



Students react to COVID-19 mandates

BY LAWRENCE LOFARO
 Contributor

Students across the world have spent more than a year coping with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. For those enrolled at County College of Morris, there are mixed emotions about the utmost caution of COVID-19 mask, vaccine and remote mandates.

For the most part, CCM students have adapted to online and remote classes. Most believe that there are both positives and negatives to the postponement of in-person classes at CCM. However, Oct. 27, in-person classes officially met on campus for the first time.

A mask mandate is currently in place for students and staff members while on campus, regardless of vaccination status. CCM strongly recommends that their students and staff receive the vaccine prior to the start of in-person classes. Medical and religious waivers are accepted by CCM, but those who are unvaccinated must report weekly polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests in order to be on campus.

Some students are happy to be back in person, regardless of any mandates put in place. "I am glad I can finally get back into the classroom after all these months at home," said David Kostek, a second-year student at CCM. "I didn't really mind my remote class, but I think it's important to have some sort of normal college experience whether I have to wear a mask or not."

Other students are a little frustrated with the State of New Jersey and CCM's extremely cautious mandates. "I acknowledge the seriousness of this virus and the Delta variant, but in my opinion, some of these requirements are over the top," said Peter Clark, a senior at CCM. "They are making it as inconvenient as they can for those who



PHOTO BY DANIELLE PECCI

A mask required sign located on the first floor of the Learning Resource Center. Numerous signs are present around CCM's campus as reminders to remain masked and stay safe.

don't want to take the vaccine. I am fully vaccinated, but from a non-bias perspective, I think things are a little unfair."

One student is still concerned with the well-being of himself and his family. "I definitely would not advocate for students not attending in-person classes, but personally, I do not think it is something I will participate in at this time," said Max Hopkins, a first-year student at CCM. "I have an immediate family member who has a weakened immune system and

is at a high risk of getting COVID-19, so it is my hope that CCM allows students to be completely online for as long as possible. My family and I aren't going to live in fear for the rest of our lives, but at the same time, if I can limit my exposure to close contact affairs, I am going to do that."

CCM students have a wide variety of opinions on the pandemic. While in-person classes have resumed, nothing is certain regarding this virus, and CCM's plans are subject to change.

Titans Basketball attempts to return to normal

BY JASON NEW
 Contributor

There are simple joys during a basketball game that all fans have come to expect. The snap of the net after a made 3. Sneakers squeaking as a player cuts on the hardwood. A dribbled ball echoing throughout a spacious gym. The roar of the crowd was once one of those constants, but COVID-19 changed that reality.

As the start of the 2021-2022 basketball season approaches, the CCM men's basketball team is preparing to return to some sense of normalcy, while still being faced with challenges due to the current state of the pandemic.

"We are not asking our student athletes to do anything above and beyond what all of our students here at CCM are being asked to do," said CCM Athletic Director Jack Sullivan. "They have the option of being tested and results submitted every Friday, if not vaccination cards. There are also protocols put in place by the conference for screening questions."

Sullivan has served as CCM's athletic director since the fall of 2002. He was previously the head

basketball coach at Bloomfield College.

"Fans will have to be masked," Sullivan said. "We are not going to ask the population to provide vaccination cards. They will have to wear masks and be socially distanced. We are blessed with a great facility, and we have the opportunity where we can have people socially distanced and spaced out."

Sullivan also said that while the team will be playing more than 20 games this season, there will still be less games than in typical seasons due to restrictions on overnight travel. CCM also will not be hosting the "Turkey Hoops Shoot" tournament as it has in previous years.

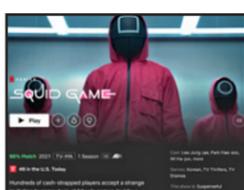
"It's starting to pick back up," said men's basketball head coach Anthony Obrey, regarding the frequency of practices. "When we first started, it was a little slow trying to get these guys vaccinated as quickly as possible, trying to figure out who wants to get vaccinated and who doesn't. So, is it how many practices I would like to have to start things off? No, but it's gradually picking up."

Now in his eighth year at the

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Athletes, coaches react to Gruden resigning

BY ETHAN LEAVER
Contributor

Jon Gruden resigned from his position as head coach of the Las Vegas Raiders Oct. 11, after several disparaging emails he had written between 2010 to 2018 came to light. In the emails he made racist, homophobic and misogynistic remarks.

The Raiders had 82 percent black players prior to Gruden's hiring in 2017, more than any other team. Under Gruden, those numbers declined to 69 percent in 2019 and 67 percent in 2020.

Earlier this year, Raiders defensive end Carl Nassib became the first active NFL player to come

out as gay. Nassib was hit hard by the leaked emails, which included homophobic slurs.

Joe Mattesich, former football head coach at Jefferson Township High School, believes there is no place for this kind of talk. "He should have been fired before he even had the opportunity to resign," Mattesich said. "A coach is supposed to be a leader, and he is no leader. He lost the respect and trust of his locker room and there was never going to be a chance he would gain it back."

Nick Gencarelli, who plays soccer at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg Florida, does not think he would be able to play for a coach like Gruden. "I would not be able

to look at him the same," he said. "The head coach is supposed to be the guy that you can trust with absolutely anything and you cannot have that same level of trust with him anymore. Gruden deserves to be banned from the league, but I feel like there has to be more accountability from the NFL."

Gencarelli argued that harsher punishments for NFL players were necessary. "There are a bunch of players who have committed worse crimes than Gruden and they just get a few games suspended," he said. "If Gruden was going to be essentially banned for verbal remarks, then NFL players who have been suspended for domestic abuse should be banned too."

Gruden was not banned, but it's not expected that he will have any kind of coaching role in the NFL again. The current NFL policy on domestic abuse is a suspension of six games without pay. If another incident occurs then the incident would result in a lifetime ban.

Paulie Monaco, a football player at Bucknell University, was surprised at the number of people defending Gruden. "I saw a lot of people on the internet that were trying to say that people can change over time," Monaco said. "That might be true in some circumstances, but the guy was nearly 50 years old when these emails first started. Gruden clearly had no

problem in using those words. He used them in such a casual manner that I cannot believe anyone would defend this guy."

The only reason these emails were even found was because the NFL was investigating former Washington football team president Bruce Allen for sexual harassment allegations.

Many people, including Las Vegas Raiders quarterback Derek Carr, advocated for the release of all emails from coaches, general managers and owners. Whether or not the NFL decides to conduct such an investigation, it is highly unlikely that this kind of communication will be allowed in the future.

COLUMN: A talk on philosophy and architecture: Some statements are still facts

BY PROFESSOR KENNETH SHOULER
Advisor for the Youngtown Edition

In October I was invited to speak before a small senior citizen's group in Mountain Lakes. When I asked what topic I should prepare, the director suggested art or architecture, sports or politics, ethics, even philosophies of well-being. "Anything that gets their brains working," she said. Because philosophers since Socrates have addressed the subject of well-being, and because in ethics class we had just been discussing Epicurus, a Hellenistic thinker from the century after Socrates, I planned to raise questions with the audience that Epicurus would have asked. Epicurus asserted that a life of well-being had two components: health in the body and freedom from disturbance in the soul. The first is inarguable and a precondition of the second. "What disturbs your souls?" I asked them. "No one admits what is true anymore," said a man in his eighties, with irritation in his voice.

He was right. He implied that without an agreement on what constitutes truth, there can be no movement forward. Election results and climate science, vaccine efficacy and mask wearing, the attack on the Capitol on Jan. 6 and the miscreant behavior political extremism has engendered—it all gets dismissed, as if they were mere events about which we could adopt any old "opinion." On this view, facts are optional, about as negotiable as dinner items on the menu. The degree of such shallowness seems entirely recent. All one needs to dismiss facts these days is a political affiliation, which functions as an excuse. "Let's fly our freedom flags and adopt alternative facts," the mob seems to be saying.

At this point philosophy comes into play. Two of the benefits of philosophy are an increased stress on critical thinking and a pursuit of the truth. Among other things, pursuit of the truth means the puncturing of myths. What the Greeks called myths needed to be replaced by what the Greeks called logos, a combination of math, reason,



PROFESSOR KENNETH SHOULER

and evidence. Pursuit of the truth must be the foundation of philosophy since all progress in thought and scientific discovery rests on acknowledging the truth of individual statements and building on them. Combine those true statements and we have a chance to discover sound arguments.

I had prepared a talk about architecture that day and the group seemed eager to hear it. I explained the movement in building called "The Race to the Skies," when builders followed their owners' wishes to create the tallest structures in the world. With the construction of skyscrapers, starting in lower Manhattan in the first decade of the last century, New York's identity grew with them. A metropolis hurtled skyward. But this New York story began in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia City Hall, with its ornate, gothic design, topped out at 548 feet in 1901, to become the tallest habitable structure in the world. It held sway until 1908, when Frederick G. Bourne, the President of the Singer Manufacturing Company, commissioned the French architect Ernest Flagg to build the Singer Tower at 149 Broadway. It reached 674 feet. But it held first place for only a year.

Starting with the Singer Tower, I provided details and showed images of six skyscrapers. Next was the Met Life Tower, with four clock faces, each 26 feet in diameter. Its luminous brilliance is best at night, lighting the sky 700 feet over Madison Square Park at 23rd. It was king of the hill, but for just four years. Until Frank Woolworth, the owner of all those five and dime stores, punctured the clouds with a 792-foot neo-gothic edifice on 233 Broadway, opposite City Hall. Woolworth's 57-story behemoth ruled the skies for nearly two decades, 1913 until April 1930.

Woolworth surrendered the lead to designer H. Craig Severance and the Bank of Manhattan Company Building, later 40 Wall Street and now called the Trump Building. Begun in 1928, the Bank of Manhattan skyscraper was in direct competition with the Chrysler Building (since Severance had once been Walter Chrysler's partner), rising simultaneously at 405 Lexington Avenue. To keep ahead of the Chrysler Building, the architects of the Bank of Manhattan modified their original plans for a 68-story, 840-foot building to 71 stories and 927 feet to finish two feet taller than the declared height of the Chrysler Building.

By May of 1930, it appeared that Severance had won the race. His was the tallest building in the world. Then Chrysler made a surreptitious move against his former partner. A stainless-steel spire was

assembled inside of his chrome-tipped edifice, out of public view. By May 1930, the spire was hoisted into place, above the building's art-deco crown, finishing the structure at 77 stories and 1,048 feet. Chrysler's dream of building the tallest structure in the world was fulfilled. Triumphant over his bitter rival, he was king of the universe, a title he could boast of for less than ten months.

Several months before the Chrysler Building took its bows as king of the hill in New York and the world, John Jacob Raskob had commissioned a new building on the corner of 34th Street and Fifth Avenue. Had the Empire State Building not been on such a fast-paced time schedule, Chrysler would have enjoyed being number one a while longer. But financiers Raskob and Pierre S. du Pont threw their building up with unrivalled haste. Its antenna spire and marble lobbies completed in just 13 months in March of 1931, the Empire State Building dwarfed its competitor at 42nd and Lexington by a staggering 202 feet, finishing with 102 floors and 1,250 feet high. Include the spire and its height is 1,454 feet, well over a quarter of a mile high.

My time was up. It had been fun and the group showed their approval with applause. It was at once history and pure escapism, a needed respite from the omnipresent heaviness of post-Trump, vaccine-phobic, mask-rejecting America. Some facts are still safe.

THE YOUNGTOWN EDITION

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All students are welcome to contribute articles to The Youngtown Edition either in person or via e-mail. However, students cannot receive a byline if they belong to the organization on which they are reporting. The deadline for articles is the Monday prior to a production.

TITANS

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helm, Obrey acknowledges that while team chemistry might be impacted by the decreased number of practices, every other team is dealing with similar circumstances.

"The group of guys we have this year are more understanding of the circumstances, and they are picking things up with a quicker pace," Obrey said. "But as far as chemistry goes, it's going to take time. COVID did have a major impact with it, but they are adapting

quickly."

Obrey stressed the importance of returning players Kymani Dunbar, Dezlyn Sebastien, Funot Woldetsai and Nasheim Harte in leading this new group and establishing "the culture of County College of Morris Basketball."

Both Sullivan and Obrey discussed how a successful season does not translate directly into wins and losses. They highlighted how academics come first, and maintaining academic eligibility is paramount to success this season and for recruitment opportunities to four-year institutions.

"If you don't do what you have to do in the classroom, then none of the basketball stuff matters," Obrey said.

The Titans are looking to play up-tempo this season, with increased athletic ability on the wings. They intend to trap and press on defense and thereby, create opportunities to run the fast break. Obrey said the team is smaller than in years past, so it is more equipped to get out and run.

The season will still not be back to complete normalcy, but hearing that crowd again will be close enough for now.

REVIEW: Watch Netflix's hit 'Squid Game' if you have a strong stomach

BY LAURA
SAN ROMAN
Contributor

To what lengths would you go to pay off your debts? How about participating in children's games for the grand prize of over 38.5 million dollars that ends in murder if you lose? The recent *Squid Game* series streaming on Netflix explores this concept to a gory degree.

When *Squid Game* began streaming on Netflix Sept. 17, social media went wild. It was an instant hit, staying on the Netflix Top 10 for weeks, where it remains. The South Korean drama was directed by Hwang Dong-hyuk and star actors Lee Jung-jae, Park Hae Soo, HoYeon Jung, Oh Young Soo, Anupam Tripathi, Wi Ha-joon, Heo Sung-tae and Kim Joo-ryeong.

The main character, Seong Gi-hun, lives with his mother in the impoverished neighborhood of Ssangmun-dong, due to his extreme debt and gambling addiction. He barely has enough cash to buy a birthday present for his daughter. After being chased and beaten by loan sharks, Seong is approached by a well-dressed man in the subway who offers him a chance to play a traditional Korean children's game, Ddakji, for 100,000 Korean won. He accepts, only to realize it's to compete in an extremely dangerous competition, where elimination means instant death. Seong later calls the number on the anonymous man's business card to join the Squid Game for the chance to win 45.6 billion won, which is equal to over 38.5 million dollars.



PHOTO BY DANIELLE PECCI

Season one of Squid Game is available to watch on Netflix, with a total of nine episodes averaging 54 minutes per episode.

The undisclosed location where the Squid Game takes place is decorated like a children's playground, with bright colors, large jungle gyms and a gigantic robotic girl with sensors for eyes. There is a beautiful juxtaposition of brightly colored children's games and a brutal ending if you fail to complete them. The 456 participants are guarded by masked soldiers in red costumes. Their masks are marked with either a circle, a triangle or a square, which defines their internal rankings. The games amplify themselves in levels of inhumanity, eventually forcing the players to compete against each other.

Squid Game is a clear political commentary on the disparity between the rich and poor in South Korea, not unlike the message from the movie *Parasite*. The amount of money that the players can win increases by 100,000 won each time another player dies. This is the equivalent of 85 dollars, showing how little human life is valued and to what lengths the rich will go to get richer. Parallels can also be made to the popular *Hunger Games* series. Although *The Hunger Games* was written for a young adult audience, participants in both are competing for their lives to keep the rich and powerful entertained.

It is hard not to root for our protagonist and his odd group of friends, especially since they are constantly on guard from a thug and his colleagues. Later in the series, viewers learn more about the masked soldiers through a detective that infiltrates.

The cinematography is shot almost like a documentary, with multiple angles and tight shots on actors' faces. This fully immerses the audience into the Squid Game experience. During the game, everything is incredibly fast paced but once it has ended, and the dead are tallied up, things slow down. The participants are left to eat their abysmal meals and converse about

who they were before they agreed to this torture, seamlessly providing the viewers with the necessary background, without creating a lull.

Squid Game has been Netflix's greatest success, allotting the streaming platform 4.4 million new subscribers. Though a second season has not been officially ordered, fans can expect it due to the profits of the first season. If you are still on the fence about watching this Korean thriller, be sure you have a strong stomach and the ability to listen to the original Korean audio with English subtitles, as the English dubbing doesn't create the same experience.

OPINION: Students' views on social media: Connecting with others, balancing temptation

BY DANIELLE PECCI
Editor-in-Chief

The rapid advancements in technology have made it possible for people from across the world to connect with one another via social media. Technological platforms allow family and friends to keep in touch and quickly see what is going on in the lives of others. Besides connecting with people, social media exposes users to current events and news, allows for self-expression, and can be used like a digital photo album, allowing people to look back at happy memories from previously posted pictures.

However, social media is also known for creating unrealistic expectations and can become addictive. Users can also experience cyber bullying, anxiety, and social isolation from its use.

A study by the Pew Research Center conducted in July 2020

found that 64 percent of Americans believe that social media has a mostly negative effect on the way things are going in the country today. Pew stated in another study that "a majority of teens believe social media has had a positive impact on various aspects of their lives," and "81% of teens say social media makes them feel more connected to what's going on in their friends' lives."

Abraham Ruano, an animation major at CCM, said that some people are too quick to judge people's social media usage. "Social media, like all topics, has its own vices and virtues," Ruano said. "To some, social media is the only way they feel like they're welcome or accepted in life. Such is evident with apps like Discord and Snapchat, where communities are built with people who have the same interests. A con of social media is the toxicity found in it, especially in communities or

news outlets trying to get you to click on their ad for clout. Where there's darkness, there's light, and that shows in social media."

CCM students Lara Leyson, a computer science major and vice president of Womxn in STEM club, and Rachel Van Dyke, a respiratory therapy major, believe that social media has had a positive influence on their moods and well-being, mainly because of the ability to connect with friends and family.

Social media usage differs from individual to individual. Ruano tends to use social media at any time of the day, depending on whether a distraction or escape from the real world is needed, or because of boredom. Leyson uses Instagram approximately one hour per day, and she no longer uses TikTok because of the amount of time she felt was taken up by scrolling through it for hours at a time.

Van Dyke usually spends four hours per day on social media like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok; however, she spaces this timing throughout the day, spending a few minutes on social media every now and then as the day progresses.

Balancing life's responsibilities like family, job, school, self-care and social media can be challenging. Though, a lot of students try to find a way to fulfill their obligations. "I sometimes get distracted on social media and procrastinate on my schoolwork, which makes it hard to find a good balance between the two," Van Dyke said. "When it comes to work, I do not go on it at all until I finish what I am supposed to do and have downtime. I have been trying to use that technique more with schoolwork and media balance."

Leyson has found a steady system for balancing social media

usage and other responsibilities. "I try to do my schoolwork first, and when I take a break, I scroll through Instagram to see what's new and then take a walk or ride my bike outside to get some fresh air and proceed to do schoolwork afterwards," she said.

When using social media, time can often be undetectable. While someone's intentions may be to use it for a five-minute break, it is easy to be drawn in for long periods because of the stresses of life. Ultimately, the individual needs to find a way to have a healthy relationship with social media.

"What feels like half an hour is actually an hour and a half, and I sit there thinking what I could've been doing instead," Ruano said. "I don't see it too much as a social media problem, rather a personal problem. The phone isn't alive. It's not begging you to use it. It's an urge we have inside ourselves."

Students share their favorite ways to study

BY CAITLIN ROHRBACH
Contributor

One of the most dreadful and sometimes tiring components about education is studying. Many students decide not to study for big tests, which can result in a decline in their academic performance. Studying, though, is a suitable approach when wanting to reinforce newer information and remember it.

This generation has been accustomed to new and advanced technology, some of which is use-

ful to students cramming for a big exam. Some of the most popular platforms include Quizlet, PhotoMath, Khan Academy and many more. Another useful form of studying that doesn't involve the use of technology is standard flashcards.

Many students have different opinions on which form of studying is most useful. "I think the best study method is note cards because you retain the information once you write it down on the cards," said Jack Spinosa, a communication major at CCM. "After, it becomes more like a game vs. study-

ing, which helps me because I do not like traditional study tactics."

Nicola Petrazzuolo, a journalism major at CCM, uses technology as a tool for studying. "When I study for a test or quiz, I usually use Quizlet," Petrazzuolo said. "If I have a study guide I'll use the study guide. If I don't have a study guide, I'll make my own and then input it on Quizlet."

The world drastically changed once COVID-19 approached, and students were affected as well. This could result in a decline in academic strength and their prog-

ress overall.

"I have had to really keep on top of my due dates because it's very hard to keep track of days when you're simply staying at home all day," said Dana Miller, a fashion merchandising major at CCM. "I kept a planner with me at all times that is designated for schoolwork."

The continuation of COVID-19 resulted in an increase in app downloads worldwide. According to Julia Chan, a mobile insights analyst for Sensor Tower, "Google Classroom was the most

downloaded Education category app worldwide for April 2020 with more than 28.2 million installs, a 21x increase from April 2019."

Whether or not studying is a part of one's routine, some students like Spinosa may rely on what information they have already endured from being in class. "In all honesty, I'm not into studying," he said. "I do enjoy the note card route, but 80 percent of the time I don't actually study at all. I usually retain the information I learn in class and apply it to whatever work I'm doing."



COVID-19 Initiative

When: 11/30 @ 12:30 pm

Where: Davidson Rooms in the SCC

Who: SGA, Business Society, Respiratory Therapy Club, Nursing Department and Randolph Health Department.