vaccine Rates by Zip Code

Casmalia and Antonio have the lowest vaccination rate, with only 31% vaccinated.

Santa Barbara County Vaccination Types

Source: California Health and Human Services Agency

Pfizer
Moderna
J&J

58% of administered vaccines
37%
4%

Pfizer Doses
Modern Doses
Johnson & Johnson Doses

300k administered doses
300k
300k

200k
200k
200k

100k
100k
100k
Transnational Italian Studies Major To Debut Fall Quarter

UC Santa Barbara's Department of French and Italian will debut the new transnational Italian studies major during the 2022-23 school year. The major is the first of its kind at any college in the U.S., according to the department, and is designed for students interested in a holistic approach to Italian culture.

Italian Studies Associate Professor Claudio Fogo spearheaded the development of the new major, with help from French and Italian Assistant Professor Stephanie Mafa Hom and Global Studies Professor David Moak.

The group developed various proposals for the Academic Senate and adjusted pre-existing courses to adhere to the major's new focus. Courses offered for the major cover subjects on cinema, organized crime and terrorism through a global lens.

"We wanted to offer a major in the humanities that would not force [students] to follow a demanding study of the language and would allow them to take in English — a course about the cultural construction of nationhood," Fogo said.

While a prerequisite for the major includes taking a year of Italian language instruction, the upper-division courses for the transnational Italian studies program are taught in English. Since some majors require a year of foreign language, Fogo said that any interested student should be able to enter the major if they wish.

"Having a major in Italian transnational studies is both a gesture towards the transnational paradigm as a new way to fight the dichotomy between globalization on one side and the nation on the other side," Fogo said.

In building the major, Fogo and his colleagues were granted approval for history and global studies courses in function as additional prerequisites to the transnational emphasis. While the major was designed with students focused on history and global studies in mind, the professors believe the major could attract a wide range of students.

"Naturally, we are hoping and thinking that this will appeal to and overlap with student work in neighboring departments in the social sciences," Moak said. "For instance, this would be a great major for people who are thinking of studying anthropology, political science, or international relations."

USCB currently offers an Italian studies major that focuses on giving students a deep understanding of Italian literature, cinema and overall culture. However, with a transnational emphasis, the new major aims to provide a specialization on Europe and the migration of Italian cultural artifacts into other parts of the world.

"If we think about the nation as this artificial construct that was born from the French Revolution, we can start to interrogate how the territorial understanding of a nation really doesn't apply in our current world where our borders are so fluid," Hom said.

One of the transnational Italian upper-division courses that will be taught by Hom is "Crime Italian Style," which looks not only at the creation and history of the Mafia but the transnational circuits of the illicit drug trade as well.

"It is important to see these political economies and cultural geographies in this respect because they are always interconnected and dependent," Hom explained. "This major focuses on those connections because Italy must be studied in relation to all of these other cultural geographies and political economies."

Through there are similar characteristics present in other major programs, Moak said this emphasis offers an innovative approach to the traditional scope of Italian studies.

"I want to emphasize that it is very rare in higher education in the United States to have people working on Italian literature and history in a holistic sense," Moak said.

"From personal experience, you can go through your entire undergraduate and graduate career without seeing courses on things like Italian national identity and national unification. It's usually a very fragmented, truncated version of Italian culture and history. This major is breaking out of that mold."

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Goleta Union School District Staff Vaxxed and Masked for 2022-23 School Year

The school district is using COVID-19 mitigation efforts and protocols such as air purifiers, hand-washing stations, health screenings and more to ensure that students and staff stay safe during in-person instruction.

Alice Zhang  
Staff Writer

Since March 2021, the Goleta Union School District has enforced safety measures across its nine school sites in order to resume in-person learning on a five-day modified schedule. As a new school year begins, the school district has returned to full in-person learning as of Aug. 18 while implementing additional COVID-19 prevention strategies.

The school district’s comprehensive COVID Safety Plan for the 2022-23 school year includes guidelines on learning options, health screenings, school meetings, contact tracing and layers of safety in the classroom.

Diana Roybal, superintendent of the Goleta Unified School District (GUSD) board, said that the school district’s plans will be revised and updated continuously based on the mandates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (SBCPHD).

The school district is following all state mandates for indoor masking and vaccination requirements for staff. According to Roybal, over 90% of staff are already vaccinated.

While COVID-19 screening was done at school during the 2020-21 school year, parents will now screen their children at home prior to bringing them to school.

"Parents should always check on their children to ensure that they are well enough to be in school. We trust our families to do the right thing," Roybal said. "Our staff members know the symptoms of COVID-19 and they will also monitor and refer children to our school nurse if there are any concerns."

Richard Mayer, UC Santa Barbara professor in the psychological and brain sciences department and GUSD Board of Trustees member, said that the district has worked to ensure that classrooms are safe for students to return to in-person learning.

"I am particularly pleased that we have been able to hire new teachers to allow for Goleta’s extremely low class size — now at less than 18 students per classroom," Mayer said.

Each classroom will be equipped with a medical-grade air purifier to increase ventilation, as well as sanitizing material like hand-free washing dispensers and hand-washing sites.

The district has also expanded the use of outdoor learning spaces through canopies and is maintaining grade-level cohorts to facilitate contact tracing, according to Mayer.

After-school care and learning experiences will be instituted at each school for families who need it, as well as independent study programs for families who do not wish to return to in-person learning.

"I am grateful for the guidance that we receive from health agencies that include CDC, CDPH and [SBCPHD]," Roybal said. "They are medical experts and because of their support, we are definitely prepared to provide GUSD students with a safe environment for learning."
The IVCSD Staff Operations increase by 56% in the 2021-22 budget.

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IVCSD Staff Operations increase by 56% in the 2021-22 budget.
hey!

It’s the 6-month trial for me!

prime student

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Isla Vista Food Not Bombs: More Than Just Meals, It’s “Basic Decency”

Etah Foster
Staff Writer

The Isla Vista chapter of Food Not Bombs, a global nonprofit volunteer movement that provides free vegan and vegetarian meals to locals, upped their production to meet demands heightened over the course of the pandemic. Food Not Bombs (FNB) serves meals in over 1,000 cities in all countries worldwide, and each chapter operates independently without a headquarters or official leadership.

The Isla Vista chapter consists of roughly 25 committed volunteers but is in contact with over 100 local community members for meal-making opportunities, according to Jonathan Dickstein, Food Not Bombs volunteer and doctoral candidate in the UC Santa Barbara Department of Religious Studies.

“Of the basic premises is that food is a right and not a privilege,” Dickstein said. “The idea is that everyone should be guaranteed food, housing and health care no matter who you are — young, old, drunk, sober or houseless. At the end of the day, our society should be guaranteeing the basic needs of the people.”

The chapter works alongside local businesses such as the Isla Vista Co-operative Food Store, the Ecovasina Co-operative and other local farmers market vendors to obtain produce and other food under the guidelines of the Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, according to volunteer Julia Leary.

“Every Sunday, we go down to one of the farmers market locations, and people buy the products and bring them to us,” Leary said. “We have a fridge, and we put all of the food in there.”

The community fridge, according to Dickstein, is also checked almost daily by FNB volunteers but is in contact with roughly 25 committed volunteers in different communities.

“I was a great place to meet people and bring your friends to hang out,” Bascom said. “Everyone deserves to eat and we all need a space to communicate and talk to others.”

These communal events came to a halt when the pandemic hit in March 2020. FNB was forced to adapt in multiple ways to the new environment, according to Dickstein, including temporarily turning away volunteers and transitioning to pick-up ordering.

But FNB didn’t stop serving food. They upped their services for two days a week to five after food. They upped their services for two days a week to five after food. They upped their services for two days a week to five after food. They upped their services for two days a week to five after food. They upped their services for two days a week to five after food.

“Last fall, we opened it up to more volunteers and we all need a space to communicate together so that we wouldn’t be alone,” Leary said.

FNB volunteers advocated on behalf of houseless community members displaced from People’s Park as a result of the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District (IVRPD) voting to transition the area back to its recreational capacity.

“We definitely were advocating for the encampment to stay open because everyone deserves a place to live,” Bascom said. “It is ridiculous that, as a society, we think we can decide what is best for these people and displace them on a whim.”

Dickstein acknowledged the importance in differentiating between being ‘homeless’ and ‘houseless’, noting the connotations behind both.

“Perhaps nothing sticks with me more than when Sumo Orschad was being cleared by IVRPD and one of the residents said, ‘Before I was houseless, and now I’m homeless’,” Dickstein said. “So many houseless people actually say things like, ‘Home is where the heart is’ and ‘Home is with family,’ and yet they still talk about unhoused people as ‘homeless’ and needing to be moved. But houseless people often live among friends and family and thus absolutely have ‘homes.’ They may not have houses, but they have homes.”

FNB’s role extends beyond just being a meal-service organization, functioning as a community resource and support system as well.

“Many of the ways in which Food Not Bombs has been involved in communities has extended beyond food,” Dickstein said. “We have very much tried to remind people that on a community-wide level, we’re doing it not like a soup kitchen, which are charitable organizations and operate on a very small scale. This isn’t charity. This is basic justice. This is basic decency.”

New Community Fridge Brings Free Produce to Isla Vista

Melea Maglalang
Staff Writer

On the corner of Embarcadero del Norte and Cervantes Road, a new fridge is open for all community members to use as a convenient source of food. The goal is for Isla Vistan to be able to both add and take food from the fridge, a model similar to book “lending libraries” that are gaining popularity across the country.

“The community fridge was founded by an Isla Vista resident and Food Not Bombs organizer, who wished to remain anonymous for privacy reasons,” Sada said. “Food Not Bombs is a community-led effort to help end food insecurity, providing free vegetarian and vegan meals throughout the area.”

With the help of volunteers from Food Not Bombs, Eco Vista and other community members, construction of the fridge began this past spring and concluded at the beginning of this summer. According to the founder, people are free to drop off and pick up food from the fridge as needed.

“The whole process of constructing the fridge — from picking the spot to moving it, building the shelter and painting a mural around it — was carried out by around 20 volunteers. The fridge is also checked almost daily by volunteers who clean and organize donations.”

First-year environmental studies major and volunteer for the project, Catrina Sada, believes the fridge is a step forward in “community helping community” and stressed that it is open to people of all backgrounds.

“A lot of people have this belief that if you’re getting something for free then you don’t deserve it. That’s not always the case,” Sada said. “But with the community fridge, it doesn’t matter your background, income status, job or really anything about you. All that matters if you want or need this thing, you can take it.”

Sada emphasized the importance of providing mutual aid and viewed the fridge as an example of such.

“When you’re giving someone something for free, it shouldn’t be an act of charity. When you pay your friend a drink, that’s not because you feel sorry for them. It’s not out of pity; it’s because they’re your friend,” Sada said. “I hope [the fridge] on a community-wide level — if the entire community of Isla Vista is like that — then everyone would help everyone.”

The fridge has received frequent donations from locals throughout the last month, as well as drop-offs from Food Not Bombs and Santa Barbara’s Local Harvest Delivery. Those wanting to participate in or keep up with the fridge can find more information from its Instagram page, @ivcommunityfridge.

“I’ve talked to people who don’t have access to refrigeration that are now able to regularly get fresh produce because of the fridge,” Sada said. “My friends love baguettes from the fridge, and I’ve talked to others that are thrilled to find snacks in it.”

In the future, Sada hopes to see the project expand throughout IV by adding a freezer to the current site, building more fridges, starting community pantries for dry goods and more.

“People come and go in Isla Vista, and even I might move somewhere else in a year,” Sada said. “But the fridge stays forever,” the founder said.

Food Not Bombs volunteer Julia Leary spoke to the history of houseless encampments in Isla Vista over the course of the pandemic.
Men's Soccer Back With a Bang

Garrett Harcourt
Sports Editor

UC Santa Barbara men's soccer is riding into this season off an unexpected success that they are hoping to translate into the Community Shield Game on Aug. 21. The Gauchos dominated this game with the first goal coming from a cross from sophomore midfielder Nemo Philipp into a dangerous area where freshman forward Sabedor Aguilar was able to tap it in. The second goal from the Gauchos came from a free kick from about 10 yards outside the box. Freshman defender Lucas Gonzalez went around the Westmont wall to beat the keeper to the far right corner of the goal.

The last goal of the game also went the Gauchos’ way as midfielder Ramos scored in this game via the free kick and had 2 other shots on target in the rest of the game. Although a freshman, Aguilar should be a force for the Gauchos this season as he is a product of the MLS team, San Jose Earthquakes academy. This academy has produced numerous players like San Jose Earthquake midfielder Tommy Thompson and Austin FC right back Nick Lima.

Another standout was Gonzalez, who was redshirted in 2020 due to an injury. He scored in this game via the free kick and had 2 other shots. Like Aguilar, Gonzalez was a part of the MLS LA Galaxy academy which featured former standouts like midfielder Efrain Alvarez and USA international Julian Araujo.

The final box score posted numbers all in favor of the Gauchos. The Gauchos managed to have 9 shots on goal in the match, along with 7 corners as opposed to 3 for Westmont. The schedule has grown more difficult as the year progressed, with UCSB scheduled to play against an always difficult UC Berkeley team on Aug. 29.

The Westmont game highlighted many standout players whose names fans should become acquainted to heading throughout the season. First off, Aguilar was a goal scorer in this game and had 2 other shots on target in the rest of the game. Although a freshman, Aguilar should be a force for the Gauchos this season as he is a product of the MLS team, San Jose Earthquakes academy. This academy has produced numerous players like San Jose Earthquake midfielder Tommy Thompson and Austin FC right back Nick Lima.

Another standout was Gonzalez, who was redshirted in 2020 due to an injury. He scored in this game via the free kick and had 2 other shots. Like Aguilar, Gonzalez was a part of the MLS LA Galaxy academy which featured former standouts like midfielder Efrain Alvarez and USA international Julian Araujo. Muntari is one of the more experienced players on the team, having been on the 2019 team that made the run to the final eight in the NCAA tournament. This could be his year to breakout like he did in 2019 due to an injury. He finished the season. Being from Bilbao, Spain, he most recently played for Santutxu FC, which is a part of the second-highest youth league in Spain.
With the dust settling on Lionel Messi's historic transfer from his boyhood club, Barcelona, to nine-time French champions Paris Saint-Germain (PSG), rumors of a possible move to Manchester City were favored, as a facilitator as a central midfielder and will offer some great depth to the squad along with versatile players like Marco Verratti and Héctor Herrera. However, Messi's loyalty to the club management and his desire for something new, Messi's loyalty to Barcelona remained strong, and he told the Barcelona fans he "did everything" in order to stay with Barcelona. Messi hit the market as a free agent and through a reunion with former Barcelona manager Pep Guardiola at Manchester City was favored, Messi seemed more interested in returning to the Premier League. Top Stuttgart defender Matthias Ginter was a target as he struggled to make an impact. Manchester City was an attractive option for Messi, who had been linked with a move to the Premier League in the past. The club's financial stability and the opportunity to play under Pep Guardiola, who was known for his attacking style of play, were key factors in Messi's decision. However, other clubs, such as Real Madrid and Barcelona, remained interested in signing him. Messi faced no competition behind him and plays that had long gains. The Rams came back to win the AFC South and set up a playoff matchup against their division rivals, the Cleveland Browns. The Browns shocked their opponents as they jumped out to a quick lead caused by turnovers and plays that had long gains. This defeat had a ripple effect on this season for Pittsburgh, as they decided to part ways with a majority of their veteran offensive line and replace them with younger and cheaper players. The Steelers also used their first-round pick on Alabama running back Najee Harris. The rookie running back has been placed on a team with little to no competition behind him and will get the volume in both the running and passing game to compete for Offensive Rookie of the Year. Many other teams also boast a large quantity of youth, such as the Miami Dolphins and the Washington Football Team. Rosters like these will strive to continue building their identities as they compete for playoff spots. Other squads, like the Green Bay Packers and Los Angeles Rams, opt for more veteran players in the hopes that going all in will win the franchise a Super Bowl. With many teams looking competitive to start the year, this NFL season looks to be an entertaining one.
As vaccination efforts continue to forge ahead in Santa Barbara, local arts and music scenes are cautiously reopening and welcoming community members back.

"We've been dark for just about 30 months," said Rick Boller, executive director of the Santa Barbara Bowl, the iconic outdoor amphitheater that normally plays host to more than 200 shows every concert season. The venue, which usually transforms from April through November, is condensing this year's schedule into about two and a half months, said Boller.

The Bowl is among the many performing arts groups who have been incorporating a variety of a capella groups, the nature of which centers around the use of voices without instrumental accompaniment. The Bowl is planning to present a series of performances that will include a variety of different genres, from classical to contemporary, with the aim of bringing people together and providing a safe space for everyone to enjoy live music again.

Father John Misty performs at the Santa Barbara Bowl on June 7, 2019.

Sundri Sridhar
Artsweek Editor

“Safety first,” exclaimed Boller, who also mentioned that he expects the Bowl to transition to a safer environment as more people get vaccinated. "We've been here 27 years on the same site," said Boller, "and it's like starting over, so we're really excited to get back into it."
In Review: “The White Lotus” Turns Problems Into Hit HBO Drama

UC SANTA BARBARA

Summer 2021

Dear Gauchos:

Welcome! We look forward to having you join our UC Santa Barbara community! The past 18 months have been challenging and our hearts are with you. As we come together in person, please be patient with one another. We are all reacclimating to an in-person university experience, but together, we can ensure that this a great year! As the pandemic continues to evolve, UC Santa Barbara will maintain its COVID-19 information site to keep students and their families informed.

Over the past year and a half, we have witnessed the many challenges of the pandemic. We’ve also seen xenophobia, increases in racist incidents against Asian-identified people, and the senseless killings of Black Americans that sparked protests and breakups of the “American Dream.”

UCSB also values respectful interpersonal interactions. This is more than a value; it is an expectation. There is no tolerance for sexual violence or assault of any kind, including sexual activity without fully informed, voluntary, conscious, and consensual consent. Any person who engages in sexual activity with someone who is incapacitated, non-consenting, or who is unable to give informed consent should be considered to be engaging in sexual assault.

As the semester begins, we hope that you will actively participate in our community and enjoy your time at UCSB. We look forward to welcoming you to campus in the fall.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Assistant Director of Admission

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**UC Santa Barbara COVID-19 Community Guide**

UCSB offers a comprehensive guide to community health and safety. Visit the website for more information.

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**UC Santa Barbara Campus Life**

UCSB offers a wide range of clubs and activities. Visit the website for more information.

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**UC Santa Barbara Athletics**

UCSB offers a wide range of sports. Visit the website for more information.

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**UC Santa Barbara Student Services**

UCSB offers a wide range of student services. Visit the website for more information.
It's Satire, Stupid.

A. Wiessas
Editor in Beef!

This last year and a half has been one of solitude and alienation, so it makes sense that many are looking for ways to connect themselves to their community. Here at UC Santa Barbara, many new students are proactively seeking out clubs and activities that will introduce them to new friends and to real Gauchohood. One incoming freshman has gone above and beyond in his efforts to find his fit on campus and has leaked his own sensitive information in order to find points of connection with those around him. "It was this mindset that led Enfaux to his decision to compromise his sensitive data," A. Wiessas says. "Many are criticizing Enfaux's move, predicting that he has likely caused himself a great deal of trouble down the road by leaking his information, but we at Nexustentialism see it differently."

Do you often find yourself utterly bewildered as to the function of everyday objects? Are you also disillusioned with the barren landscape of your fine institution? Well, you're in luck, because for the first time in over 50 years, we have a brand spanking new "Classroom Building" set to be unveiled in spring 2023! You may be thinking, "It's literally named 'Classroom Building'? What an ingenious name. I never could have ascertained the function of this building on my own!" And you're not the only student who feels this way. According to Chancellor Henry T. Yang, most UCSB students can't figure out why things exist and what they do. That is why this new building will not only increase our overall classroom capacity by over 33%, but it will also include practical accommodations such as "sitting chairs" and "talking podiums" in each beautiful new room. Gone are the days when you'd have to sneakily ask your seat partner what the function of the strange bright things in the ceiling are for, because this new building will include "illuminating lights" that will ease your mind once and for all. Sophomore Carly Stevens sees this as a great opportunity to familiarize herself with what things do. "I've never critically thought about things do. It's just kinda sucked," Enfaux said. "Like, there are so many ways I already felt separated from my classmates, I really didn't need another!" It was this mindset that led Enfaux to his decision to compromise his sensitive data.

As we all know the UC system's virtual security has gone above and beyond in his efforts to find his fit on campus and has leaked his own sensitive information in order to find points of connection with those around him. "It was this mindset that led Enfaux to his decision to compromise his sensitive data," A. Wiessas says. "Many are criticizing Enfaux's move, predicting that he has likely caused himself a great deal of trouble down the road by leaking his information, but we at Nexustentialism see it differently."

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One of my favorite things about living in Santa Barbara for the past three years has been the food scene. Food is very important to me (as you might imagine, coming from the editor of this section). I like to explore, I like to learn and I like to experience new things. Food has always been the way I do that, and the food in Santa Barbara has allowed me to broaden my horizons even more than I expected. With so many new people coming to Santa Barbara this year, I put together this little guide to some of my favorite places to eat, the places in Santa Barbara I could return to over and over again if my ever-shrinking wallet allowed such recklessness. Whether you are a newcomer to our community, or have been here for a while, I hope this guide is helpful!

Newcomer’s Guide To Eating in Santa Barbara

**Chace Duma**
On the Menu Editor

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### Breakfast

**Lilac Pâtisserie**
I’m gluten intolerant, so sometimes eating out for breakfast can be a little disappointing. A lot of the time, I’ll end up ordering only a side of bacon and potatoes and calling it a day, because I can’t eat pastries, pancakes, waffles, etc. However, that’s not a problem at Lilac Pâtisserie! Lilac is Santa Barbara’s only dedicated gluten-free and vegan bakery. Located downtown State Street, it’s a great place to swell up the first bite. I blow through their bagels, albeit slightly pricey, is fantastic! All bagels are handmade in their very own Lilac-brand beans, which you can buy if you feel like you could do it yourself better.

### Lunch

**Chilaquiles**
Plus, with 17 different meats to choose from, it’s going to be hard not to try something new every time you eat here. If tacos aren’t your thing, they’ve recently expanded their menu. Chilaquiles de colorado, mole negro... there’s going to be something there to scratch your itch for Mexican food.

**Cabana**
I am from a family that comes from eating rice. Our family gathers around the table as well, and if you choose to offer before dinner! It’s rather expensive, so maybe you should come from the editor of this section). I like to explore, I like to learn and I like to experience new things. Food has always been the way I do that, and the food in Santa Barbara has allowed me to broaden my horizons even more than I expected. With so many new people coming to Santa Barbara this year, I put together this little guide to some of my favorite places to eat, the places in Santa Barbara I could return to over and over again if my ever-shrinking wallet allowed such recklessness. Whether you are a newcomer to our community, or have been here for a while, I hope this guide is helpful!

### Dinner

**Sama Sama**
I have been here for a while, I hope you will enjoy all the oddities that the Funk Zone has to offer before dinner! Loquita is a tapas and paella shared-plate style restaurant, giving you the opportunity to explore all over the menu, which you’re going to want to do. Loquita’s menu perfectly summarizes what it is to eat in Santa Barbara: delicious, fresh seafood, beautiful produce, bold Spanish flavors and inventive food.

**Loquita**
It’s hard to pick things to recommend, as their entire menu is hard to enjoy, but here are my top three picks. First of all, the crispy rice salad is a must. If you watch “Chopped” and never know what they’re talking about when they’re fanning over the “texture” of a crispy rice salad and you’ve understood. Cucumber, mint, basil, lime, fish sauce, pork sausage, pickled onions and a fried egg with a beautifully runny yolk, all served on top of a bed of tasty, crispy, fluffy rice, create an ascidian, bright, technical lacework of crunches and umami blues. It’s tough to go wrong with the pan-seared octopus as well. I’ve eaten a lot of octopus and this was, by far, the best I’ve ever had. It is fanning over the “texture” of a crispy rice salad and you’ve understood. Cucumber, mint, basil, lime, fish sauce, pork sausage, pickled onions and a fried egg with a beautifully runny yolk, all served on top of a bed of tasty, crispy, fluffy rice, create an ascidian, bright, technical lacework of crunches and umami blues. It’s tough to go wrong with the pan-seared octopus as well. I’ve eaten a lot of octopus and this was, by far, the best I’ve ever had. It is
With California Heating Up, UCSB Researchers Study the Future of the State’s Fires

Sean Crommelin
Science Editor

Large and severe forest fires burn soil, kill off swaths of forest and leave a moonscape in their wake. With time, things return. Flowers bloom and small trees and shrubs may take root, blanketing the newfound abundance of soil. But, then, with luck and even more time, sometimes take root and begin their quest to rehabilitate the forest.

But the experiment, spanning even generations. In California facing a hotter, drier future, the road to recovery — or even the road to understanding what comes next at all — is fraught with uncertainty.

“It doesn’t just affect fire,” Reed said. “It also affects the ability of vegetation to recover from a fire. Climate affects how much vegetation you will have on the landscape and how productive forests are. And, of course, it also affects the water cycle,” said Naomi Tague, a researcher with the UC Santa Barbara Bren School of Environmental Science and Management.

Tague and Janet Chouteau, a research assistant at the Bren School, started this experiment in 2008 with his collaborators while leading the experiment in 2008. This program is one of the only long-term research, a necessity when one wants to uncover here are relevant to, you know, a broader kelp forest ecosystem and its nuances.

The kelp forest is a really amenable system, said Dan Reed, a research biologist and the deputy director of the Marine Science Institute. “I actually thought that in a couple of years, this stuck out to Reed. ‘This popular paper focused on the extent to which primary production in the system would respond to this canopy being torn out every year. For instance, the understory algae that live beneath the kelp are typically shaded by the kelp,’ Reed said.

‘Would they then be allowed to grow at a level that would capture all the light and basically compensate for all the production that is lost by the giant kelp?’

According to Reed, this is particularly relevant because of how a changing climate is anticipated to alter the frequency of severe storms that impact California. “The system shows that as the area warms, rain events will be less frequent. However, the events that do manage to barrage through the Santa Barbara coast will more often be severe, bringing with them large waves which are capable of tearing up kelp canopies.”

The researchers were able to monitor relatively large plots of varying kelp environments that ranged from the abundance of drift and understory algae. With this, they had a snapshot of the broader kelp forest ecosystem and its nuances.

With repeated disturbances, the researchers found that the difference between the experimental and the control plots, those whose canopies were cut and those whose were left alone, respectively, continued to grow. Understory productivity from algae was still high, even though the forests were left alone, respectively, continued to grow. Understory productivity from algae was still high, even though the forests were left alone after several years had not managed to equal the production in the canopy. ‘We hope that the processes that we are studying will be applicable to other systems,’ said Reed.

However, vast swathes affected by the Dixie Fire, for instance. The largest fire in the United States so far this year, the behemoth blaze has torn through over 700,000 acres of land across the Northern Sierra Nevada, some of which hadn’t burned in over 40 years. However, vast swathes affected by the Dixie Fire had already burned in the 21st century, including some 75,000 acres as recently as 2012 in the Chips Fire.

One of the core things that I do as a scientist is develop essentially simulation models that allow us to integrate both data and the conceptual understanding of how water and vegetation and climate interact,” Tague said.

“The kelp forest is a really amenable system for understanding of how water and vegetation and climate interact,” Tague said.

“But this takes decades, even generations. In a 10 years, we still did not see a leveling out,” Reed said.

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“The kelp forest is a really amenable system for understanding the ways in which the fire landscape transformed. ‘If everything kind of keeps on the same path, eventually you’re going to see this transition to more fuel-limited areas. However, there’s a decade or so where you have a lot of high fire severity,’ Tague said.

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Earlier this year, the University of California Santa Barbara was forced to reopen all nine campuses after two years away from in-person classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This upcoming quarter, this is exciting news, but an increase in stress has been observed. Over the past month in Santa Barbara County, there has been a significant increase in the number of breakthrough cases, surging from 50 cases per 100,000 residents to 70 cases per 100,000 residents. This rise has been attributed to the delta variant and the lowered efficacy of the Pfizer vaccine against this strain, with a corresponding increase in the number of cases among vaccinated individuals. This is an important reminder to continue practicing COVID-19 precautions, such as wearing masks, maintaining physical distance, and getting vaccinated.

Nathaniel Ramirez
Staff Writer

McKinsey and Company. While according to a study done by the American Psychological Association, in-person instruction, in addition to online learning, mitigates the negative impact of stress on students' mental and physical health. Since the pandemic is over, the risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19 has decreased significantly due to the high vaccination rate and the widespread use of masks and social distancing.

This sums up my experience so far—outside of class, I get to be my true self, at the empty void that is Zoom and Google Meet. I was not meant to be here, as I would rather be in the classroom with my friends, enjoying a good lecture and engaging in discussions. However, I still believe we have a responsibility to each other to get vaccinated (if you aren’t already), continue wearing masks and encourage your friends and family to do the same. Together, we can create a safe environment on campus.

Nathaniel Ramirez is excited to return to the classroom and hopes we can all have a safe and enjoyable return to campus fall.

Opinion
Thursday, August 26, 2021

Should Classes Be In Person This Fall?

Christine Tu
Staff Writer

In a month’s time, the yearly ritual starts again. Dorms that were previously filled with students who had been moved into new, notebook-filled rooms are now mostly barren of students who had started new classes the quarter previous. This doesn’t mean that students are not still staring at the now-empty void that is Zoom and Google Meet. For some, the future is unknown, and the need to continue the pandemic. A study by the American Psychological Association, in-person instruction, in addition to online learning, mitigates the negative impact of stress on students’ mental and physical health. Since the pandemic is over, the risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19 has decreased significantly due to the high vaccination rate and the widespread use of masks and social distancing.

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This sums up my experience so far—outside of class, I get to be my true self, at the empty void that is Zoom and Google Meet. I was not meant to be here, as I would rather be in the classroom with my friends, enjoying a good lecture and engaging in discussions. However, I still believe we have a responsibility to each other to get vaccinated (if you aren’t already), continue wearing masks and encourage your friends and family to do the same. Together, we can create a safe environment on campus.

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Thursday, August 26, 2021

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Should Classes Be In Person This Fall?
The Language of Liberalism

Syd Haupt
Staff Writer

Over the past year, I’ve watched a variety of terms go from tiny propositions to subjects of huge discourse that are regularly utilized by everyday people and mass corporations alike. You are likely familiar with some of these terms — “BIPOC” (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). Attempts at explaining “BIPOC” to my Japanese relatives ends with him simply blinking at me in confusion. My aunts were raised in an era where they were described as “colored” or “Oriental.” They’ve barely begun to grasp the new label of “POC” (People of Color). But would you look these 60-year-old women in the eyes and tell them they are wrong for not understanding and immediately applying the term “BIPOC”? Language evolves so quickly that it is a mistake to shun people simply because they fail to use a fleeting term, especially those with valuable insight to share, like my aunts, whose lived experiences in post-WWII America have shaped my understanding of racism.

Additionally, many of the people who belong to these minority groups are entirely averse to this language. For example, the term “woman” was proposed with the intention of including trans and genderqueer women. However, trans women are quick to point out that adding the “x” to women simply further alienates them by denying that they are true women after all. Rather than calling them by their deserved title, “women” the term “womxn” relegates trans women to being a sort of woman-tangent, never a “true” woman.

And perhaps the most glaring problem with terminology like this is that it is easy to stand up for trans women, people of color, homeless people, etc., often ends at this utilization of inclusive language. It’s a matter of taking a further step to fight injustice within laws and community spaces or to support local organizations that fight these problems. People seem to think that using this language is enough that they can stop there and then it puts them beyond racism, beyond sexism, beyond cancellation. Surely someone so woke as to refer to homeless people as their “houseless neighbors” could never do any wrong.

One prime example of this is a recent comment from President Joe Biden (which I, in my opinion, a deeply telling moment as far as understanding of human rights goes). In a July press conference discussing the importance of adults getting vaccinated, Biden was quoted as saying, “It’s awkward hard, as well, to get Latinx vaccinated as well. Why are they shy about Latinx? They’ll be vaccinated and deported.”

Is there anything that sums up the misguided and toxic politics more than those few sentences? Those phrases stereotypically demean an entire group of people mere seconds.

But one cannot deny that Biden really thought he did something. He took his inclusion of “woke” terminology to a shadow of what he was above racism — that everyone would accept his statement as truth, or at least as harmless, because he had done a 180. The brave Biden had integrated the internet into a real press conference, broadcasting it to the American households that would now be exposed to a new idea.

He did not even realize that he really has no right to use this terminology. As Biden has little experience within the Latin American community and no real background in social advocacy, this usage of the term does not feel earnest in the slightest. And, when used in tandem with overt prejudice, his words could be a backhanded condescending tone. Whether intentional or not, Biden has now not only weaponized a term whose original purpose was to uplift and empower. That’s the very problem with this language.

Because he utilized a fun little “woke” term, Biden felt no pressure to amend his statements or confront his racist way of explaining vaccination issues in the United States. He believed that he had provided an excellent answer to questions about U.S. vaccination statistics. He didn’t think about examining how these communities statistically have less access to vaccines or mentioning how mass misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine is rampant throughout the U.S. Yet, this is not completely faulty Biden brain machine cooked up (amongst many other good ideas) in favor of using force in dispersing this allegedly bombing Syria in February when no one asked for this. Even in the notorious 1994 crime bill that perpetuated mass incarceration.

Finally, it’s worth asking if some of these terms often originated in small communities who had extremely specific purposes for them. Unfortunately, these definitions have been significantly altered over time, largely due to the spreading of misinformation on the internet. For example, a 2020 article from Shape defined the term “fols” as being “used to specifically display inclusion of gender-queer, transgender and non-binary folks.”

However, back in 2014, the term “fols” was mainly utilized by grassroots organizations to designate “People organizing and theorizing in queer, trans, and other people of color.” This term has gone from highlighting community organization to being thrown around as a replacement for the already-genderless term “folks” in an effort to highlight one’s identity. The danger with this vocabulary is not merely that it needlessly excludes those who do not utilize it or that it excuses people from internal examination – it is that it robs the people they’re white to protect of language that was true to them. In modern-day mainstream, the internet has corrupted its original purpose.

This terminology is dangerous. It excuses people from examining their own possibly racist internal biases. It is so easy, within the left as people disagree about the value and usage of this new vocabulary. And much of its mainstream use is only that it is used in tandem with overt prejudice.

Rather than falling into the trap of obsessive theorizing about the language of liberalism, the left needs to come together and focus on what has always been the most important thing: Improving the quality of life for people around us with active action. Settling for words alone is, frankly, dangerous.

Syd Haupt couldn’t care less about the term “BIPOC” and seriously thinks everyone’s going to be much happier put towards donating to JTOWN Action and Solidarity.