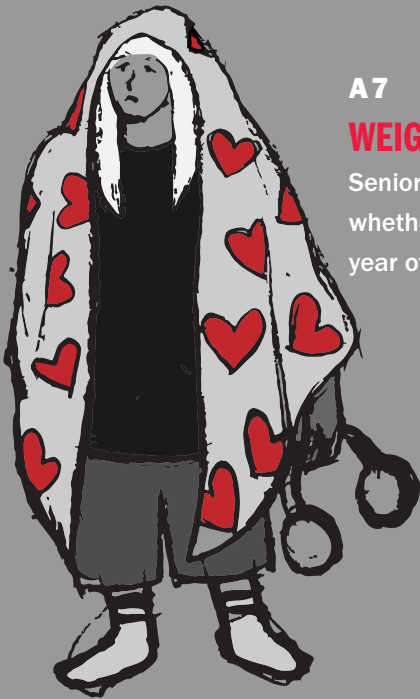


# The Red & Black

## COVID-19: IMPACT ON UGA & ATHENS



**A7**  
**WEIGHING OPTIONS**  
Senior athletes decide whether to use an extra year of eligibility.



**A4**  
**NO CLEAR END IN SIGHT**  
Read about Athens' health care system, which serves a 17-county area.



**A5**  
**MAKING ADJUSTMENTS**  
Athens area service workers are left without a source of income.





The logo for 'Front PAGE The Red & Black' is a tilted square. It has a black background with a white border. The word 'Front' is in a white serif font with 'THE' in smaller letters above it. 'PAGE' is in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. Below that, 'The Red & Black' is written in a white serif font, with 'Red' in red and '&' in red.

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**redandblack.com/newsletters**

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— Rebecca Burns

— Hunter Riggall



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| COVID-19<br>TIMELINE |  |
|----------------------|--|
|                      | Compiled by<br><b>Jacqueline GaNun</b><br>City News Editor   |
| <b>Dec. 31</b>       | China alerted the World Health Organization of several cases of respiratory illness in Wuhan.  |
| <b>Jan. 7</b>        | Chinese authorities identified the novel coronavirus and named it SARS-CoV-2.  |
| <b>Jan. 11</b>       | China recorded the first virus-related death.  |
| <b>Jan. 30</b>       | WHO declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.  |
| <b>Feb. 11</b>       | WHO named the disease caused by the novel coronavirus COVID-19.  |
| <b>March 2</b>       | Gov. Brian Kemp announced the first two confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Georgia.  |
| <b>March 5</b>       | UGA faculty were asked to prepare remote curricula in case of disruptions.   |
| <b>March 11</b>      | WHO classified the outbreak as a pandemic.   |
| <b>March 12</b>      | Kemp announced the first confirmed COVID-19-related death in Georgia.  |
|                      | NCAA canceled winter and spring championships.   |
| <b>12:14 p.m.</b>    | The University System of Georgia announced all USG schools would continue face-to-face instruction. The UGA community was told classes would resume following spring break and that the Georgia Department of Public Health advised the risk of contracting coronavirus in Georgia was low.  |
| <b>3:56 p.m.</b>     | USG reversed course, suspending instruction for two weeks beginning March 16. An Archnews email said UGA would use the two weeks to test online instruction and for state officials to assess the coronavirus situation in Georgia.  |
| <b>March 13</b>      | President Donald Trump declared a national emergency.  |
|                      | Brian Kemp declared a public health state of emergency in Georgia.   |
|                      | Trump waived interest payments on federal student loans indefinitely.  |
|                      | SEC suspended athletic competitions and practices until April 15.  |
| <b>March 14</b>      | Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger postponed Georgia's presidential primary election from March 24 to May 19.   |
| <b>March 15</b>      | The Georgia DPH announced the first two confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Clarke County.  |
| <b>March 16</b>      | USG announced all member institutions would move to online instruction for the remainder of spring semester.   |
|                      | Athens-Clarke County declared a local emergency restricting gatherings of 10 or more and instituting a voluntary shelter-in-place policy.  |
| <b>March 17</b>      | UGA canceled spring commencement ceremonies.   |
|                      | SEC canceled competitions and championships for the rest of the athletic year.   |
|                      | UGA announced the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the university community.  |
|                      | UGA canceled Maymester study abroad programs.  |
| <b>March 19</b>      | ACC Mayor and Commission declared a second local emergency and instituted a mandatory shelter-in-place order. The ordinance prohibited all gatherings outside of households and all non-essential travel. The order also restricted non-essential businesses to "minimum basic operations." Restaurants were limited to take-out and delivery service. |
| <b>March 21</b>      | UGA announced it would partially refund students for certain student fees, meal plans and housing.   |
| <b>March 24</b>      | Public health officials announced the first confirmed COVID-19-related death in ACC.   |
|                      | Raffensperger announced all registered Georgia voters would be mailed absentee ballots.  |
| <b>March 26</b>      | The U.S. became the country with the most confirmed COVID-19 cases worldwide, according to the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota.   |
| <b>March 27</b>      | Trump signed the \$2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act into law.   |
| <b>March 30</b>      | The NCAA voted to allow schools to grant an extra year of eligibility to spring-sport athletes.  |
| <b>March 31</b>      | UGA notified some students they may have come in contact with a housing employee who reported testing positive for COVID-19 after helping with move-out in four dorms.   |
| <b>April 1</b>       | DPH announced PruittHealth-Grandview was the first long-term care facility in ACC with a confirmed COVID-19 case.  |
|                      | Kemp closed all public K-12 schools and colleges through the rest of the school year.  |
| <b>April 2</b>       | Kemp signed a statewide shelter-in-place order, superseding local emergency ordinances and orders.   |
|                      | USG moved instruction online for Maymester and summer semesters.   |
| <b>April 7</b>       | PruittHealth-Grandview confirmed to WSB-TV that 10 of its patients who tested presumptive positive for COVID-19 had died in the past two weeks.  |
| <b>April 8</b>       | Kemp extended Georgia's shelter-in-place order to April 30 and public health state of emergency to May 13.   |
|                      | Georgia's May 19 election was postponed to June 9.   |
| <b>April 11</b>      | The U.S. became the country with the most COVID-19 deaths worldwide at more than 20,000 deaths.  |
| <b>April 17</b>      | UGA President Jere Morehead announced spring undergraduate commencement would be held Oct. 16 in Sanford Stadium if public health officials deem it safe to do so.   |
| <b>April 20</b>      | Kemp announced that Georgia would start to roll back shelter-in-place regulations, with some businesses opening April 24 and restaurants and others April 27.  |
| <b>April 22</b>      | As of press time: 2.6 million confirmed worldwide cases, 842,319 confirmed U.S. cases, 20,740 confirmed cases in Georgia, according to Johns Hopkins University and Georgia DPH.   |



Max Richards worked for the University of Georgia Athletic Association before classes moved online. JASON BORN/STAFF

Richards said if anyone had told him that all Georgia athletic competitions would be canceled for the remainder of the athletic year, he would have never believed it.

# Student workers feel the effects of closures on campus

**Samantha Perez**  
Staff Writer

Sophomore sport management major Max Richards was ready to return to working for the University of Georgia Athletic Association after spring break.

Richards said if anyone had told him that all Georgia athletic competitions would be canceled for the remainder of the athletic year, he would have never believed it.

But that's exactly what happened when the SEC canceled all spring athletic competitions on March 17. The announcement came a few days after the University System of Georgia decided to transition to online classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some UGA students lost their on-campus jobs as a result. Some, like sophomore finance major Alana Alverson, received mixed communication. Although she said money was a concern, Alverson said her health took priority.

A lifeguard at Ramsey Student Center, Alverson was originally scheduled for monthly in-service training immediately after spring break.

On March 12, UGA announced classes were suspended for two weeks after spring break. Students were not expected to participate in classwork and were instructed not to return to campus.

Less than 24 hours later, lifeguards received an email from the Department of Recreational Sports saying the Ramsey Student Center was closed. On March 16, UGA moved instruction online for the rest of the semester. The day after that, the university cut back on-campus operations and canceled all public events for the remainder of the semester.

For Alverson, the news about her on-campus job came as a relief.

"I live with my grandma, who's 70 years old, so it definitely made me feel better," Alverson said. "I mean, the chances are low, but I don't want any possibility to pick [the coronavirus] up, go home, give it to my grandma and her really struggle with that if she were to get it."

Meredith Lynn, a junior communication sciences and

disorders major, said she felt the university handled the situation "the best they could." Lynn was a crew member at the UGA Performing Arts Center, which canceled all scheduled performances through May 10.

Lynn said her boss reached out to each employee over the phone to make sure they were OK. He also advised employees to file for unemployment, Lynn said.

In addition to her role on UGA's campus, Lynn held a second job in Athens at Carrabba's Italian Grill, which she said offered "relief pay" to its workers. At first, Lynn was thrown off and upset when the university didn't offer her any sort of student-employee financial compensation, although it reimbursed students for on-campus housing and various fees.

Although Lynn heard from her boss often, Trey Young said the last he heard from UGA Dining Services was through email after UGA suspended classes for two weeks. Young, who worked at the Chick-fil-A in Tate Student Center, said he has not received any information since USG announced classes would transition online.

"Once we got word that we were being shut down for the rest of the semester, it's like all communication just vanished. It evaporated," said Young, a junior journalism major.

Other students were able to keep their jobs with UGA. Peer learning assistants continued helping professors teach classes from home as the courses switched to online.

Sophomore biology and anthropology double major Ankita Shah assists with a Biology I class — she said the PLAs brainstormed how they could effectively help engage students and assist professors via an online platform. Shah said they discussed facilitating discussions on eLearning Commons, scheduling Zoom office hours and continuing to make review sheets for the course.

"I'm privileged in the sense that I can still work from home, even though I don't have as much to do," Shah said.

Shah said she is being paid the same amount and receiving the same amount of hours as she would have if classes had continued face-to-face after spring break.

In a March 31 email to The Red & Black, UGA spokesperson Greg Trevor said some students are working from home and earning wages in certain roles that allow teleworking, such as graduate assistantships. Students who earn Federal Work-Study jobs are continuing to receive aid, he said.

"However, teleworking is not possible for every student job on campus," Trevor said in the email. "Students who have a particular financial hardship should reach out to Student Care and Outreach, which can help advise the students about resources that may be available."



Olivia Richardson created a petition urging UGA to create a pass/fail option. TAYLOR GERLACH/STAFF

10,201

The number of signatures on a pass/fail petition as of press time.

# Request denied

## Students petition for pass/fail grading option during pandemic

**Samantha Perez**  
Staff Writer

University of Georgia students have petitioned for the University System of Georgia to adopt a pass/fail grading system this semester to provide an option for students who have faced challenges as classes moved online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

USG decided to keep the current grading system in place, according to a March 30 email from UGA spokesperson Greg Trevor. UGA students have been petitioning since UGA announced class would move online in March. The last day of spring semester classes is April 28.

USG represents 26 public universities across Georgia and is overseen by the Board of Regents. The board is composed of 19 appointed members. USG also has authority and an established grading policy with all 26 universities.

UGA supports USG's decision and trusts its "faculty to assess the performance of their students, as they always have, on work performed before and after our temporary closure," Trevor said in the March 30 email.

USG's statement acknowledged that other institutions across the country transitioned to a pass/fail system, but said it would continue with current grading systems through the end of the semester to "allow faculty to assess the performance of students in the same manner they always have."

"In times of adversity, we should reach higher, not lower," the USG statement said. "Maintaining high academic standards is critical to the success of USG students now and in the future."

The UGA Student Government Association Senate passed a resolution on March 31, later signed by former SGA president Rachel Byers, encouraging USG to create an opt-in pass/fail grading system.

"We normally agreed on the assumption that students have access to the same resources, or an avenue through which they can get those, through the university," said Senator Ciera Thomas, who introduced the legislation. "That's not an assumption we can make anymore."

An opt-in system would accommodate students' unique home and financial situations caused by the COVID-19 crisis and transition to online learning, the SGA Senate resolution said.

A separate petition asking UGA, which is a member of USG, for an opt-in pass/fail system has garnered more than 10,000 signatures as of April 18. The petition's creator, Olivia Richardson, said she started the call to action after she realized the scope of people affected by the coronavirus and the transition to online classes.

Richardson, a sophomore cognitive science and psychology double major, said the move to online instruction will likely affect the mental and physical health of faculty members and students. She said students don't have access to typical in-person resources while learning outside of UGA's campus, such as tutoring, library books and one-on-one meetings with professors.

"And just to think that this semester is going to be comparable to any other?" Richardson said. "I can't even comprehend how you could think that when people are going to be getting sick, and this is going to continue happening."

Richardson's petition calls for an opt-in system, meaning students would choose between a traditional grading scale or the pass/fail alternative.

The option is necessary because of students' apprehension about a new grading scale, Richardson said. She cited students applying to medical school or graduate school who may prefer to keep the typical A-F grading scale.

Students from USG institutions across the state have come together to petition the university system.

USG Students 4 Grade Reform, a group of students from multiple USG schools, created an online form for USG students, faculty and staff to voice their opinions on the opt-in pass/fail system. Thomas, who helped organize this group, said the state-wide petition is receiving support from students at Georgia College and State University, Georgia State, Georgia Tech, Georgia Southern and Kennesaw State.

Thomas said the coalition has worked with Richardson, who is helping with outreach. While Richardson's petition has gotten widespread support, Thomas said the goal of the USG Students 4 Grade Reform petition is to be a reflection of the opinions of students, faculty and staff without "external influences" such as parents or high school students.

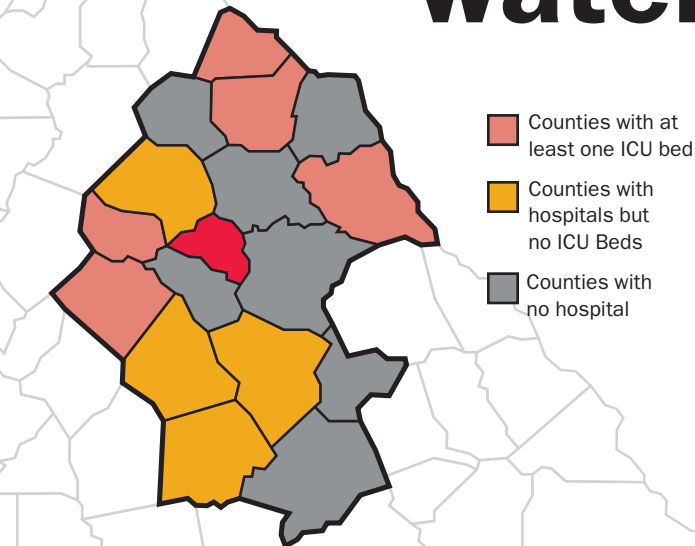
"We're hoping that through our joint efforts across the state, we will be able to encourage USG to make the right decision and allow students to take their academic futures into their own, capable hands," Thomas said.

UGA is the only SEC school that has not changed its grading policy due to COVID-19, and it is the only SEC school under the guidance of USG.

“Maintaining high academic standards is critical to the success of USG students now and in the future.”



# Uncharted waters



In the area served by ACC's hospitals,

**ACC** accounts for **104** of the **135 ICU beds** in the region that serves more than **600,000 people.**

**No other county** has more than **8 ICU beds.**

**11 counties** have **0 ICU beds.**

**7 of those counties** have **no hospital.**

ZAKK GREENE/STAFF

SOURCE: KAISER HEALTH NEWS ANALYSIS OF HOSPITAL COST REPORTS FILED TO THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES.

## Athens health care system navigates COVID-19 fight

Spencer Donovan  
News Editor

Athens-Clarke County's two main hospitals serve more than 600,000 people in a 17-county region. Seven of these counties don't have a hospital.

But ACC already faced a health care provider shortage before the coronavirus was first detected in Wuhan, China, according to federal data.

A provider shortage means there are more people who need care than the number of people who can provide it, said Grace Bagwell Adams, a University of Georgia associate professor of health policy and management. In a health crisis, there may not be enough providers in ACC to care for critically sick people.

Adams and a team of researchers at the UGA College of Public Health published a study on April 3 that estimates COVID-19 cases may peak in the 17-county region around April 28. It's unclear when this crisis will end, but the economic fallout will last for a long time, Adams said.

"I don't think there's going to be a complete return to quote-unquote normalcy until there's a vaccine," Adams said.

The Food and Drug Administration has not approved any products to treat or prevent COVID-19 as of April 17.

A vaccine could take months to develop because of rigorous safety and efficacy testing, said Ted Ross, director of the UGA Center for Vaccines and Immunology, in a March 24 UGA news release. Ross is developing a COVID-19 vaccine with a team of researchers at UGA.

Even when the coronavirus pandemic ends there will be a recovery period, which will involve supporting families and creating access for "basic things" such as food security, housing stability and health care access, Adams said.

When people lose their jobs, they often lose the health insurance that comes with

it, Adams said. And as people lose their health insurance, they often lose health care access.

That's the most immediate consequence of an economic decline, especially in Georgia, Adams said. People without health insurance — nearly a fifth of ACC's population in 2018 — can often only find health care access in hospital emergency departments.

That means people living without insurance in Hancock County, which has one doctor, may have to travel 70 miles to Athens-Clarke to see a doctor.

But just because someone shows up to the emergency room does not mean they will receive a COVID-19 test, Adams said.

Overall tests administered and turnaround time has improved, but it's not enough, Adams said, adding that even the best scientists don't have an exact number of what constitutes "enough" tests.

The Georgia Department of Public Health expanded its testing criteria on April 15 to include all symptomatic people. DPH testing eligibility was previously limited to health care workers, law enforcement, first responders and long-term care facility workers and residents. Georgia lags behind most other states in testing per capita.

"If we are still having to ration tests for health care workers and people who are extremely symptomatic, then we don't, we still don't have enough tests," Adams said.

In-house testing capabilities, which Piedmont Athens Regional Medical Center and St. Mary's Hospital have, exponentially speeds up the turnaround time for results. These tests allow providers to see results in hours as opposed to waiting up to 10 days, PARMC CEO Michael Burnett said in an April 6 conference call.

Turnaround time aside, Adams said proper testing should include people showing mild symptoms and those who have come in contact with them due to asymptomatic transmission.

"Limited testing capabilities can delay reporting of the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases," Adams said.

There is a lag between the time someone is tested, when the patient sees the result and when the DPH receives the result. For some patients, this may take up to seven business days, Adams said.

"You can't really develop solutions or even prepare adequately if you don't know what the problem is that you're facing," Adams said. "We've got over 9 million people in Georgia and only 60,000 tests."

Anila Yoganathan and Jake Drukman contributed to this article.

**You can't really develop solutions or even prepare adequately if you don't know what the problem is that you're facing.**

GRACE BAGWELL ADAMS, UGA HEALTH POLICY PROFESSOR

# Extra care

*Athens area long-term care facility works to protect staff, residents from COVID-19*

Anila Yoganathan  
Enterprise Editor

In a span of 11 days, Quiet Oaks Health Care Center conducted three separate rounds of COVID-19 tests — two nasal swab tests and an antibody test — on all of its residents with a private lab, operations manager Terry Cook said. According to the April 17 Department of Community Health report, Quiet Oaks has over 50 residents.

On April 10, Quiet Oaks reported its first four confirmed COVID-19 cases. That number has since risen to 18 cases and one death as of April 17, according to the Georgia Department of Community Health.

The facility in Crawford, a city of around 800 about 14 miles from downtown Athens, conducted the tests to get ahead of the outbreak in their facility, Cook said.

In nursing homes and long-term care facilities across the country, COVID-19 has spread rapidly, with grim results in some cases. As of April 22, more than 10,000 residents and nursing home and long-term care staff have died due to COVID-19 nationwide, almost a fifth of total deaths.

In Georgia, about 2,500 residents and staff of long-term care facilities have reported cases of COVID-19 as of April 17. Tracking for this data was first reported on April 10 by Gov. Brian Kemp's office before being updated by the Department of Community Health on April 17.

As of April 17, 45 cases have been reported in facilities across Athens-Clarke County and the five counties that border it — Oglethorpe, Jackson, Oconee, Barrow and Madison. Within this six-county area, there have been 12 deaths, 11 from PruittHealth-Grandview in Athens and one from Quiet Oaks. The deaths at PruittHealth-Grandview were not made public, until a whistleblower alerted WSB-TV.

### Extreme measures required

The Quiet Oaks numbers reported by the DCH are the results of nasal swab tests the facility made on March 31 and April 10 by contracting with a private lab. The tests were conducted after one resident tested positive for COVID-19 during an unrelated visit to Piedmont Athens Regional Medical Center, Cook said.

As of April 17, Georgia has at least 230 facilities with outbreaks, four of which are located in the Athens area.

Since its outbreak, Quiet Oaks has taken multiple measures to protect its residents, Cook said. He said they have contracted a private company to help disinfect the facility. The Georgia National Guard is scheduled to come in on a weekly basis to disinfect and sanitize the facility.

"They were very good about getting ahead of it [the virus], early on," said Tracy Norman, an Oglethorpe County resident who has at least three relatives at Quiet Oaks.

Cook said Quiet Oaks also purchased an ultraviolet disinfection lamp. The lamp, which cost about \$30,000, has the ability to kill biological material in a room, Cook said. Residents are confined to their rooms and separated from residents who have tested positive for COVID-19, some of whom have returned from the hospital after responding to treatment, Cook said. Staff members wear protective gear.

"Our main thing is to support our patients and support our staff and provide as much information to the families as we can keep them informed on a daily basis," Cook said.

Given the recent outbreaks in long-term care facilities, Whispering Pines Personal Care Home in Athens no longer allows residents to leave their rooms. St. Gabriel in Oconee County has ended communal dining and only allows residents to go outside if they each have personal masks.

Representatives from Whispering Pines and St. Gabriel said they would only begin testing if a person at the facility demonstrated symptoms of COVID-19 or they interacted with someone with the virus, as per DPH and Oconee County Health Department guidelines, respectively.



Quiet Oaks did multiple rounds of coronavirus testing on all of its residents.

COURTESY QUIET OAKS HEALTHCARE CENTER





# To livestream or not?

Performers ponder options in the age of social distancing

A screenshot captures Athens musician Leeann Peppers performing on a Tweed Recording livestream.

**Anna Thomas & Kyra Posey**

Assistant Culture Editor & Staff Writer

Live performances came to a grinding halt after Athens venues canceled or postponed shows indefinitely due to COVID-19.

Athens' performing community, however, quickly pivoted. Soon after Mayor Kelly Girtz announced Athens-Clarke County's shelter-in-place ordinance, Tweed Recording aired its first episode of "Live From Over There" on March 27 via Twitch.

The recording studio began livestreaming episodes so artists could have the opportunity to perform and promote their work, said Taylor Rogers, facilities and venue manager at audio production academy Tweed Recording, located on Washington Street.

Each livestream has a virtual tip jar with 100% of the proceeds benefiting the performers rather than the studio, Rogers said. There are multiple artists per episode, with each performing a roughly 30-minute set. The studio was purposeful in choosing artists who could still practice social distancing while performing, such as solo acts or artists who live in the same household.

Local R&B artist and University of Georgia student Convict Julie performed from her bedroom for the first episode of "Live From Over There."

"It was kind of weird because it's not the same as being in front of actual people and interacting with people the way that you would if you actually are at a concert venue," Convict Julie said.

Before the pandemic hit, Convict Julie organized a solo tour up the East Coast over the summer. Every date was then canceled as the reality of the disease caused venues to close.

Although Convict Julie cannot perform live for the foreseeable future, but she has turned to social media to maintain her presence and connect with her audience. Convict Julie also hopes to start her own livestream show to perform, showcase an "intimate look" into her music-making process and raise money for COVID-19 relief.

## Un-digital drag

Troupes within the drag community in Athens do not have plans to pivot to the digital realm. Instead, they're resting and looking forward to resuming in-person shows.

All drag in Athens — shows by FEMME, The Kourtesans, the Athens Showgirl Cabaret and Boybutante AIDS Foundation, Inc. — was canceled until further notice after the shelter-in-place ordinance went into effect.

The cancellations have financially impacted individual performers and the larger drag community. Queen Alex Suarez said the absence of shows since mid-March has cost her between \$1,000-\$1,500. Boybutante AIDS Foundation, Inc. had to cancel this year's Boybutante Ball, its biggest fundraiser of the year.

Drag performer Lisa Couchlocker considered organizing a digital set for The Kourtesans in late March. The tendency for drag is to start in

your bedroom, and the Zoom-style drag show could provide anyone doing drag in their bedroom the chance to begin performing for an audience, Couchlocker said.

As weeks progressed, Couchlocker found that it presented some logistical challenges. Instead, Couchlocker is producing personal, drag-focused content on her Instagram, including makeup tutorials and photos of new outfits.

Suarez said she is using this time to rest and not push herself to work. The Athens Showgirl Cabaret also wants its performers to rest instead of moving to digital performances, member Jenn Sparx said.

An online drag show can't replicate the same atmosphere as an LGBTQ+ friendly space, Sparx said, which is part of the reason for drag shows in the first place.

"Without these drag shows, there's not really a space for us to gather," Sparx said. "We just don't have that physical space that lets us all come together."

When social distancing ordinances are lifted, each troupe plans to bring shows back as soon as possible. In the meantime, Suarez said she and other queens in Athens are advocating for social distancing until troupes can return to the dance floor.

“Without these drag shows, there’s not really a space for us to gather.”

JENN SPARX, MEMBER OF ATHENS SHOWGIRL CABARET

# SERVICE INDUSTRY WORKERS ADJUST TO BUSINESS CLOSURES

**Savannah Sicurella**

Culture Editor

Kate Fleming's phone bill was the first to go.

Fleming, formerly a server at George's Lowcountry Table, was hired one week before the owners closed the dining room due to fears over the spread of COVID-19. Though the restaurant shifted to takeout and delivery orders, there wasn't a burning need for waitstaff, Fleming said. She was then let go.

"It's hard not knowing when you're going to get money again to put gas in your car or buy the extra thing that your child wants," Fleming said. "It's just really hard."

On March 16, the Athens-Clarke County Mayor and Commission first issued a local state of emergency order to restrict public gatherings of 10 or more people, which effectively limited the number of patrons businesses could serve. Gov. Brian Kemp later implemented and extended a statewide shelter-in-place through April 30, which superseded local orders. On April 20, Kemp announced restaurant dine-in services could resume basic operations on April 27, though bars and nightclubs would remain closed until further notice.

When all nonessential businesses were ordered to cease activities other than basic operations, a major flow of income for most service industry workers in Athens was interrupted.

Bars, restaurants and coffee shops switched to curbside pickup, to-go or delivery models. Smaller businesses falling under the ACC government's "non-essential service" category, such as salons and boutiques, closed their doors.

Food preparation and serving-related occupations are the second-highest category of employment in ACC behind office and administrative support occupations, according to 2018 occupational employment statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Living day-to-day

The primary caregiver of her immunocompromised mother, Fleming said her only sources of income are the monthly Social Security checks her mother receives.

Fleming knows there are other employment opportunities she can apply for — like grocery stores or delivery services such as Instacart — but fears of exposing her mother to the virus outweigh the benefit of additional income, she said.

Servers are used to having quick access to cash because they're paid with tips, Fleming said. Before the pandemic, she said she wasn't living paycheck-to-paycheck but living month-to-month. Now, she said she's living day-to-day.

"I can pay a bill, and I can say that I'm working tomorrow, and I'll have tip money tomorrow, which is how I've been living," Fleming said. "That's not the



ZAKK GREENE/STAFF

“The unknown is really frightening to everyone who makes a living off of working for the public when people are afraid to go outside.”

ALYSSA ZANONE KREUTZ, HAIRDRESSER AT PAGEBOY SALON

deal anymore — if I have 100 bucks, it's the 100 bucks I'm going to have until the foreseeable future."

## Everything in flux

The coronavirus pandemic escalated during the University of Georgia's weeklong spring break, a time when Athens businesses already were vulnerable to low sales. UGA's subsequent two-week class suspension and shift to online instruction exacerbated the problem.

Alyssa Zanone Kreutz, a hairdresser at Pageboy Salon, fears the lessened activity in the local economy will have a "devastating impact" on businesses in town.

"It's like a six-month-long summer," Kreutz said, whose primary form of income is receiving commission off of services at the salon. "As a business that really works with students at UGA, we are already impacted in the summer by students not being at the salon."

Pageboy closed temporarily on March 19. Kreutz is not heavily impacted by the virus putting her out of work — she has savings and owns her own home, she said — but her husband also works in the service industry, so there is no active flow of money coming into the household.

"The unknown is really frightening to everyone who makes a living off of working for the public when people are afraid to go outside," Kreutz said.

## Finding support

Lauren Owens, a bartender at Hi-Lo Bar and Lounge and Little Kings Shuffle Club, applied for the Bartender Emergency Assistance Program, created by the United States Bartenders' Guild to help ease the burden of the closures, within the first few days of closings. Owens also filed for unemployment benefits, and said that she is considering applying for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

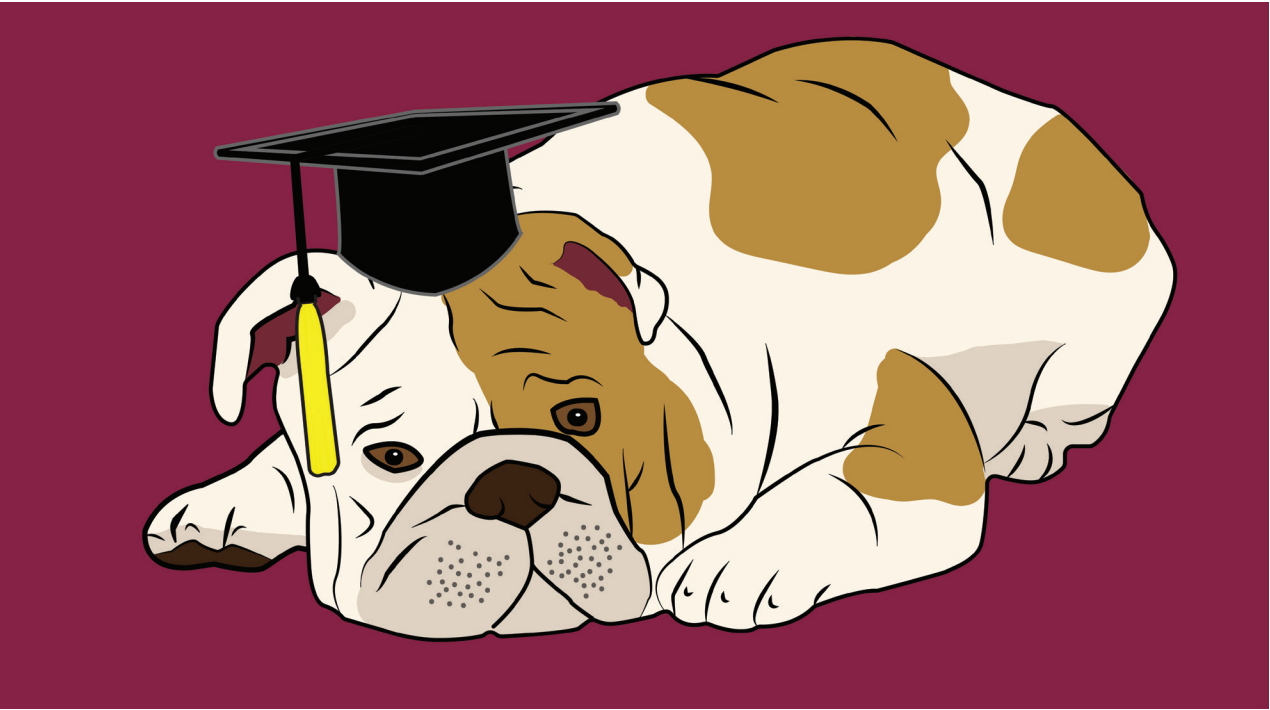
Little Kings will remain closed for the foreseeable future, while Hi-Lo is offering a limited menu for takeout and delivery. Both bars have established donation pools for their employees, and Owens said she has received donations through the crowdsourced Athens Virtual Tip Jar spreadsheet.

Owens has yet to reach a place where she is worried about her finances, though she's worried about the places that make Athens, Athens not being able to ride out the pandemic. She finds solace in the support she's receiving from her management and the community at large.

"I know personally it's nice to feel really supported and know that I have people that I can rely on and that care about me, and that makes me feel really safe," Owens said.



# Opinion



ALEX ALDANA/  
CONTRIBUTOR

## A global pandemic was not part of my senior year plans

I imagined a perfect final semester. Then COVID-19 came to Athens.

**Erin Schilling**  
Staff Writer

At the beginning of this year, I pre-planned my nostalgic last-semester-of-college moments.

I already felt grateful all year for my mundane routines — Friday nights playing pool in my favorite bar or Saturday mornings drinking coffee with my roommate. I looked forward to the bittersweet series of “lasts” I would spend with friends who felt like family in a town that felt like home.

I planned perfectly timed tears because I wanted to take a few moments to fully appreciate how much I’ve enjoyed my cozy life in this college town.

However, my regularly scheduled nostalgia never aired. Instead, a global pandemic turned my spring programming into gray static. The reality that I was leaving my home of the last four years crashed down on me, canceling my extended goodbye.

Instead of worrying if I could finish a paper, I now worry about rent payments for an apartment I haven’t even been staying in because I lost my job as a student worker. I worry about how I am going to enter a job market in shambles or how any media company will have enough money to hire me.

I worry about friends who have also lost jobs and opportunities and when I’ll be able to see or hug them again.

This bittersweet spring became simply bitter in just a few

days. The nervous excitement of graduation turned into anxious fear. Any tears I shed are no longer part of a romantic farewell, just salty reminders of the unfairness of everything.

I am grateful for my situation, of course. I am not fighting for my life in a hospital or hoping for a loved one’s recovery. Though I lost my job, my parents can still help me. My biggest loss of the coronavirus pandemic is much smaller than others’.

But in the past several weeks, I think I’ve gone through the seven stages of grief. I’m still teetering between “depression” and “hope and acceptance,” but every day I find more aspects of my life to appreciate.

The pandemic has forced me — and all of us — to slow down and think about what we find important. I have family and friends who are healthy and love me, and I’m more confident than ever that I want to be a journalist as I’ve seen the importance of transparency and information in this crisis.

**This bittersweet spring became simply bitter in just a few days.**

Instead of juggling my part-time job, The Red & Black and classwork, I’ve spent sunny afternoons chatting with my mom and doing puzzles in my pajamas. Though my grandmother is disappointed neither me nor my brother will have a graduation ceremony, she’s safe and healthy.

I may not be in Athens, but I still report on a town whose community support for each other makes me proud.

*Erin Schilling is a senior English and journalism double major from Peachtree City.*



## Value essential workers

*Service industry employees deserve better protection*

**AJ Askew**  
Guest Columnist

What will you do if your workplace closes down? How do you go to work when it could be damaging your health and the health of your community? These are some of the questions that I and other members of the Athens service industry have been asking ourselves during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The emergency ordinances that went into effect on March 20 in Athens-Clarke County, the University of Georgia’s shift to online learning and subsequent statewide policies have impacted local restaurants and shops. Following the orders of Athens-Clarke County Mayor and Commission, nonessential businesses were ordered to close. On April 20, Governor Brian Kemp announced that some nonessential businesses would be allowed to reopen.

Many service industry workers, including students, live paycheck-to-paycheck and depend on consistent hours to pay rent, bills and living expenses. While everyone wants to avoid a devastating loss of income, workers now have to consider that going to work is potentially hazardous to our health.

During this pandemic, the Athens businesses that have remained open are relying on their staff to come to work. Those still working have to cope with changes in their usual workday in the form of severe cuts in hours. In response to COVID-19, businesses are implementing new sanitizing and cleaning procedures. The workers not only have to adapt to these new policies, but they have to do so with the knowledge that these changes are more for the safety and health of the customers, not the staff.

At my job (which I am not mentioning for fear of retaliation), additional procedures ensure the lobby area is cleaned almost hourly, but they do not outline any additional cleaning in the back where the employees work. Customers can request contactless delivery, but delivery drivers themselves cannot request this option. In addition, drivers are not given any protective materials such as wipes, hand sanitizer or gloves to keep with them in their cars.

I’ve printed out signs for the door that read “We Appreciate our Loyal Customers” along with a reassuring message, but I have yet to receive anything from my company that shows they appreciate their workers.

Some companies, such as Starbucks, are offering bonuses to the employees that continue to work while giving paid sick leave to the workers who choose to stay home. My job has not offered any such benefits. My company also refuses to waive the need for a doctor’s note to call out sick, despite evidence that visiting the doctor at this time can be inaccessible or dangerous. This can be especially problematic for those of us in the service industry whose employers do not offer health insurance for workers.

I applaud businesses that stay open and give the public access to essential services, but I implore them to consider who is really providing these services.

The people working in the service industry are dealing with fear and anxiety about leaving our homes, along with everyone else. We deserve appreciation for continuing a dependable service in a time filled with precariousness and change.

*AJ Askew is a senior sociology major.*

### GUEST COLUMN

## What happens when classes go to Zoom

**Janet Frick**

On a sunny afternoon in early March, I smiled at the students (mostly graduating seniors) who were leaving my class for the last time before spring break. The news of the novel coronavirus was something we were hearing about in other parts of the world, but it felt like a distant threat.

“Y’all be safe, get some sunshine, and wash your hands,” I called as they left class that day. I never imagined it would be the last time I would see them in person.

COVID-19 has hit the world hard, endangering lives, shuttering businesses and turning our academic system upside down. Students of all ages have had their academic year suddenly disrupted, with the expectation that learning would continue online. Also caught in this whirlwind, of course, are teachers.

University of Georgia faculty have had to adjust our courses and rapidly learn new techniques for online instruction. We UGA faculty are fortunate in many ways. First, although we all had numerous aspects of professional life that were disrupted (canceled research travel, labs that are shut down indefinitely), we received tremendous support from a wide variety of campus offices, in particular from the Center for Teaching and Learning, which immediately created thorough guides for online instruction.

**I never imagined it would be the last time I would see them in person.**

But at the same time that faculty faced a steep learning curve in teaching, we had decisions to make — should we try to deliver content at the time of our class (i.e., synchronously), or create videos ahead of time that would be posted (asynchronously)? How should we do tests? What if our students get sick, or have other stressors that make finishing the class difficult? What if we don’t have reliable high speed internet at home?

In addition, many faculty have family responsibilities that we are juggling in the midst of this chaos. With schools and daycares closed, faculty — particularly female faculty — with children at home suddenly find ourselves working from home while also serving as homeschool teachers, sibling squabble referees and short-order cooks. Workplace analyses consistently find that even in dual-income households, female professionals shoulder a heavier load of child care and domestic responsibilities. These hurdles are expanded for single parents, those with children with disabilities and/or those with elder care responsibilities.

Despite all this, I have seen UGA faculty unite together like never before in the past month. We have become adept at Zoom meetings and have oohed and aahed over babies and puppies we have met in those sessions. We have shared tips and tricks for how to create engaging online videos. We have solemnly discussed how we would cover classes if one of us gets sick. And we have mourned with students over canceled end-of-year events (especially graduation).

These lost experiences of the spring 2020 semester are irreplaceable, but the UGA community will come back strong. And for faculty, at the end of the day, it’s not research, it’s not conference travel, it’s not academic papers, but it’s students — and our genuine enjoyment of teaching you, working with you, sharing in these sacred years of your lives — that make our jobs worthwhile.

*Dr. Janet Frick is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences. She has been a professor at UGA since 1997.*

As businesses in Athens shifted to takeout and accommodated social distancing, work for service industry staff became more challenging. TAYLOR GERLACH/STAFF

**The people working in the service industry are dealing with fear and anxiety about leaving our homes, along with everyone else.**



# Sports



## UNFINISHED SEASONS

### 0-0 OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

The track and field team's outdoor season was canceled before it was scheduled to begin on March 20, while the indoor season was completed with the exception of canceled NCAA indoor championships.

### 14-4 BASEBALL

The baseball team played less than a month of its 56-game regular season and finished the year losing to Georgia Southern twice, never facing an SEC opponent.

### 23-5 2-1 SEC SOFTBALL

The softball team played just over a month of its 54-game season and earned its last win against Furman on March 11.

### 8-2 3-0 SEC WOMEN'S TENNIS

The women's tennis team was at the halfway point of its regular season with 10 matches to go when the last half was canceled.

### 9-2 3-0 SEC MEN'S TENNIS

The men's tennis team was on a six-match winning streak when its season was canceled with nine regular season matches remaining.

### 6 tournaments canceled MEN'S GOLF

The men's golf team had played seven of its 10 regular season tournaments when its season was canceled, with six tournaments left counting championships.

### 5 tournaments canceled WOMEN'S GOLF

The two tournaments the women's golf team planned to host the annual Liz Murphey Collegiate Classic and the NCAA Athens Regionals — both were canceled.

### 3-4 2-4 SEC GYMNASTICS

The gymnastics team ended its season with the team's three most important meets of the season — senior day, SEC championships and NCAA Regional — canceled.

### 6-6 1-5 SEC EQUESTRIAN

The equestrian team finished its regular season but was unable to host the SEC championships in Bishop or attend NCEA championships.

### 16-16 5-13 SEC MEN'S BASKETBALL

The men's basketball team finished its regular season and won its first game of the SEC tournament in Nashville before it was canceled on March 12.

### 5-1 4-2 MEN'S & WOMEN'S SWIM & DIVE

The swimming and diving teams finished their regular season and SEC championships, but both men's and women's NCAA championships were canceled. The women's NCAA championships were scheduled to be held in Athens.

## ‘A second chance’

### Senior athletes weigh eligibility after cancellations

Augusta Stone  
Sports Editor

Spencer Ralston's mental approach had been steady. The senior captain of the Georgia men's golf team knew he wanted to fulfill his life's dream by turning pro after playing in the NCAA championship in May.

The coronavirus pandemic forced him to rethink his plans. Ralston's last three regular season tournaments and all postseason championships were canceled. The decisions were made by the SEC and NCAA in mid-March while Ralston was competing in a Canadian PGA Tour qualifier in Dothan, Alabama.

Georgia men's golf head coach Chris Haaack called Ralston on March 13 after news broke of the cancellations. The two kept in touch while Ralston weighed the possibility of returning to Georgia in the event he was granted eligibility relief by the NCAA.

Ralston waited three weeks to pick up another golf club.

"It was just kind of a weird place to be in," he said.

The NCAA's decision on March 30 to grant spring-sport athletes an extra year of eligibility forced Georgia athletes approaching the end of their college careers to face a question they hadn't considered before the COVID-19 outbreak: Will I spend another year in Athens?

PGA event cancellations caused

Ralston to put off his goal of playing professional golf in favor of staying at Georgia for another year. As of press time, the PGA isn't set to return until June. All tournaments to that point have been canceled, including the RBC Heritage in Hilton Head, South Carolina, where Ralston planned to compete.

"There's just a lot of uncertainty in the professional golf world right now," Ralston said. "They don't know when they're going to play, if they're going to play."

Ralston isn't alone in his decision to extend his college career. Victoria Powell, a graduate transfer sprinter in her final year with Georgia track and field, said she felt certain she was ready to end her track career and move onto a career in sports communications before the coronavirus pandemic. She's since had a change of heart and plans to sprint in next year's outdoor season.

"It was definitely like a second chance kind of thing," Powell said. "If things had proceeded as normal, I would've been done."

Georgia equestrian senior Ali Tritschler wasn't offered eligibility relief, as equestrian didn't fall under the NCAA's spring-sport umbrella. Despite the ruling, she still had the option to compete another year since she redshirted the 2016-17 season.

Tritschler hadn't planned on using her extra year until the coronavirus pandemic canceled SEC and National Collegiate Equestrian Association championships. She wanted closure.

"I had this extra eligibility just sitting there, and with the job market right now and everything, I just realized that the thing I thought was such

a burden in my life, my freshman year, actually turned out to be the biggest blessing now," Tritschler said. "It just took a national pandemic — a worldly pandemic — to prove it."

Tritschler, Powell and Ralston are adjusting to a new normal within the limitations of virtual team meetings, online classes and social distance restrictions. Tritschler meets with her coaches weekly on Zoom. Powell works to find ways to exercise despite the closure of tracks at her alma mater The Lovett School in Atlanta, where she used to run before the coronavirus pandemic.

If things had proceeded as normal, I would've been done.

VICTORIA POWELL,  
GRADUATE SPRINTER

Ralston has made it back to the golf course. He plays in his hometown with his 14-year-old brother, Brigham, at Chattahoochee Golf Club in Gainesville. The course is still open, though precautions are in place. Golfers can't touch the flagstick, and the golf ball doesn't go all the way in the hole — all to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

"It's a different game than I feel like I normally play," Ralston said. "But it's kind of fun to get out of the house a little bit [and] spend some time with my family."

Tori Heck contributed to this article.



The usual Division I 35-player baseball roster limit will not be enforced next year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

RYAN CAMERON/  
STAFF

### Baseball braces for roster challenges amid rule changes

Henry Queen  
Managing Editor

On a normal Monday during baseball season, Scott Daeley would be sitting in the bleachers watching the best high school baseball game he could find within driving distance.

Georgia's hitting coach and recruiting coordinator tried to catch at least one high school game each week. When the Bulldogs had a week-end series on the road, Daeley spurned the team bus for a trip in his car. On the way to Florida, he tried finding a game in South Georgia. On the way to Vanderbilt, he liked stopping in North Georgia.

Daeley's recruiting trips are now on hold, and the future of Georgia baseball's roster is in limbo.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellations of professional, college and high school games. In response to the crisis, the NCAA extended its in-person recruiting ban through May 31. It also allowed schools to grant an extra year of eligibility to spring-sport athletes.

Georgia baseball plans to offer eligibility relief to the players who want it, Daeley said. The uncertainty surrounding players' decisions, along with the inability to evaluate recruits,

will make it difficult to manage the team's roster, Daeley said.

"It's always a juggling act with us as far as how many incoming guys we take on," he said. "We're a long ways away from knowing exactly where we're going to be scholarship-wise."

Baseball is the only Division I spring sport with a roster limit. It also has just 11.7 scholarships to distribute among 27 players.

The NCAA won't enforce the normal roster limit of 35 players next season due to COVID-19. Each player over the limit must be taking advantage of the eligibility relief.

Georgia seniors Cam Shepherd, Patrick Sullivan, Logan Moody and Justin Glover haven't decided if they will return as of press time. Moody and Glover are trying to decide if they want to enter the workforce, pitching coach Sean Kenny said.

"My feelings based on our conversations were one day they want to come back, and the next day, they wake up and they're not sure," Kenny said.

Seventeen other players are eligible to leave for the professional ranks, further complicating Georgia's roster management. Major League Baseball teams can select redshirt sophomores and juniors (and this year, seniors) who might have been expected to return to college. They can also draft and sign high school seniors who were committed to play in college.

The 2020 MLB Draft was shortened from 40 rounds to as little as five rounds due to financial concerns

connected with COVID-19. A deal between the MLB and the player's association also capped signing bonuses for undrafted free agents at \$20,000.

Georgia will have to wait longer than normal to figure out which players are returning. MLB's signing deadline will be as late as Aug. 1. Last year, it was July 12.

Kenny said the rule changes won't have an effect on next year's recruiting class, which has 16 commits according to Prep Baseball Report. Future recruiting classes will likely be smaller.

"You kind of have to wait and see what your own roster looks like," Kenny said. "We just don't know."

A proposed transfer rule that would allow athletes to compete immediately after their first transfer would add another wrinkle to the situation.

If the Division I Council votes to remove the requirement in May, a wave of transfers would likely ensue. Players are already more incentivized to transfer since rosters will be deeper and more experienced with the eligibility relief granted in the wake of COVID-19.

"[The proposed transfer rule] will play a huge role in how rosters are managed moving forward," Daeley said. "I think it's good for the players. Some of them end up in situations they didn't expect to be in."

Mason Cantrell contributed to this article.





A Service Industry Fundraiser Coordinated By

# The Red & Black



In this online art fundraising sale, 100% of the proceeds will be split between The Garrie Vereen Memorial Emergency Relief Fund, a local fund that supports workers in the Athens arts, music and service industries, and Giving Kitchen, a Georgia-based nonprofit that assists restaurant workers with medical emergencies.

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