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REFLECTING ON 2020

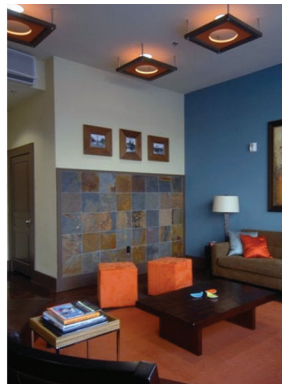
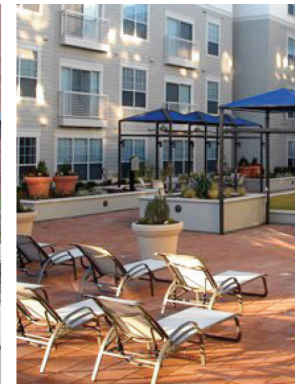
STUDENTS LOOK BACK ON THE
HARDSHIPS AND PIVOTAL
MOMENTS FROM THE PAST YEAR.

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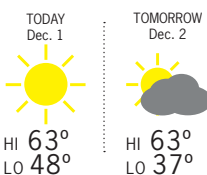
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AUSTIN WEATHER



in my opinion, everyone should be a little bullied

Dell Medical School students talk adapting to virtual learning during COVID-19

By Amanda Figueroa-Nieves
@amandafn02

Dell Medical School adapted safety protocols and teaching methods due to COVID-19 this year, leading to a different learning process for medical students.

Beth Nelson, associate dean of undergraduate medical education and professor of medicine and medical education, said the initial changes from COVID-19 were individualized to each year of medical school. Second-year students experienced the most disruption, Nelson said.

“(Second years) were doing what we call core clerkships, which are things like internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, OBGYN — things ... all doctors in training do,” Nelson said. “(On) March 13, they were only two weeks into the fifth out of their six clerkships that they had to complete. They stayed out of direct patient care until June 15.”

Third-year Dell student Elaine Ramirez was pulled out of clerkships in the spring. She said she had just completed a 28-hour shift on her surgical rotation when she found out about the disruption.

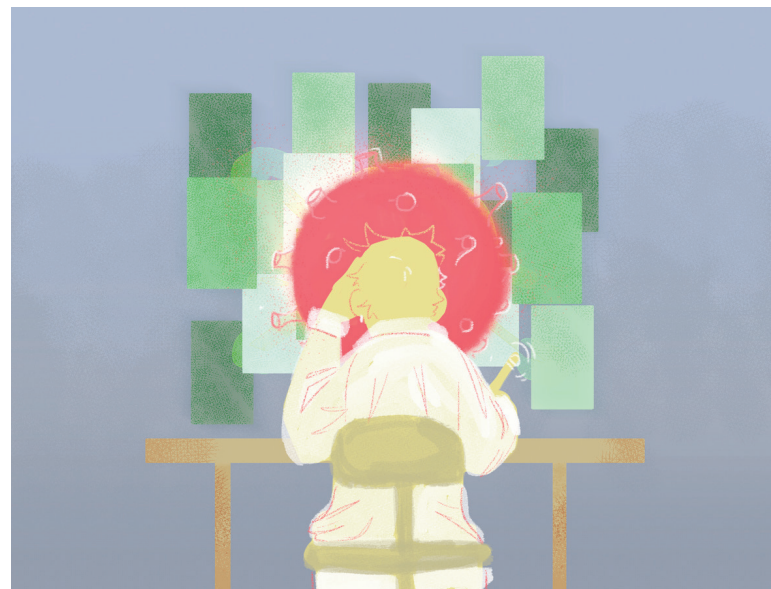
“We reverted to an online platform, like Zoom, to meet up with attendings who take their time to teach us certain topics that they normally would have taught us at the hospital or during a surgery,” Ramirez said.

Ramirez completed her sixth clerkship in June and will finish the surgery clerkship during winter break.

Third-year student Kaylee O'Connor had to finish her last clerkship in August at the same time she began working on a Masters of Health Care Transformation.

“There was more downtime (on surgery) than normal because they weren't doing any elective surgeries, so that was a bummer,” O'Connor said.

Nelson said first-year students



DESTINY ALEXANDER / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

complete a classroom-based curriculum, so they were able to finish their year virtually. Second-year student Maius Bianca Bermejo said during the spring, faculty listened to students and used Zoom well, but it was still hard to shift to virtual learning.

“At Dell, they design the building to be super interactive, so we have whiteboards everywhere, and we do fun group activities during our case-based sessions,” Bermejo said. “So that was a more difficult transition as far as logistics goes.”

Nelson said the new first-year class started off virtually but they began in-person, socially-distant learning in October.

“Since our class is small, we have the ability to have spaced-out and appropriate reduced numbers in our different classroom settings,” Nelson said.

Nelson said third-year students at Dell were working on dual degrees or research, so they followed UT's guidelines for their programs or research labs.

Fourth-year student Megan Lewis said she was working on her Masters of Public Health when the pandemic hit. Her spring coursework shifted to virtual learning, and she is now applying to residency programs.

“In normal times, it's an opportunity to fly over the country and interview at different programs, and that's been converted to virtual this year, so a lot of us spend a lot of our time on Zoom,” Lewis said.

Nelson said 50% of the fourth years had not finished the graduation requirements, so they participated in alternative learning experiences. The fourth year class was also looking forward to Match Day, a large event where they find out their residence programs, and their graduation ceremony. Both were done virtually in the spring.

“They were very well done and very meaningful, but not the big celebrations that you hoped for with an inaugural class of students,” Nelson said.

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New online dashboard projects COVID-19 risks for schools across country

By Kevin Vu
@KevinKek_

A new dashboard from the UT COVID-19 Modeling Consortium will allow families and school officials to estimate the probability of an infected case emerging at schools across the United States on a weekly basis.

Spencer Fox, associate

director for the consortium, said the team is an interdisciplinary group of researchers who develop models to assist public health officials, health workers and policymakers with decision-making during the pandemic.

The school dashboard was released in early November and will be consistently updated every week using The New York Times' daily data

set, which tracks the number of cases for each county in the U.S.

The dashboard will project cases at public elementary, middle and high schools in counties across the U.S., Frock said.

"(The dashboard) allows schools and families to think of their own risk tolerance and risk thresholds and basically decide

whether they think it's safe for the school to be open for interest in education at that time, or whether to send their kids to school at that time," Fox said.

Remy Pasco, an operations research and industrial engineering graduate student working with the consortium, said an earlier version of the dashboard was featured in The New York

Times to show the infection risks of schools across the country during the summer.

"There's been a lot of uncertainty, in general, of the role that children have in the transmission of the disease," Pasco said. "That was a way of helping ... anyone in charge, or even people who are concerned about the risk of opening schools, or parents (who) are concerned just to have an idea of what's actually risky, or when the risk is very low."

The consortium also has dashboards projecting hospitalizations in Austin and Texas, and projecting mortality in states across the U.S.

"What we had previously ... were projection dashboards, basically showing what we think the trajectory of the pandemic might look like in Austin, across different regions of Texas, and similar things for projections across the country," Fox said.

Biology freshman Kaylee Vu said her sister goes to school in-person and, though she attends a smaller school, she sometimes wonders if her sister will catch COVID-19. Vu said she thinks the dashboard will be especially helpful for those higher-risk counties who have more students attending school in-person.



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COLUMN

GIVE BACK STUDENTS' DINE IN DOLLARS

UHD should either return unused Dine In Dollars or let them roll over into the next year.

By Renee Gomez
Columnist

As economic distress becomes a prominent effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, many students are striving to save every penny.

Despite difficult times, University Housing and Dining has not changed their policy to allow Dine In Dollars to roll over to the next academic year or to be given back to students in cash value.

The University should allow unused Dine In Dollars to roll over into the next academic year or offer students a cash refund instead of just absorbing the extra money, especially during the pandemic.

Dine In Dollars are essentially money that can only be spent at various University food markets and coffee shops. Bevo Pay is a form of payment that can be used on and off campus. Bevo Pay rolls over and can be used by students the next academic year, but unused Dine In Dollars do not extend.

Students who live in University housing often buy Dine In Dollars alongside their housing, assuming that they will spend all of the money they put into their Dine In Dollars bank account.

However, as COVID-19 continues to hold UT hostage for much longer than most expected, it seems as though many students would much rather be reimbursed for their unused Dine In Dollars than have them given back to UT.

Journalism freshman Julia Mahavier sees UT's stinginess regarding Dine In Dollars as a red flag that future students should be wary of.

Mahavier, who got coronavirus earlier this academic year, has experienced both the financial and physical stress COVID-19 puts on freshmen as



JUWON YOO / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

they grapple with what is and is not worth spending money on. She wishes UT would be more sympathetic toward her and other students in her position.

"I think it's only fair, like to me, it doesn't make sense why they wouldn't let it roll over," Mahavier said. "It's almost like deceiving, and it ends up going back to them anyways because you don't use it. So it's almost like, 'What's the point then?'"

Mahavier, and many students like her, doesn't really understand exactly what the University has to gain as far as student relations when it comes to giving students back their money.

"Are you trying to deceive your student body or do you

actually mean it when you say that you value us and we're not just a price tag, we're a student," Mahavier said.

Director of Dining Rene Rodriguez said there is no sure way to give students the Dine In Dollars or let them roll over to the next academic year, as Dine In Dollars are a part of the meal plan as a whole, and there is no dollar-to-dollar ratio between U.S. dollars and Dine In Dollars.

According to Rodriguez, the UT meal plan is designed like this in order to complement the housing experience, and if students do not house with UT next year, they do not get the luxury of having meal plan benefits, such as Dine In Dollars.

However, Bevo Pay rolls over regardless of if a student lives on campus, and students can also request their money back in U.S. dollars when they graduate. Dine In Dollars should follow that example. Additionally, if Dine In Dollars are a luxury given to students with housing, students should still be able to use these dollars if they have housed at UT in the past. Denying them this money is unfair, especially during a financial crisis fueled by a pandemic.

Students paid for these Dine In Dollars, and they should be able to use them or get a refund regardless of their housing.

Gomez is a journalism freshman from Lewisville, Texas.

GALLERY



CHARLIE HYMAN / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

UNIVERSITY

Dell Medical, LBJ Schools offer dual degree

By Athena Hawkins
@athenahawkins

Dell Medical School students will have the option to earn a dual degree in medicine and public affairs starting next fall, according to a Nov. 16 press release.

Dell Medical School and the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs are partnering to offer the dual degree as the coronavirus pandemic impacts public policy decisions. The dual degree program, which is currently accepting applications for fall 2021 through Dec. 15, will allow medical students to earn a Master of Public Affairs in addition to their medical degree in about four years.

Elizabeth Nelson, associate dean of undergraduate medical education, said while the timing seems appropriate, the two schools have been talking about the new degree program for several years.

"While the timing seems ideal to explore the public

policy implications of COVID, this was not the reason the degree program was developed," Nelson said in an email.

Second-year medical student Cole Martin said while students discuss political implications of health issues from day one at Dell Med, the dual degree program could give students better formal training on writing policy, interacting with politicians and advocating for health care issues.

In their third year, which is known as the "Growth Year," medical students choose to either complete an inquiry project or obtain a dual degree in addition to continuing their clinical practice in medicine.

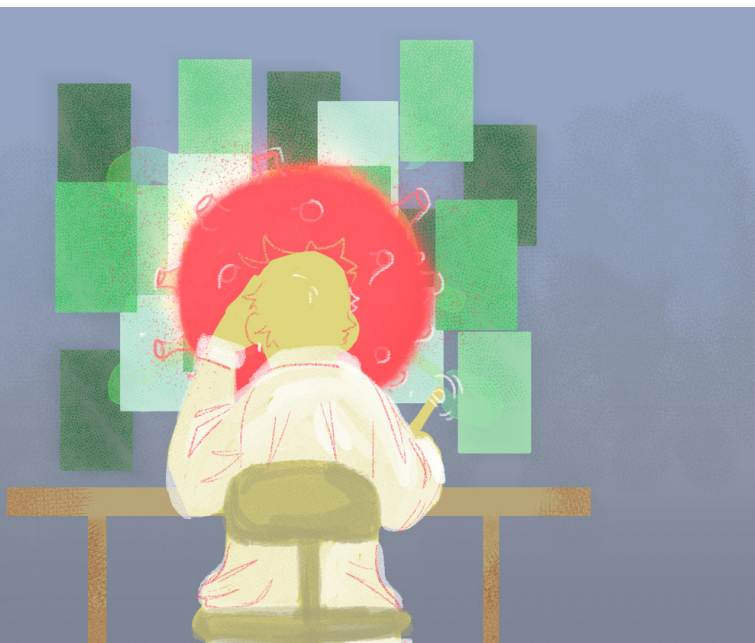
"The Masters of Public Affairs program is an amazing opportunity for students who are passionate about affecting real change in health care during their careers to really dive deep into how that process works and get real-world experience in political advocacy," Martin said.

According to Dell Med's website, the "Growth Year" experience shows Dell Med's commitment to training future physicians.

"Many of our students apply to DMS because of their interest in community health and advocacy," Nelson said. "They want to be engaged in changing the system and one way to do that is through policy change."

Martin Luby, the LBJ School associate dean for academic affairs, said over 20 students attended information sessions on the Masters in Public Affairs dual degree before it was approved.

"The changing landscape of the modern health care system and the accelerating needs of health care to all our citizens necessitates that we train physician leaders in the various aspects of public policy from its development to implementation to evaluation," Luby said in an email.



BARBRA DALY / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

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STUDENT LIFE**A LETTER TO FUTURE GENERATIONS**

Students reflect on the past year's events and why 2020 has changed their lives and their futures.

By Lauren Castro
@laurncastro

Dear future generations, By the numbers, 2020 saw 267,946 COVID-19 related deaths, more than 15 million participants in Black Lives

Matter protests, record voter turnout and 22 million jobs lost. And that's only the half of it.

When you read about '2020' in your history textbook, five UT students want you to know what it was really like.

Blake Motl

"Throughout March and April, that was probably the most depressed I had been in my life," finance junior Motl said.

Motl said he has been back home in Allen, Texas, since campus closed and the state went under lockdown in early March.

"There was one point where I sat in my room for probably two weeks straight just because there really wasn't anything I could do," Motl said.



Left: Motl has been back home in Allen, Texas, since the state went under lockdown in early March. Right: Blake Motl poses for a photo with his girlfriend with their masks on at her mom's wedding.

PJ Chukwurah

"(This year has brought) protests, police brutality, systemic oppression and inequality," business management junior Chukwurah said. "We still have to fight. Electing Joe Biden is progress, but that's nowhere near enough."

Chukwurah said that this year he has learned that the fight for equality for women, minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals and BIPOC is not over.

"I'll be real — I don't feel safe around the police," Chukwurah said. "I get PTSD. I'm a Black man and a lot of Black people feel that way. We can't be satisfied. We still have to work for change."

While some learned about social injustices recently through the news and social media, Chukwurah said this isn't new information to him.

"(The) one thing I'm passionate about is just marching for change and systemic oppression because it's always been a problem, and we can't let it die down," Chukwurah said. "We can't go back to normal because there's not a normal for people like me."



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PJ Chukwurah works out with his mask on.



COPYRIGHT BLAKE MOTL, AND REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION



COPYRIGHT GRACE HORNUNG, AND REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION

Above: Grace Hornung's high school had a socially distanced graduation because of COVID-19.

Right: Hornung took a photo during her Zoom call with her sorority members.



Gracie Hornung

"I don't think you'll ever be able to cram into a textbook how tired everyone is and just how rough this (year) was for so many people," biochemistry freshman Hornung said.

Over the summer, Hornung said she felt like the news was repetitive and never-ending — switching back and forth between COVID-19 and protests across the country.

"It kind of felt like 'Groundhog Day,' where you were just living the same day over and over again," Hornung said.

She said she was "constantly trying to be on the right side of history." She recalled elementary school, when she wrote a report on what her parents were doing on Sept. 11, 2001. One day, she said her children or grandchildren may ask her where she was and what she was doing during the pandemic.

"You want to (be able to say), 'I stood up for what was right,'" Hornung said. "I watched out for my fellow Americans. When the news (said) to stay home (and) wear your mask, I did that because it was the right thing to do."

Jackie Cheng

"We're starting to see more struggle for racial equality — not only here in America, but also around the world," said Cheng, a sociology and international relations freshman.

In the midst of a turbulent presidential election and calls for racial justice, Cheng said this year has led her to have more conversations about politics and social justice.

"I found myself thinking, 'Oh my (gosh), I can't believe

this ... just why?'" Cheng said. "Why wouldn't you want everybody (to) achieve more equity? We're all just people."

Cheng said she's tried to have conversations with her family about her beliefs, and she has often left them feeling overwhelmed.

"That feeling of when you recognize someone's too far gone and nothing you say will change their mind," Cheng said. "Just seeing that hate emanating from a person (is hard)."



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Many items were out of stock at grocery stores in early March because of COVID-19.



Kerry O'Malley Gleim

"Class has definitely been a lot harder, just staring at my screen all day," said O'Malley Gleim, an international relations and global studies sophomore.

O'Malley Gleim is a resident assistant and said it was hard to work, live and go to school in the same space. O'Malley Gleim, like many others, did the semester entirely online as more than 75% of classes were

taught virtually.

O'Malley Gleim tested positive for COVID-19 in July. While she has since recovered, she said she still feels the mental and physical ramifications of the virus.

"I don't smoke or anything like that, and it feels like I've kind of been a smoker for a good amount of time now that I've had it, which is really kind of scary and weird," O'Malley Gleim said.



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Above: Kerry O'Malley Gleim stands in front of the Capitol at the 2020 Austin Women's March.

Left: Kerry O'Malley Gleim attended a Zoom baby shower for her cousin.

Lessons Learned

In a year of disease, political divisions and protests, 2020 has taught students a lot, but one lesson stuck with them: resilience.

"The fact that we all (got) out to vote and did our civic duty ... after all we've been through this year, after everything that's happened," Chukwurah said. "People are still trying their best to make our society a better place and that's what I think is most important. After all this, (we're) not giving up."

Hornung said it's important

to be kind to yourself, whether it's forgiving yourself for not being overly productive or taking a break from checking the news.

"I realized ... being positive doesn't really mean being happy and smiling all the time, (but) means letting yourself have dark, really bad days but knowing that it can't always be dark and bad forever," Hornung said "And that sometime soon, it won't be that bad anymore."

Sincerely,

Kerry O'Malley Gleim
Jackie Cheng
Blake Motl
Gracie Hornung
Chukwurah

COVID-19

Students stay with friends, roommates to celebrate Thanksgiving holiday during pandemic

By Grace Robertson
@gracearobertson

This year, Sydney Slocum spent Thanksgiving in her West Campus apartment, eating turkey from Luby's and gluten-free pies with her roommates.

Slocum was supposed to spend Thanksgiving with her mother's side of the family in New Mexico, but on Nov. 20, hours before she was planning to leave Austin, one of Slocum's roommates tested positive for COVID-19.

"We all realized we have to quarantine and self-isolate," biology sophomore Slocum said. "We were like, 'I guess we're just staying here, then.'"

In light of COVID-19, Slocum

and other students studying far from their hometowns stayed in Austin this Thanksgiving.

A few days before Thanksgiving, Slocum and her two other roommates also tested positive for COVID-19. Even though one of her roommates couldn't taste or smell, they still wanted a traditional dinner.

"No one really wanted to cook that turkey, so we just ordered in," Slocum said. "One of my roommates whose parents live in Austin dropped the food off for us."

They ate a full Thanksgiving spread in their living room of turkey, mashed potatoes, corn, yams, rolls and stuffing. After their meal, they solved puzzles

together and finished off the night watching "Freaky Friday" and "The Parent Trap."

"It's definitely a Thanksgiving that none of us will forget, but we made the most of it," Slocum said.

Slocum wasn't the only student who spent Thanksgiving far from her family. Going home wasn't an option for many international students.

Accounting junior Iris Liu, an international student from China, said it is too difficult for her to travel.

"Right now, there's a lot of regulation from the Chinese government," Liu said. "We have to have two tests within 48 hours before our flight, and the price of the ticket is so expensive."

While she wasn't able to see her family on Thanksgiving, Liu didn't spend the holiday alone. She stayed with a friend's family for Thanksgiving.

"She has a really big family, so we just hung out in her room," Liu said.

They ordered Chinese and Korean food, including fried chicken and hot pots. Liu said they played poker, Mahjong and entertained their friend's 4-month-old Shiba Inu puppy.

Even though she said it's hard knowing she won't be able to see her family until the summer, Liu said being with her friends helps.

"The only thing we can do to deal with homesickness is spending time with our friends," Liu said. "Friends are like family members for us here."

Urban studies junior Kit Hagin said keeping himself and his girlfriend safe was a



COPYRIGHT SYDNEY SLOCUM, AND REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION Laila Cook, Gabby Colon, Sydney Slocum and Kiara Crean spent Thanksgiving together in Slocum's West Campus apartment this year after she and her roommates tested positive for COVID-19 before the holiday.

large factor in his decision to stay home.

"My sister was positive (for COVID-19) a couple of weeks ago, and (my family) is gathering, but I just didn't feel comfortable going," Hagin said. "I have mixed feelings, and I want to be going, but at the same time, I want to hold myself accountable."

Instead of going to see his family who live in Austin, Hagin spent Thanksgiving with his girlfriend in their apartment playing

with their cat and eating mac and cheese and pumpkin pie.

Now, Hagin and his girlfriend are planning on making meals to donate to the Austin Free Fridge Project every week until Christmas, a tradition he grew up with. He said although it's hard to be away from his family during the holidays, it's worth it to keep everyone safe.

"I want to be able to go to next Thanksgiving, and it takes sacrifices like this," Hagin said.

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FOOTBALL

HERMAN FOCUSED ON GAME, NOT JOB

A heartbreaking loss to Iowa State knocked Texas from the Big 12 Championship race.

By Stephen Wagner
@stephenwag22

Tom Herman said he doesn't have an answer for why Texas fell short to Iowa State for the second-consecutive year Friday, or why the Longhorns haven't lived up to their annual

expectation to compete in the Big 12 Championship game.

During a teleconference Monday, the fourth-year Texas head coach said any reason he gives would come off as an excuse. He isn't worried about national rankings or his team staying focused against Kansas State despite being out of the Big 12 Championship race.

"We're still fighting for some really good bowl games, we're fighting for a really, really good record, and we're fighting to give the seniors an opportunity to go out with four-straight winning seasons, and hopefully four-straight bowl game wins as well," Herman said. "(We) wiped the tears from our eyes, picked ourselves up, dusted ourselves off and got back to work yesterday."

Herman said he isn't

thinking about his job security, either, or if he can find a suitable replacement for junior left tackle Sam Cosmi, who announced Sunday that he would forgo Texas' final two games to prepare for the NFL Draft. Who suits up Saturday will depend on the health of senior center Derek Kerstetter, who is listed as "questionable" with a high ankle sprain for this week's matchup against the Wildcats.

Even with two games left, Texas doesn't have much to play for the remainder of the season. Saturday's 23-20 loss to the Cyclones guaranteed Iowa State its first-ever Big 12 Championship game appearance and condemned the Longhorns to finish with fewer than 10 wins for the 10th time in 11 years. The only remaining hope Texas has to still qualify

for the conference championship game is if Oklahoma loses its final two games against two-win Baylor and unranked West Virginia.

Herman said Texas didn't reach the program's standard of competing for a conference championship this season, although the team was a matter of inches on a missed field goal from potentially saving its season on Friday.

"The standard should be what I always have expressed it to be, which is to be in the conversation and to be competing for conference championships in the months of November and December," Herman said. "We were there this year, we were there four years ago, and this year we came up three points short."

Herman said after Friday's

loss he believes the program is in better shape now than when he took over four years ago, although he said he doesn't necessarily "know the measurement of better." He'll leave it "for everybody else to decide how much better" the program is now than it was when he took over in 2017.

Herman said his only worry was preparing his team for their trip to Manhattan, Kansas.

"I'm extremely focused on beating Kansas State, not worried about winning my way out of anything, not worried about dyes or being cast or anything like that," Herman said. "We are full steam ahead in preparation mode to try to win a conference game and give these seniors a fourth-straight winning season."

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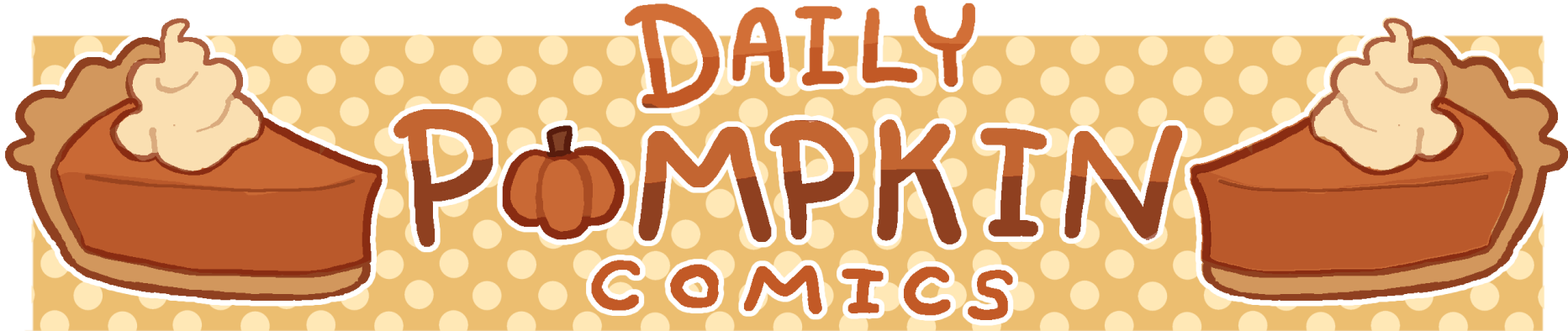
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JACK MYER / THE DAILY TEXAN FILE

Texas head coach Tom Herman addresses the media on Nov. 18, 2019, just two days after losing to Iowa State 21-23. Herman refused to speculate about his job security Monday after a crushing loss.

DAILY PUMPKIN COMICS



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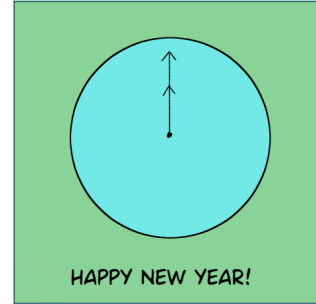


"3 P.M."

Steph S.

NEW YEAR, NEW ME

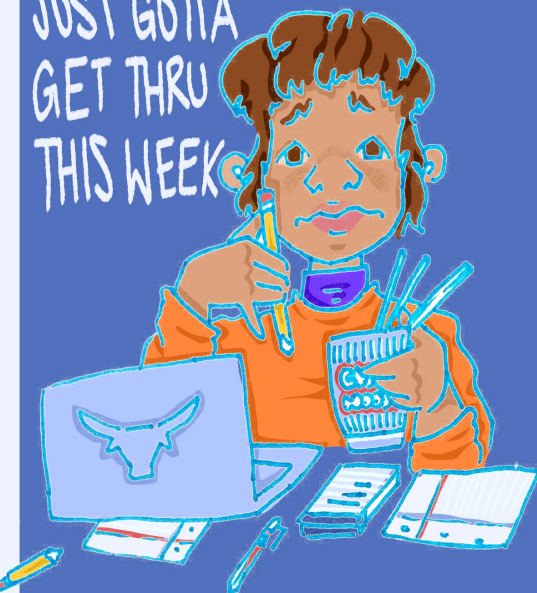
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WOMEN'S TENNIS

Stearns becomes Texas legacy in freshman year on tennis team

By Vicente Montalvo
@texansports

Peyton Stearns was one of the most sought-after tennis recruits during the 2020 recruiting cycle, but family ties to the University helped lead her to Texas.

While the freshman hails from Mason, Ohio, her mother Denise Stearns is a UT graduate.

"When I was being recruited, deep down, I think she really wanted me to go to Texas, but she did her best not to show it," Peyton said. "When I chose Texas, I think she was really happy, but she definitely didn't try to influence me in any way. She wanted it to be my choice."

Although Texas holds a special place in Denise's heart, she knew that the decision to go to her alma mater was Peyton's.

"I love UT, and I loved UT when I went there, but I want my kids to make their own choices," Denise said. "I've tried to stress to her, and she got it, that you go where people care and where you're going to get the best out of it. Not a facility but more the people there."

Denise feels comfortable with the environment that head coach Howard Joffe has created at Texas because she saw it firsthand. She can recall tournaments where she was impressed by Joffe and his coaching style.

When Peyton signed with Texas, Joffe understood what a momentous occasion it was for the program.

"Not only is Peyton one of the top recruits in the nation, but the way she handles herself, her values and her drive embody everything that Texas

Athletics is about," Joffe said.

Peyton's performance at the ITF Tyler 80k Tournament now has her ranked No. 463 in the World Tennis Association rankings, which is the highest rank she has held in her career.

However, she is adjusting like every other freshman at UT, having to make choices by herself like she did when choosing colleges.

“

I'm planning on playing professionally, but while I'm here at Texas I want to represent, (and) I want to win for the team.”

PEYTON STEARNS

UNDECLARED FRESHMAN

"I have to make my own decisions throughout most of my day," Peyton said. "That's really been the biggest change for me coming here, but it's definitely made me more independent, which is a good thing."

Peyton has found a home in Austin surrounded by encouraging teammates who are ready to cheer her on.

"COVID has definitely put a limit on a lot of things but the team is awesome," Peyton said "I got really lucky coming here. The whole team is supportive."

Denise said she is eagerly awaiting



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Freshman tennis player Peyton Stearns braces for a shot during a win at the IFT Tyler 80k Tournament Oct. 26.

the opportunity to see her daughter compete for Texas in person.

"I can't wait to go down and watch her play a match," Denise said. "That's the best part of college tennis is the screaming and yelling. I'll be the soccer mom, the loudest one out there."

One of the biggest differences between competing at the collegiate level for Peyton is playing for something more than herself.

"You have more than just yourself on the line. It's your whole team," Peyton said. "Honestly, I think it kind

of kicks that extra gear in the back of your mind."

Even though Denise is a Texas graduate, Peyton is looking to leave a lasting legacy on a University that now has an even deeper meaning in her family.

"I'm planning on playing professionally, but while I'm here at Texas I want to represent, (and) I want to win for the team," Peyton said. "In the spring, we are going to be getting some really good players in and honestly, I think we can win this thing."