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DT

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TUESDAY, FEB. 9, 2021

UTPD creates mental health crisis response team



Studies show extra training doesn't lead to decreased use of force.

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Austin City Council votes to separate forensics lab from APD

By **Tori Duff**
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The Austin City Council voted to separate its forensics lab from the Austin Police Department last Thursday, a move that the council hopes will create more efficiency in evidence testing.

APD's budget will transfer \$11.9 million and 86 full-time positions in the lab to the Forensic Science Department to support the change.

The lab will maintain the same functions as before, but the change is

expected to ensure a more timely processing of evidence and a better allocation of funds that will allow for more well-trained staff, law professor Jennifer Laurin said.

The Texas Department of Public Safety took over APD's crime lab in 2017 after a state audit showed the police-run lab failed to adopt nationally recognized testing guidelines and mishandled evidence, according to the Austin Monitor.

After the shutdown, a

CITY



CHLOE PERTUIT / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

backlog of over 4,000 untested rape kits accumulated, causing outsourcing to other states and labs, according to KXAN. Austin City Council member Greg Casar said the city council hopes the shift to a scientist-run lab will help prevent this from happening again.

"We must prevent rape kit backlogs, prevent inaccurate science that impedes justice and avoid further failures of accountability," Casar said. "This move has been a long time in the making, and it's because of survivors and advocates that we are able to take this step forward."

Laurin, who studies regulating forensic science, said that objectivity in producing evidence is essential.

"It is important for scientific evidence to truly be produced and supervised by individuals whose ultimate commitment is to scientific integrity and the scientific method, rather than ultimate commitment to law enforcement or crime

fighting," Laurin said.

Kelly White, co-CEO of the SAFE Alliance, an Austin advocacy group for survivors of sexual violence, said it is best practice for forensic testing to be separate from APD.

"This change will create transparency and provide additional answers to survivors by removing unnecessary layers of oversight," White said. "It is best practice to have the forensic testing separated from investigations. ... My hope is that this change will mean that survivors feel heard."

Laurin also said this shift in administration will help ensure the lab is not underfunded since it is no longer a piece of APD's larger budget.

"One thing that we've seen in crime lab scandals ... is that the crime laboratories were clearly underfunded, they clearly lacked adequate equipment, they lacked adequate in-service training, they lacked adequate salaries to attract well-qualified individuals," Laurin said. "Part of the reason for this is

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"i'm not a fan of the passage of time"

UNIVERSITY

UT expands PCT operations

UT will offer Proactive Community Testing at locations around Austin by the end of February.

By Lauren Abel
& Lauren Womack
@laurena0324 @laurenjwomack

The University's Proactive Community Testing program is expanding to include mobile sites located around Austin to increase access for students.

Austin City Council voted last week to authorize the University to use parks and libraries to administer COVID-19 tests to faculty, staff and students. Currently, Proactive Community Testing is only scheduled to take place on University property and certain mobile testing sites in West Campus, such as Texas Hillel. The City Council proposed to expand the PCT areas to places such as Patterson Neighborhood Park, Adams-Hemphill Neighborhood Park and four possible Austin Public Library branches.

"This allows for UT to do its testing in these sites in part so that it's happening outdoors and in areas of the community to make it more accessible to people who need that," said Kathie Tovo, District 9 council member.



CATE LOWRY / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

Jessica Klima, director of the PCT program, said the program has been testing anywhere from 1,300 to 1,500 people a day, but hopes to expand those numbers through new testing sites.

"We're targeting areas that have higher rates of positivity, and this is going to make testing as convenient as possible to those that are living nearby," Klima said.

Students taking courses remotely may not have to come to campus, so these testing sites are a way to accommodate them if they live in

other parts of Austin, Klima said.

"(This) also applies to staff who are working remotely," Klima said. "We encourage all UT-affiliated individuals to take advantage of our testing opportunities in their neighborhoods and save them a trip to campus if we can."

Klima said the contracts to finalize the agreement were signed Jan. 27, and the library and park locations should be open and running by the end of February.

Richard Sherwood, Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity chapter president,

said proactive testing at the Pike house takes place Wednesday afternoons, and the location has been a testing site for almost 200 people.

"As a longtime member of the UT community, we felt it important to step up and offer our facility," Sherwood said.

Although fraternity members are not directly involved in the testing process, they are glad to help the community in a small way, Sherwood said.

"PCT testing will continue at the Pike house site for the foreseeable

future," Sherwood said. "We're open to hosting the rest of the semester if it is helpful to fellow students."

Klima said the locations and hours of the mobile sites are posted on the Healthy Horns website a week prior.

"In this climate, we've had to become more comfortable with the unknown," Klima said. "We want to be nimble with our operations and have the most impact, so we will constantly be reevaluating our site choices and making sure that they're meeting our goals."

FORENSICS

CONTINUES FROM PAGE 2

because these were just one line item against a line for things like new police cars and new patrol officers."

The Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Budget must first be amended before a transition can begin, according to the Feb. 4 meeting agenda of Austin City Council. Decisions about the lab's contract

with the Texas Department of Public Safety, which was supposed to last until 2022, must also be made before the transfer. The transfer will not affect the positions of those currently employed in the crime lab.

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FORUM

Free speech on campus

Students respond to disbandment of Campus Climate Response Team.

By Daisy Kiely
& Maria Sailale
Forum Editors

Team here at UT.

The Campus Climate Response Team, made up of University officials and professors, was created to help students report incidents of bias that are specifically motivated by a person or group's identity.

In late 2018, Speech First, a campus free speech advocacy group, filed a suit against University policies on nondiscrimination, claiming that said policies were restrictive and violated

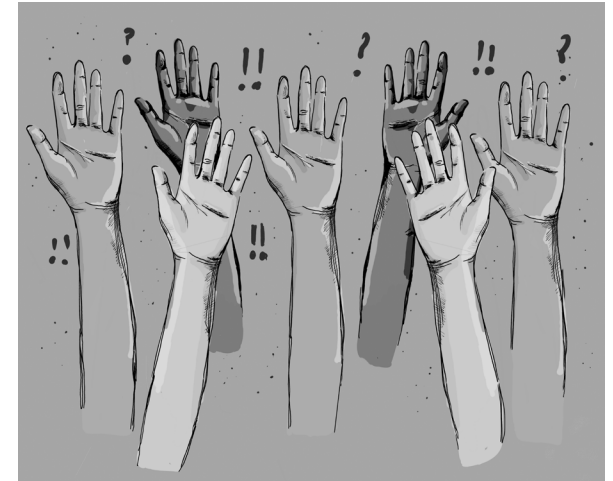
students' First Amendment rights to free speech.

Although the primary goal of the Climate Response Team was to create a "more inclusive and welcoming university community by connecting individuals to the appropriate resources when bias incidents occur," Speech First argued that UT had "created an elaborate investigatory and disciplinary apparatus to suppress, punish, and deter speech that other students deem 'offensive,'

'biased,' 'uncivil,' or 'rude.'" In this forum, we hear from both sides of the debate.

Contributor Emmanuel Ramirez argues that the Climate Response Team hindered students' right to free speech because there were no "set-in-stone" guidelines about what constituted discrimination or hostility.

Forum editors Daisy Kiely and Maria Sailale argue that UT needs to assist its students in reporting incidents of hate and provide them with



ERICKA SUAREZ / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

the necessary support, just like many other universities across the country.

As always, if you have

any thoughts on this topic or any other, please feel free to reach out to us at thedaily-texanforum@gmail.com.

FORUM

FORUM

Response Team hinders speech

By Emmanuel Ramirez
Contributor

The definition of these incidents varies among different individuals as there is no set-in-stone guideline. This has the potential to punish students for unpopular opinions among their peers, even if the opinions are not hostile or discriminatory. The CCRT treats students like children by trying to maintain social order rather than exposing students to different ideas or create ideological discomfort.

The very notion that UT attempted to regulate speech is a sign that the University and, to an extent, some students do not have full trust that civility can occur while practicing our First Amendment rights on campus. The CCRT hindered free speech rights by insinuating some opinions would be punishable by the University. UT has a diverse campus with thousands of students from

all walks of life, and it is a disservice to students to regulate or monitor speech since part of the college experience involves interacting with challenging views.

The University of Texas has genuine incidents of discrimination, harassment and hostility, and these occurrences must be dealt with accordingly. But regulating student speech harms students and inhibits their rights. I agree with the settlement in ridding the CCRT, as the University should promote free student speech instead of discouraging it. I love The University of Texas and I wish to see it thrive, but its students cannot develop and prepare for the real world when personal freedoms are surrendered for just a bit of security.

Emmanuel Ramirez is a radio-television-film senior from Dallas, Texas.

UT should protect its students

By Daisy Kiely & Maria Sailale
Forum Editors

Just a month ago, on Jan. 10, the members of the Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity discovered anti-Semitic graffiti on the wall of their fraternity house. Sigma Alpha Mu highlights its Jewish identity on their website and "cultivates a strong bond between its members and the Jewish community at Texas as a whole."

Even though the UT incident notification on Jan. 15 classified the incident as a hate crime, UT Austin no longer has a bias response team to report such events or provide the necessary support to its students.

The late 2020 ruling in favor of Speech First, a national free speech group, dismantled the UT Campus Climate Response Team. This team's primary goal was "to handle any outbreaks of hateful or violent speech" and connect "individuals to the appropriate resources when bias incidents occur."

In the ruling, the Climate Response Team was heavily criticized for policing and effectively hindering free speech. This accusation is not totally unfounded, though the University did note there's no evidence students were sanctioned

for their speech. Despite its original intentions, in practice the team was a Band-Aid solution to the larger, systemic problem of intolerance and discrimination at UT.

However, this is not to say that the University should forego any future efforts to address incidents targeting students because of their various identities. Efforts such as the Climate Response Team should function as tools in this larger goal.

UT should provide an avenue for students to report incidents so that the administration can be aware of the bias students face and be well-equipped to initiate substantial, systemic change.

Failing to do so only increases the burden students face in addressing these incidents.

The Climate Response Team was created because all students deserve a comfortable and safe campus environment. While students' First Amendment rights should be protected, students should not feel threatened because of who they are.

Holding the UT community accountable does not need to be inherently synonymous with stifling discourse.

Daisy Kiely is a government and sociology junior from Concord, Massachusetts. Maria Sailale is an international relations and global studies sophomore from Dallas, Texas.

LEGISLATIVE

Bill filed to deny in-state tuition to undocumented students

By **Samantha Greyson**
@GreysonSamantha

Two Texas state representatives co-filed a bill in January to deny in-state tuition to undocumented students, which would force undocumented students at UT to pay over \$13,000 more a semester when switched to out-of-state tuition.

There are over 65,000 undocumented students in Texas pursuing postsecondary education, according to last year's New American Economy study. Edna Yang, co-executive director of American Gateways, a nonprofit that provides legal services to immigrants, said the bill, if passed, would create a financial barrier for undocumented students looking to receive a degree. State Reps. Jeff Cason and Bryan Slaton said they did not want tax dollars going toward undocumented student's education.

Undocumented students cannot receive federal financial aid, making the bill even more potentially detrimental to these student's higher education access, said Tiffany Lewis, Director of UT's Monarch Student Program, a resource

center for undocumented students on campus.

"What this bill will essentially do is make it nearly impossible for many folks to attend higher education," Yang said. "The rhetoric around it is really divisive and it's really dehumanizing. It is saying that these individuals,

because they're undocumented, don't have the right to afford higher education."

Cason claims taxpayers' dollars are being used to finance the education of undocumented immigrants, according to a press release. In 2001, House Bill 1403 granted in-state tuition rates to undocumented students. This is the third attempt to overturn the 2001 decision in the state legislature.

"Texans' tax dollars should not be used to reward and encourage illegal immigration to our state and nation," Cason said in the release. "As Texas taxpayers are seeing their property taxes rise, they are rightfully even more frustrated to find out that the Texas legislature has seen fit to give handouts to illegal immigrants."



JACK MYER / THE DAILY TEXAN FILE

The UT Tower on Feb. 4, 2021. A House bill in January was filed that would increase tuition for undocumented students.

Cason and Slaton did not respond to requests for comment.

Yang said because undocumented immigrants pay millions of dollars in taxes, they have a right to in-state tuition. Because Texas has no state income tax, undocumented immigrants pay taxes through sales and property taxes, just like documented citizens, Yang said.

"They're taking this issue and making it about taxes and money when it's actually not about taxes and money," Yang said. "It's about the fact that the folks who proposed this bill don't want to educate undocumented immigrants. But the fact is, those individuals are here in the community, they pay into the tax system and they should be given the right to afford higher education."

Yang said the bill would

hurt the state's workforce and economy by holding people back from higher education, and an educated workforce benefits the whole state.

"They're making it sound like ... we're rewarding or giving a gift to undocumented students if they are able to afford college," Yang said. "Having individuals who become educated and enter the workforce with advanced degrees really benefits all of us."

Because many undocumented students have completed primary and secondary school in Texas, Lewis said they have a right to in-state tuition for higher education in Texas as well.

"Undocumented students are only eligible to apply for state financial aid and getting in-state tuition is part of these families' personal affordability formula for college," Lewis said.

UNIVERSITY

UTPD develops crisis intervention team to respond to mental health calls

By Lauren Abel
@laurena0324

The UT Police Department launched the University Critical Incident Response Team on Jan. 11 with the hope of using alternate methods to de-escalate mental health crises.

The response team is composed of four officers and one sergeant who have worked for UTPD for more than two years and are certified mental health officers, which means they have received 40 hours of mental health training. Members of the team will wear a button-down shirt with a name tag, conceal their weapons and use unmarked cars when responding to calls.

According to a 2014 study by the American Psychiatric Association, crisis intervention training in multiple departments demonstrated increased verbal negotiation as the highest level of force used, with referral to mental health units more likely and arrests less likely. The study found there was no measurable difference in the use of force between officers with crisis intervention training and those without it.

Lt. Samantha Stanford said UTPD hopes that using a more subdued response will make mental health crisis situations less stressful.

“(The officers are) just going to be

talking with them, doing an evaluation to see if they need to be taken to a hospital to talk to a professional or see if there are other resources in the community that they can connect them (with) to help them move forward,” Stanford said.

Chris Harris, director of the Criminal Justice Project for Texas Appleseed, said there isn’t much evidence to indicate that additional training and mental health intervention helps alleviate police brutality.

“This (initiative) is better than nothing almost surely, but I think that ultimately what defines police is their ability to use violence, surveillance and coercion in exercising their duties,” Harris said. “Police will resort to use of those tools at some point.”

UTPD Police Chief David Carter said one of the focuses of the response team is to increase trust among those who

do not have confidence in the police, including communities of color.

Carter said he established a crisis negotiation team in 2013 that looked at issues occurring around the country among various police departments and supported the development of the response team to improve UTPD’s crisis response.

“The past year or so has certainly been challenging in the world of policing, and the way that I look at it, in a lot of instances where police departments were ... responding to calls involving people in crisis, they did not end well,” Carter said. “We’ve not had an instance like that at UT or with UTPD.”

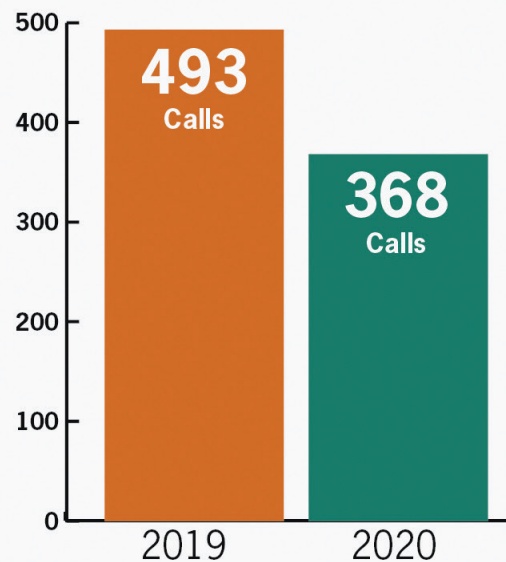
According to a study released by the UT School of Law Human Rights Clinic and the Austin Community Law Center, the Austin Police Department was responsible for the death of eight

people experiencing a mental health-related crisis from 2010 to 2016. There were 20 other shootings in which the victim survived, according to the study. These incidents contributed to the budget reallocation that was approved by City Council in August 2020 following Black Lives Matter protests in the summer.

Harris said involving individuals who don’t have the authority to use violence is the best approach to preventing conflict in mental health encounters.

“A more appropriate response is someone who has got clinical expertise and specialty in dealing with mental health issues,” Harris said. “These are positive steps but clearly don’t go as far as many communities are starting to recognize is necessary in order to truly ensure the safety of people in mental health crisis.”

UTPD Mental Health Call History



Calls with a mental health element include:

- Voluntary commitments
- Police officer emergency detentions
- Suspicious activity
- Suspicious person
- Disturbances
- Welfare concerns
- Assaults with a mental health element in the narrative

SOURCE: NOELLE NEWTON, DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS

STUDENT LIFE

‘It’s given me hope’

UT students describe what their favorite songs mean to them during difficult times.

By Ikram Mohamed
@ikramxmoham

Devra Winslow grew up listening to *Wish You Were Here* by Pink Floyd, her dad’s favorite album and a musical staple in her childhood home. However, Winslow said it wasn’t until high school when the album began to gain importance to her.

“The song’s rooted in the band’s story of how one of their old bandmates relied heavily on drugs and lost himself,” Winslow said. “For me, it’s a reminder to (not) let (anything) take over to the point where I lose perception of reality and what really matters.”

Music plays an important role in the lives’ of many UT students. Their favorite songs have helped them navigate through challenging experiences and emotions when they felt no one else could.

“I feel there’s a stigma around the (mental health) issues I was dealing with,” psychology freshman Winslow said. “I had people I could talk to, but I didn’t want to be a burden to them. (“Wish You Were Here” by Pink Floyd) was there for me in ways I didn’t allow people to be.”

Psychology freshman Meghan Lamsfuss discovered her favorite



ROCKY HIGINE / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

song, “Fever” by The Tragic Thrills, in the midst of a heartbreak four years ago. When she first heard the song, Lamsfuss said she was amazed by how much it resonated with her.

“I’m gay, and (the song) mentions the struggles of (being gay),” Lamsfuss said. “I connected with that a

lot, and it (has) helped me through quite a bit. It’s given me hope.”

Lamsfuss said her favorite song has helped guide her through her emotions, keeping her balanced.

“I was going through a heartbreak right when I was newly figuring out who I was,” Lamsfuss said. “All

those confusing feelings all together (weren’t) healthy, but that song really helped me just accept things and work through them.”

Unlike Winslow and Lamsfuss, journalism freshman Ivy Fowler didn’t fall in love with her favorite song immediately. Initially, she said she hated it.

“The first time I heard (“Ivy” by Frank Ocean), I didn’t like it,” Fowler said. “Then, I really got into Frank Ocean. I remember the moment it became my favorite (song) was February of (2020). I remember (thinking), ‘This is my life ... everything he’s saying is what I’m going through in this moment.’”

Being a bit of a melancholic person in general, Fowler said “Ivy” resonates with her deeper emotions.

“Nostalgia is really healing to me,” Fowler said. “‘Ivy’ reflects that in its lyrics, and it’s helped me resonate with my emotions and be okay with what I’m feeling.”

Alone in her car, Fowler said Frank Ocean’s *Blonde* is an album that she finds herself coming back to. Whenever “Ivy” comes on, she said she would always scream out the lyrics, “If I could see through walls/ I could see you’re faking/ If you could see my thoughts/ You would see our faces.”

“Sometimes, I’ll be so alone in my feelings,” Fowler said. “Then I’ll put on (“Ivy”) and it makes me feel less alone, like I’m not the only person who’s gone through this.”

STUDENT LIFE

Talking about ‘stonks’: Students invest in GameStop, create groupchat to discuss financial literacy

By Dina Barrish
@BarrishDina

Adrian Dominguez made \$500 in 30 minutes after buying three shares of GameStop.

“Right now is pretty historical,” Dominguez said. “It doesn’t feel real.”

Like many UT students, advertising sophomore Dominguez tracks the stock market each day from open to close. He watched as Reddit users united to buy shares in the declining GameStop stock for \$13.66 a share on Jan. 11. Two weeks later, GameStop’s share price had skyrocketed to its Jan. 28 value of \$483. Wall Street investors who bet against the company were forced to repurchase the stock for much more than the selling price, destroying nearly \$30 billion dollars of on-paper wealth.

After seeing Elon Musk’s “Gamestonk” tweet on Jan. 26, Dominguez said he immediately invested in GameStop.

As the company reached its peak share value, Dominguez started a Twitter group chat for UT students to “talk about ‘stonks.’” He said his goal was to help students navigate the GameStop phenomenon and the broader financial world with confidence.

“I do research 24/7 ... who to follow, what to look for, how to sell, how to plan,” Dominguez said. “(I would advise) not to invest anything you’re not willing to lose.”

Dominguez launched the group chat at 12:12 a.m. on Jan. 28. By

1:23 a.m., it had reached its 50 participant maximum.

“This past week, I slept six hours in four days,” Dominguez said. “I talk in (the group chat) every day.”

Marketing senior Alec Alvarez chose not to invest in GameStop, but he said he joined Dominguez’s group chat to gain a basic understanding of the stock craze.

“It’s a dangerous game,” Alvarez said. “I (wanted) to see how other people (felt) about the situation that both know about finances and don’t.”

Both Dominguez and Alvarez taught themselves how to invest through books, YouTube and a variety of online platforms. Dominguez said he comes from a low-income family, so learning to be financially independent has always been important to him.

“Since 2012, I remember watching (YouTube financiers) and learning everything about finance, about making money from passive income. I’m all self-taught,” Dominguez said. “(Last Monday), I made a month’s worth of (income) for my dad.”

Isaac Martin, the president of Texas Financial Derivatives, said people playing the stock market should think carefully before following financial advice from others.

“Just from the way someone can sound explaining something, you might think, ‘This totally makes sense,’” finance junior Martin said. “But a lot of investing theses that you hear aren’t fully fleshed out. No one has all



EMILY REED / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

the answers.”

Martin said a main mission of Texas Financial Derivatives is to increase financial literacy among UT students.

“It was a little bit concerning that people who didn’t seem to know a lot about finance were

buying into (GameStop),” Martin said. “I feel like some of those people might have been a little bit misled and might have suffered losses because of that.”

Alvarez said his main takeaway from the GameStop stock boom

is the need for education reform surrounding finances.

“If we push for financial education at the high school level, a lot of people’s lives will be better because they’re going to make better decisions with their money,” Alvarez said.

Almost halfway to his

goal of a \$100,000 portfolio, Dominguez said he will continue to supply financial tips to fellow students through the Twitter group chat.

“I’ve always seen myself going up in all aspects of life,” Dominguez said. “I’ve never had as much money as I have today.”

CAMPUS

How to experience art, culture in a safe way on campus

By Zoe Tzanis
@ztzanis

COVID-19 regulations have largely kept students out of museums and away from art installations, leaving some without a culture fix. But UT's campus is scattered with works of art by professors, artists and even sculptures commissioned by students.

The Daily Texan has compiled a list of spots on campus that provide a COVID-safe way of experiencing the arts.

Littlefield Fountain

Located at West 21st St. and University Avenue, the fountain features a winged female figure on the bronze bow of a ship, mermaids and horses rising from the water. An iconic part of UT, taking a swim in Littlefield Fountain is considered a rite of passage for some UT students although UT has said it is not advised.

The Family Group

Along the south entrance of the McCombs College of Business Administration building is an enormous sculpture titled The Family Group. Created by late UT art professor Charles Umlauf, the piece depicts a father, mother and child — the most basic economic unit of society.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Sculpture

A step off Speedway at the East Mall, between the William C. Powers, Jr. Student Activity Center and the Jackson Geological Sciences Building stands a tall bronze statue of Martin Luther King Jr. The piece stands as a symbol for education and empowerment. Students led the effort to bring the sculpture to campus in 1999, bringing the idea to the former UT President William Cunningham and raising the majority of the funds themselves.



JACK MYER / THE DAILY TEXAN STAFF

Students walk by Monochrome for Austin, which is installed in front of the Norman Hackerman Building. The sculpture is made from 70 recycled canoes.

Cesar Chavez Statue

Across campus on the West Mall is another student-funded sculpture of Cesar Chavez, an American civil rights activist and labor leader. The piece was the first statue of a Latino on UT's campus. The project to bring a statue of Chavez to campus was created and funded by students.

The West

Farther along Speedway is a sculpture of two gigantic buoys covered in copper pennies. The artist, Donald Lipski, created the piece to

start conversations due to its controversial portrayal.

For journalism freshman Ivy Fowler, "The West" is a UT landmark that never fails to make her smile.

"Personally, I just find it hilarious," Fowler said. "Whenever I see it, I always have a good grasp on where I am on campus."

Monochrome for Austin

The infamous canoe sculpture, Monochrome for Austin, stands at the west end of Speedway in front of the Norman Hackerman Building. Designed by artist Nancy

Rubins, the sculpture came to UT in 2015. Monochrome for Austin is an enormous aluminum sculpture made from 70 recycled canoes.

Women's and gender studies freshman Mia Hay said this is her favorite sculpture on campus.

"I love the way they are held up," Hay said. "They branch out and sort of hang in an arch over Speedway. They remind me of the flow of ideas running one into another, supported by the connections between them."

Barbara Jordan Sculpture

In front of the Texas Union

is a monument dedicated to Barbara Jordan, the first Black woman from Texas to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. It was the very first statue of a female public figure on campus.

Diana of the Chase

At the center of the Honors Quad is a sculpture of the Roman goddess of the hunt, Diana, shooting an arrow toward the sky.

Diana represents more than protection and inspiration for psychology freshman Hannah Carney.

"It's a symbol of the Quad,"

Carney said. "I love it because it's something that united my closest friends. We would pick up fruit, bananas, apples, oranges and give them to her as offerings."

Etter-Harbin Alumni Center

Lastly, check out the Etter-Harbin Alumni Center on San Jacinto Boulevard. This secluded spot is home to many sculptures: a mother and child, a sculpture titled The Graduate, a sculpture titled The Student, a life-size longhorn and more. Soak up some sun and enjoy this quiet spot surrounded by beautiful art.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Texas looking to right ship

The Longhorns have lost four of their last five games and fallen nine spots in the AP Poll.

By **Matthew Boncosky**
@mboncosky

The Texas men's basketball team of late has not resembled the squad that started 10-1 in any way, shape or form.

The loss Saturday to No. 23 Oklahoma State was the fourth in the last five games for the Longhorns, who have slipped from No. 4 to No. 13 in the AP Poll since Jan. 11.

"I told the guys that adversity and challenges are going to occur over the course of the season," head coach Shaka Smart said Monday. "The difference between the teams that really finish strong and have a very successful season at the end of the day and the ones that don't, are the ones that come closer together through adversity and challenges. We're in the midst of that right now."

In the loss to No. 2 Baylor, Texas struggled defensively, allowing 83 points on almost 60% shooting. But in the loss to Oklahoma State, the offense was stagnant. The Longhorns shot 25% from the field, including a rough 0-for-12 combined in the two overtime periods.

"It's just an ugly reminder in the back of our minds to stay together, stay poised (and) stay connected around our



JACK MYER / THE DAILY TEXAN FILE

Texas head coach Shaka Smart calls out commands to his team during a game against LSU on Jan. 27, 2020. The Longhorns have fallen from No. 4 in the AP Poll to No. 13 since Jan. 11 and have lost four of their last five games.

ultimate goal," senior guard Matt Coleman said after the loss. "There's still games to be played and it's just time to be better, to take that next step to getting the mojo back or playing how we know we can play."

Heading into a very winnable game at Kansas State on Tuesday, Smart said it's time to put together a solid effort on both sides of the ball.

"I was really pleased with the defensive effort that the guys gave (against Oklahoma State)," Smart said. "(But) when you

shoot 25% from the field and you turn the ball over 21 times, obviously you look at (the offensive) end of the floor."

The past few weeks of close losses and COVID-19 health protocols have tested the Longhorns, but Smart stressed the importance of remaining focused on the present and not getting caught up in the future ramifications of a tough situation.

"There's a tendency sometimes when you're winning, or even when you go through a tough stretch like we've been through

the last couple of weeks, to think about, 'How does this impact me?' or, 'Where do I stand as it relates to the future?'" Smart said. "And that certainly can impact your focus and your concentration on the present."

The Longhorns now enter a crucial stretch of the season with three of the next four games on the road and the postseason looming on the horizon.

"I don't think (there's) a lack of urgency at all," Smart said. "To me, it's about us getting as connected as we can be around a

common goal."

The grind of a season, on top of adjusting for COVID-19 protocols, weighs heavily on coaches and players across the country, Smart said. The athletes on the team aren't machines despite how routine the protocols feel now.

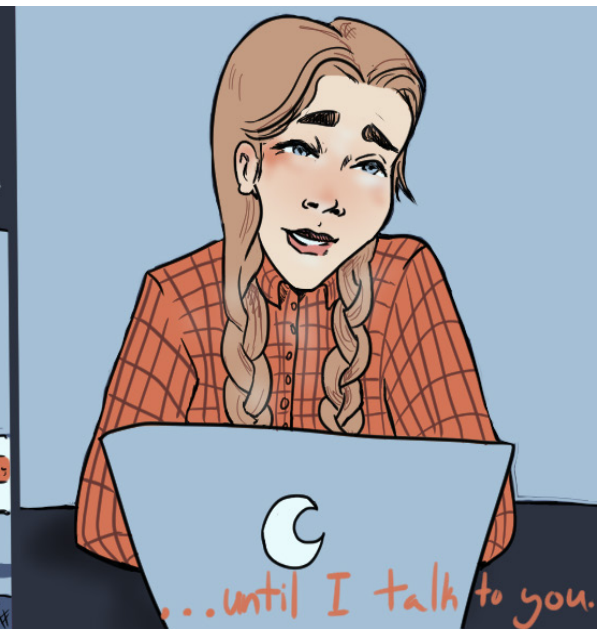
"These guys are human beings, and they are 18- to 22-year-old college student-athletes in a very uncommon time," Smart said. "We have to make sure that we factor in what they're dealing with."

Daily Texan Comics

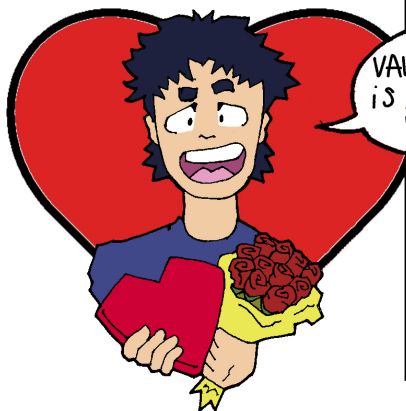
A Surprise Encounter



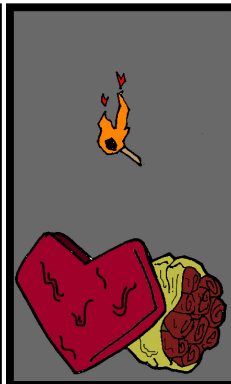
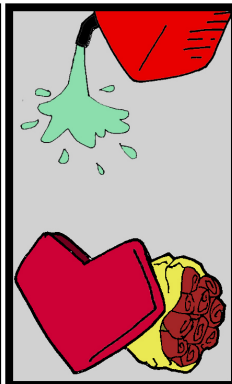
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ANTHOLOGY 301



VALENTINE'S
IS COMING
UP...



BURN



TENNIS

Sunday night collapse: Texas finishes second in Stillwater

By Nathan Han
@NathanHan13

Texas women's tennis seemed poised to make program history late Sunday night at the ITA National Indoor Championships in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

The No. 3 Longhorns beat No. 13 Northwestern on Friday. They beat No. 2 UCLA on Saturday. Then, Sunday, after a delay pushed the final against No. 1 North Carolina

three hours, Texas came out swinging, winning the doubles point handily and taking a 3-2 lead.

But as the match extended past midnight, the train came off the tracks and the Longhorns fell in two third-sets in both of the final singles matches to lose 4-3 in a heartbreaking fashion.

"(We) unraveled," head coach Howard Joffe said. "We were leaking oil all the way home."

Texas held leads in the two

final singles matches and only needed one win to take home the title. But freshman Charlotte Chavatipon couldn't hold on to a 4-0 lead in her second set, losing a tiebreaker before dropping the third set. Senior Fernanda Labraña jumped out to a 4-1 lead in her third set but lost five straight games.

Despite the loss, Texas took a massive step forward last weekend, proving it belongs in championship contention.

The last time the Longhorns played in the finals match of

the Indoor Championships was 2006.

"We've ended well inside the top 10 for at least the last three years," Joffe said. "But we've never really advanced to the final stages of either Indoor (Championships) or the NCAA (Championships). Our tennis didn't let us down. We got the best of ourselves and the circumstances."

This season, Texas brought in the No. 1 recruiting class in the nation. Then in the fall, the team added freshman Lulu

Sun and in January brought on mid-year addition freshman Kylie Collins to round out the talented group of newcomers.

The duo of Sun and Collins took down the No. 1 and No. 3 ranked doubles teams in the nation on Saturday and Sunday. Top recruit and freshman Peyton Stearns instantly jumped to slot at the team's top singles spot.

But Sunday was a reminder of the team's inexperience with the dual-match format and a "super-duper valuable lesson," Joffe said.

"What you can't put a price on is the format of college tennis, where there's six simultaneous matches going on," Joffe said. "Over the years, I've had many players tell me that the dynamic is different. ... In that respect, we are very, very inexperienced."

While the team might be made up of a majority of freshmen, several of the players that have defined Joffe's current run as head coach are still Longhorns. Fifth-year senior Anna Turati battled back from a 5-1 deficit in her second set to win Sunday after losing both Friday and Saturday.

With the combination of veterans like Turati and Labraña along with the talented newcomers like Stearns and Chavatipon, sky's the limit for this Texas team who proved it in the first half of their match against North Carolina.

"I literally just kind of started laughing," Brian Kalbas, North Carolina head coach, said of his reaction after losing the doubles point to Texas. "Sometimes you (have) to give credit where credit is due, and they were just too good."



EVAN L'ROY / THE DAILY TEXAN FILE

Senior tennis player Anna Turati serves against Iowa on Jan. 24, 2020. The women's tennis team finished second to North Carolina at this weekend's ITA National Indoor Championships.