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THE PROSPECTOR

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

AUGUST 2020

College in the age of coronavirus

Michael Cuvillo

The Prospector

Students attending UTEP this fall will have an unprecedented impact on the way they experience the university lifestyle due to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Not since the influenza pandemic of 1918, commonly referred to as the Spanish Flu, have cities shut down due to rising cases of a virus spreading. In El Paso, over 600 people perished due to complications from the virus.

According to the latest death count conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as of Aug. 4, COVID-19 has claimed more than 160,000 lives in the United States, resulting in universities being forced to shut down and move their curriculum online.

As an institution, UTEP has revamped its college schedule to reduce in-person classes and increase hybrid and online courses.



According to a news release by UTEP President Heather Wilson, before the pandemic, the university would offer 3,800 different sections in the fall semester, with only 12% of those courses being offered in an online format. Now, there will be a little more than 100 in-person, traditional classes, after having provided almost 2,500 online options to students.

Remote learning that will utilize meeting and

completing the majority of work online will add a new element of difficulty for students that have typically opted for in-person classes as their primary method of taking academic courses.

The college experience will also be far from typical for students, with the campus at "Limited Campus Operations," which is the second highest level of COVID-19 precaution on UTEP's Campus Recovery Matrix.

Wednesday Aug. 5, Wilson sent out a letter stating that coronavirus cases had dropped over a three-week period in El Paso and UTEP would be moving up from "Restricted Campus Operations," that has been in place since March.

"Coronavirus remains an urgent public health concern in our region and beyond, and we will continue to monitor conditions daily," said Wilson. "But with these new efforts and others like the revised fall schedule we announced last month, which will substantially reduce on-campus presence, and the proactive coronavirus testing program we announced yesterday, we believe we will be able to continue our teaching and research mission while keeping the safety of our campus

Graphic by Hugo Hinojosa community at the forefront."

Over this three-week period, the amount of COVID-19 cases has fluctuated while averaging 231 new cases per day, according to the El Paso official COVID-19 data website. Over the past seven days, 10.49% of people in El Paso were positivity for COVID-19

"Anything below 7.2% is going to be a good number," Gov. Greg Abbott said at a news conference in May. "If the positivity test rate is more than 10%, that's one of those red flags that we begin to look at."

Until further guidance, any in-person operations will require social distancing and face masks as a precaution. Remote operations are encouraged when possible and working in groups of no more than 10 people under these new guidelines.

After suspending school operations March 13, UTEP was able to use the rest of the semester as a test run for going entirely online. Although the transition created new challenges for UTEP's Technology Support Group, which has never encountered such a large number of students working online before.

"The work that we did was unprecedented," Frank Poblano,

Inside

Entertainment

Minerpalooza goes viral, page 7

Sports

Miner football preview, page 14

executive director of UTEP's Technology Support Group told the El Paso Herald. "Our ability to adapt was put to the test. The situation was stressful, but I had no doubt that we would be successful."

For some, a considerable part of the college experience is joining an organization, club or fraternity. These activities will still be available, but much like classes, in a virtual form. Housing space will be limited to one person rooms.

Testing will be available for all students who have classes on campus beginning Aug. 24. There are four locations planned for testing: The Fox Fine Arts Complex lower level courtyard, the breezeway between the Engineering and Classroom buildings, the Union breezeway, and the Undergraduate Learning Center patio. According to UTEP, these locations could be changed at any given time with prior communication.

As of now, there are still many facets of the college semester that have yet to be worked out.

Football and soccer seasons are scheduled to start within the next month but have yet to issue any guidelines for fans to attend games. Limited capacities are expected, according to UTEP Athletics, but guidance is still being evaluated.

With so much out of the realm of control for administrators, professors and students, there are few certainties for the upcoming semester outside of most of it being taught remotely. For more information and updates regarding UTEP's COVID-19 guidelines, visit utep.edu/ehs/COVID-19.

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AUGUST 2020

MICHAEL CUVIELLO, 747-5161

Masks and patience are key to returning to normalcy

Michael CuvIELLO

The Prospector

While leadership in the United States remains divided on the solutions to the current COVID-19 pandemic, with states and cities all using different tactics to combat the coronavirus, it is important to not base decisions on what is convenient or makes one feel better.

With nearly 5 million cases and over 154,471 American lives lost to COVID-19, according to a live count being conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), choosing the proper course to combat it has significant long-term implications for all citizens.

Initially, when the pandemic was at its worse nationally, Texas had been spared from much of the outbreak's toll outbreak and was trailing other highly populous states by a wide margin in both cases and fatalities.

On March 13, Gov. Greg Abbott asked that residents follow CDC guidelines. Abbott defined the guidelines for services such as grocery shopping, exercising and hunting. What was considered an essential, was ultimately left up to the counties.

"This is not a stay-at-home strategy," Abbott said. "This is a standard based upon essential services and essential activities."

Eleven days later, on March 24, the city of El Paso issued a stay at home order to its residents.

"We must protect the health and safety of this community. We cannot wait until it is too late, so we must continue working to stay ahead of the wave of cases and help flatten the curve by suppression of this virus," said El Paso Mayor Dee Margo. "It is very important that residents and businesses cooperate to make this

effort as successful as possible to keep our community healthy."

One of the significant issues with all of these mandates and orders was that face coverings could not be made mandatory.

Under the executive order issued by Abbott April 27, individuals were 'encouraged to wear appropriate face coverings,' but no jurisdiction could impose a civil or criminal penalty for failure to wear a face covering.

Texas began its reopening phase on May 1, as President Donald Trump pushed for all states to reopen their economies, with Abbott continually acting on the president's bidding.

By May 18, bars had reopened, and restaurant capacities were expanded. By June 3, all businesses could operate at 50% capacity. The push to reopen and get people in establishments was moving at a rapid pace, and with still no statewide mask mandate. On June 12, restaurant capacity had expanded to 75%. Within four days, on June 16, cases in the state of Texas had doubled per day to about 4,000 cases.

Within two weeks of the expanded capacity of restaurants and bars being at 50%, COVID-19 cases had exploded to four times the amount they were at the initial reopening of the state.

On June 26, Abbott closed bars once again and reduced restaurant capacity, as cases in Texas continued to rise, while other states' cases were going down. Finally, on July 2, Abbott relented and ultimately issued a statewide mask mandate.

Unfortunately, much of the damage had already been done in the haste to reopen the Texas economy. Texas is one of the top three hardest-hit states by coronavirus, along with being the fourth state with the most active COVID-19 cases in the



country.

Complicating the issue further, there are people, including the current president of the U.S., that have ridiculed wearing masks as unnecessary and a personal choice.

Some have gone as far as claiming it's a constitutional right not to have to wear a mask. The problem with that concept is that your choice affects other people's bodies and shows a lack of compassion for your fellow citizens.

"We are not defenseless against COVID-19," said CDC Director Dr. Robert R. Redfield. "Cloth face coverings are one of the most powerful weapons we have to slow and stop the spread of the virus – particularly when used universally within a community setting. All Americans have a responsibility to protect themselves, their families,

and their communities."

Case study after case study has shown that masks do offer a higher level of protection against COVID-19, compared to no mask. It is not the mark of the beast or some alien plot to take away your rights. It's an extra level of protection designed to reduce the spread of a virus that has decimated our country.

So, while masks are by no means 100 percent effective, why would a person not want to improve their odds of not getting or spreading a virus even if only by a moderate chance?

Even with all precautions being taken, there could be some level of spread, so every little bit that we can do should be considered worth it.

Any slowdown of this virus until a vaccine is developed will, in essence, save lives in the long run. Sacrifices

of not being in ordinary crowd situations short-term, far outweigh the alternative.

The governor's inaction and haste are not the sole reason for the state of Texas's rapid increase in cases and deaths. We, the people, chose to ignore common sense and put COVID-19 concerns away for our comfort own rather than being diligent. Many flocked to bars and restaurants to congregate. After a few drinks and laughs, rarely does a bar make a person long to social distance.

So have patience, social distance and put on your mask. Don't do it for yourself, do it for your loved ones and the ones whose lives you put at risk.

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Study: How effective are cloth masks, which are better?

Paulina Astrid Spencer

The Prospector

Last month, Gov. Greg Abbott signed an executive order mandating that people in Texas must wear a face covering while in public and failure to comply could result in a fine.

"Due to recent substantial increases in COVID-19 positive cases, and increases in the COVID-19 positivity rate and hospitalizations resulting from COVID 19, further measures are needed to achieve the least restrictive means for reducing the growing spread of COVID-19, and to avoid a need for more extreme measures," the order stated.

Just like other places in El Paso,

UTEP requires students, faculty, and staff to protect themselves and others against the spread of the coronavirus by wearing face masks and practicing social distancing.

It has been scientifically proven that wearing a face mask can help reduce the spread of the virus and due to shortage of surgical masks, the community has been advised to wear other face covering alternatives, such as homemade cloth masks.

However, according to a new University of Arizona-led study, not all masks are the same and some are more effective than others.

Amanda Wilson is the lead author on a recent study published, titled "COVID-19 and use of non-traditional masks: how do various

materials compare in reducing the risk of infection for mask wearers?" which focuses on testing a variety of nontraditional mask materials.

The evaluation reviewed the effectiveness of different masks after 30 seconds and after 20 minutes of exposure in a highly contaminated environment.

In the study, researchers compared wearing a mask versus not wearing one for 20-minute or 30-second exposures. They found that the risk of infection was reduced by 24-94% or by 44-99% depending on the total exposure time. They discovered that risk-reduction decreased as exposure increased.

Wilson and her team collected data from various studies on mask

efficacy and created a computer model to simulate the risk of infection, taking various factors into consideration.

The model developed by the team included factors such as inhalation rate, the volume of air inhaled over time, and virus concentration in the air.

According to the research results, the next best options are N95 and surgical masks. Since those are often reserved for hospital staff, vacuum cleaner filters can be inserted into filter pockets in cloth masks to provide additional protection.

Results showed that scarves, which reduced infection risk by 44 percent after 30 seconds and 24 percent after 20 minutes, or cotton

T-shirts are only slightly better than not wearing a mask at all.

The size of virus-transporting droplets is an important factor. Larger, heavier droplets carrying the virus drop out of the air faster than smaller, lighter ones. The droplets can come from sneezes, coughs and even speech, which is a reason why distance helps reduce exposure.

It is important for a mask to have a good seal that pinches at the nose. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a person should not wear a mask beneath the nose or tuck it under their chin.

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Housing and Residence Life implements new policies for residents

Vicky Almaguer

The Prospector

After UTEP students living on campus were directed to move out by UTEP Housing and Residence Life (HRL) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they are now being given the opportunity to return.

Although UTEP housing has never closed, students who could afford to relocate were encouraged to do so in the middle of spring 2020.

“We definitely had to take some steps,” said Catie McCorry-Andalis, Ph.D., associate vice president and dean of students. “It has meant increased diligence from cleaning and sanitation. It also has meant a real increase in education outreach to our residents to understand what it means to be part of this.”

New rules were implemented to further combat the virus and keep students and staff safe, such as the reduction of capacity in apartments, an enforcement of masks and an isolation apartment in case students test positive for COVID-19.

“We are following not only the local state guidance when it comes to how to manage the coronavirus and steps to take to stay healthy and safe, but also the Centers for Disease Control as well,” McCorry-Andalis said.

While some residents are ready to move back, some are debating whether to renew their contract.

“I understand most of the rules given are meant to keep us safe and less exposed to the virus, but I think that they can be more understating when it comes to finances,” said

Naomi Valenzuela, a previous resident at Miner Village. “I think the cancellation fee is really unfair during these times because things are incredibly unpredictable.”

The Student Housing Contract has a cancellation policy where students are assessed a cancellation fee of \$500 if the contract is cancelled before July 15th for the full academic year.

“I can maybe overlook not giving a refund back because usually if the rent is paid in advance it means the money came from financial aid or a scholarship, but you’re talking about students who perhaps live outside of the state, having to move out when they might not have the resources to do so as quickly as they might,” Valenzuela said.

Apart from the financial issues that could arise from living on campus during a pandemic, Valenzuela fears that residents will not take into consideration the rules being implemented, especially if they continue to ignore the effects of the virus.

“Right now, I’m concerned with getting roomed with someone who isn’t concerned with the virus,” Valenzuela said. “(Someone) who won’t take the necessary cautions to avoid the spread of the virus in our shared parts of the dorm.”

Housing fees have remained the same in order to assist students who have been financially impacted by the pandemic. Resources available include the Campus Advocacy Resources and Education Act, the Food Pantry, and a new team set up to assist residents through this crisis. “We have case managers set aside,



Photograph by Claudia Hernandez/The Prospector

The University of Texas at El Paso on Aug. 17 will make COVID-19 testing available on campus for all students in housing.

that is their full role right now, to help students through this financial crisis,” McCorry-Andalis said.

Recently, UTEP released a new and special webpage, titled “Resuming Campus Operations”, focused on entirely assisting students and staff during the pandemic.

“The situation that we’re all dealing with is new, and it’s a very

fluid situation and it changes,” McCorry-Andalis said. “I think reading information that is shared is going to be super important, whether it’s through email, through the university social media folks, or campus bulletins that go out or looking at that website.”

Students who are looking to reside on campus, but have financial

issues, can contact the dean of students at DOS@utep.edu. The new UTEP website designed for students and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found on UTEP’s homepage at www.utep.edu.

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Student starts a 'readvolution' with free books about race, identity

Michael Cuvillo

The Prospector

After attending her first protest following the death of George Floyd at the hands of police, Kierra Lopez-Robinson was motivated to contribute to the movement. Inspired by the community's response to police brutality and systematic racism, her mobile library, Readvolutionary, was born to help educate children on race and reduce institutional racism.

Readvolutionary is a not-for-profit library that Lopez-Robinson has created to provide the community, particularly children, with free books about race and identity.

"Spreading as much knowledge to the community, focusing on children with lessons about anti-racism and how to express their feelings with books on multiculturalism and diversity are my goals with this library," said Lopez-Robinson, 21-year old senior organizational and corporate communication major at UTEP.

With the idea that racism is a learned behavior, as many parents and children struggle to find ways to understand other cultures, Lopez-Robinson believes literature related to those matters can help gain a healthier perspective and cultivate knowledge. Lopez-Robinson's library books focus on encouraging positive interactions with people of all backgrounds, a subject she says is not often accessible in local bookstores or public libraries.

"I feel that many times in school when history is discussed, we are only given half-truths," Lopez-Robinson said. "Educators need to do a better job at educating themselves on diverse cultures and institutions should hire more teachers and leaders that look like the kids being taught."



Photograph by Michael Cuvillo/The Prospector

UTEP senior Kierra Lopez-Robinson speaks to crowd at Cleveland Square Park about mobile library she calls "Readvolution" at Defund the Police rally June 12, 2020.

One of the educators Lopez-Robinson credits for inspiring her library and her passion to educate others is Michael Williams, Ph.D., the head of UTEP's African American Studies Program. Williams opening dialogues in African American history class helped Lopez-Robinson grasp a better understanding on how to try to connect with others, she said.

Lopez-Robinson has attended

protests and events held in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, where she says she has received positive reactions from attendees regardless of the political spectrum they may fall under. She feels this experience has given her a more positive outlet to create a discussion around a subject few want to address.

Lopez-Robinson hopes to expand her library by addressing the

subject of sex in order to provide children and parents with a better understanding of appropriate and inappropriate touching. Only through open discussion, does she feel parents can make their children comfortable to talk about sensitive matters.

Readvolutionary's books are donated by individuals or bought from the financial contributions Lopez-Robinson receives through

her GoFundMe page. All books are personally sanitized by Lopez-Robinson, to reduce health concerns amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

People can learn more about Readvolutionary by visiting its Facebook or Instagram pages.

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Voting becomes uncertain amid COVID-19 pandemic

Anahy Diaz

The Prospector

As COVID-19 cases continue to grow across the United States, the virus is predicted to impact one of the most fundamental rights the country's citizens hold: voting.

With over 154,471 COVID-19 related deaths reported in the U.S. by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as of Aug. 4, country leaders have begun to question the future of the upcoming presidential election on Nov. 3.

President Donald Trump, who is expected to face his Democratic opponent, Joe Biden, in the polls, has been pushing for in-person voting despite the pandemic and the Constitutional right states hold to run their own elections.

In the past, Trump has expressed his belief that mail-in-ballots could be subject to fraud, going as far as toying with the idea of delaying elections until it is safer to vote, something he is not constitutionally titled to do.

"The universal mail-in-ballots have turned out to be a disaster," Trump said during a White House press conference on Aug. 3.

In El Paso, mail-in-ballots had a high turn out during the 2020 Primary Runoff Elections, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the El Paso County Elections Department, early voting concluded with more than 26,000 in-person and mail-in ballots. The Democratic Primary Runoff had a total of 21,570 ballots, with 14,007

people voting in person and 7,563 voting by mail. In the Republican Primary Runoff, 5,044 ballots were cast, with 4,297 in person votes and 747 mail-in votes.

Even with early voting extended an extra week, unlike other years, because of the pandemic. Compared week to week with the 2018 elections, turnout this year increased by 22%, with mail-in-ballots increasing by 87%.

"With the mail-in ballots, as well as the in-person early voting, we've seen a pretty decent turnout compared to what we normally see," said Lisa Wise, the El Paso elections administrator, back in July during the early voting period. "I'm hoping that everybody is either voting, if they can, by mail or by early voting when they have more options and we have more opportunity to social distance."

Election administrators worked to provide appropriate health precautions during the runoff elections, this included having poll workers wear masks and face shields, providing voters with disposable styluses that can be used for the touch screen machines and having air disinfectant and hand sanitizer available for voters and poll workers.

"Every election has its own challenges," Wise said. "This has definitely been probably the most challenging on the logistical side of just making sure that we have enough supplies on things we normally wouldn't supply."

Wise and her team also placed six foot separations on the floor in order

to observe social distancing and used germicidal cleaner to help disinfect voting stations after each use. Wise said these elections served as a trial of what might be expected to come during the presidential election.

"We know there's stuff we can magnify and amplify to a 50% to 60% turnout and we're seeing what's working," Wise said. "We're kind of looking at this as a little test run."

Similar to runoffs, Gov. Greg Abbott, announced he will be extending the early voting period for the November election by six days.



The Prospector

Early voting will now begin Oct. 13 instead of Oct. 19, with the end date remaining the same on Oct. 30.

Texas residents can register to vote by visiting votetexas.gov, filling out a voter registration application, and mailing it at least 30 days before the election date. People are eligible to vote if they are a U.S. citizen, are at least 17 years and 10 months old or 18 years of age on Election Day, not a convicted felon and have not been declared mentally incapacitated by a court.

According to the El Paso County

Elections Department, a person is qualified for mail-in ballot if he or she is 65-years-old or older, sick or disabled, confined in jail or out of the county on election day and during the early voting time period. The Application for a Ballot by Mail (ABBM) must be submitted to the Early Voting Clerk by mail, email or fax.

For more information regarding voting or to check one's voting registration status, visit votetexas.gov.

Anahy Diaz may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

Memorial held for Walmart shooting victims at Ponder Park

Michael CuvIELLO

The Prospector

In 2020, one year after the tragic El Paso Walmart shooting, El Pasoans marched to Ponder Park carrying 23 crosses with the names of those that lost their lives on one of the deadliest attacks targeting Latinos in modern U.S. history.

From the park, the El Paso Firme and Border Network for Human Rights group marched down Sunmount Drive. There, a short memorial was held, where all 23 victims' names were read aloud, and 23 white doves were released in their honor. This was followed by a rendition of the renowned Juan Gabriel ballad "Amor Eterno" sung by Selina Nevarez.

"A very special group of people have come together this weekend," said Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso. "It is a community that was created on that awful day, people of various nations and races and faiths and ages now all united, welded together by our suffering."

Family members of the victims took turns speaking about their loss. Antonio Basco was one of them. He lost his wife, Margie Reckard, on that tragic day. Basco took some time to speak about the lack of action against gun control from the United States' government leaders.

"When Trump did not come through with the gun laws, it just encouraged people to do more," Basco said. "I am just praying that the next generation will have a way to grow up and have a way stop all this killing. They did not deserve that. Nobody deserves that."

Patricia Benavidez, who lost her husband Arturo Benavidez, also spoke to impassioned crowd as she held back tears speaking of the tragic day.

U.S. Congresswoman Veronica Escobar was also present to show her support for the victims' families and loved ones. She later addressed the crowd saying that much of the hate that caused this incident is still prevalent and is being stoked by many of the country's leaders.

"We are here today because of racism, hate and division that our country is still grappling with right now," Escobar said. "We are here today because some of the highest leaders in this land have fueled hatred for communities of color and have used language to describe immigrants that rips them from their humanity. We will not have reconciliation until we confront that hate and that racism... Until we remove the power that it has."

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Photograph by Michael CuvIELLO/The Prospector

Crosses are held for each of the 23 victims of the Cielo Vista Walmart shooting Aug. 3, 2020.

Leadership Network aims to help high school students get ahead

Anahy Diaz

The Prospector

El Paso Leadership Network (EPLN) is a new organization in town that strives to foster the growth of the city's talent and leadership through academic and professional development.

EPLN is a registered non-profit organization composed of individuals who want to give back to the El Paso community by providing academic programs, mentorship, networking and other opportunities for students and professionals.

"We aspire to influence our community's education, economy, government and culture by building an extensive network of extraordinary El Pasoans committed to aiding one another to thrive in scholastic and professional pursuits," said Miguel Moya, co-founder and president of EPLN.

Moya, along with El Paso natives, Ricardo Flores, Eric Diaz and Guillermo Santos, founded EPLN in spring 2019 with the aspiration to serve the El Paso community through an idea they could act upon.

"As a community-based organization whose members are all El Pasoans, we are committed to realizing the potential of our region," said Moya, who is a senior at Columbia University majoring in philosophy. "Members of EPLN share a common characteristic, and

that is a desire to give back to the city that has given them the opportunities to grow and succeed. We want to use our experience and education to be part of the growth of El Paso in the years to come."

The organization's foundation lies in their Scholars Program, which is dedicated to mentoring high school students during the college and scholarship application process. The program consists of a two-year curriculum where students, who are accepted as juniors in high school, are granted access to webinars designed to help with financial aid applications, resume building, SAT and ACT preparation, essay writing and other career and academic opportunities.

Students are paired with a college student who acts as a mentor throughout their high school-to-college transition. Mentor applications are open to El Paso natives that have attended or are currently attending a four-year university and are willing to provide guidance to a high school student. Mentee applications are open to El Paso high school juniors with a 3.0 and above GPA and express motivation, ambition, and dedication for their education.

"As a mentor, you tap into a network of young academics and professionals from El Paso who can help you continue to grow," Moya said. "Becoming a mentee

is an unparalleled opportunity to be guided step by step on the journey to go to college, gain insight into potential career options, and meet others who are on the same trajectory."

EPLN is currently recruiting mentors and mentees for its 2020-2022 EPLN Scholars Cohort on its website elpasoln.org. Moya says there are other opportunities in which

people can engage with the network aside from its mentorship program, this includes attending its upcoming virtual 'Education Summit' on Aug. 29 and 30, 2020.

"Our hope for this organization is to give people in our area the platform to help one another succeed," Moya said. "El Paso is already working towards a better future for its people, and it is

essential for us to enhance that work by leveraging our networks to create a positive impact in our community one step at a time."

For more information and to stay up to date on all the opportunities offered by El Paso Leadership Network, visit its website at elpasoln.org or its Facebook (@EPLNetwork) and Instagram (@eplnetwork) pages.

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Photo courtesy of EPLN

El Paso Leadership Network (EPLN) is a new organization in town that strives to foster the growth of the city's talent and leadership through academic and professional development.

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STUDENT MEDIA AND PUBLICATIONS

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New counseling program has been launched

Victoria Almaguer

The Prospector

UTEP's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) has launched its new project CAPS to Go to further reach out to students with its services. After the COVID-19 pandemic affected many services provided by the department, CAPS has adapted and implemented new ideas.

"I think that it's incredibly important for (students) to be aware that there's a place that they can go when they're feeling stuck or they're not sure what's going on," said Brian Sneed, Ph.D, director of CAPS.

This new website introduces workshops that touch base on adapting to a pandemic life and how to surpass any issues that arise from it. They are separated like a menu to implement which sessions go first and what they offer.

"We have 'Appetizers', which are a little short five-minute video on meditation, maintaining social connections while at home, relaxation techniques and then we have our entrees which are usually somewhere around 45 minutes to an hour on final exam preparation, managing COVID-19 stress, maximizing your homework output, you know, different things like that," Sneed said.

The website also includes a section titled 'Specials' where further tips and webinars are placed. One interesting session is "Nap Time, How to Get Better Sleep", where one can learn how this pandemic affects their sleeping schedule and how to

take better care of themselves.

Although the department already offered most of these sessions online, the access and recordings of these webinars have an easier access and platform.

"Before the pandemic we were able to offer those in a certain format, you know, remotely," Sneed said. "But we have had several workshops and presentations participating in larger kinds of activities online. Thank goodness for the technology, and everything that you test, has been able to provide."

Some of the changes that were implemented were the support groups added and the new one-on-one counseling sessions that have adapted to respect safety guidelines due to the pandemic. Students can go on to the CAPS website and log in to a support group if needed or call their hotline.

A research presented by Healthy Minds Network and the American College Health Association shows how there is a wide range of psychological repercussions that have affected college students due to the pandemic. One of them being depression.

The survey of more than 18,000 college students on 14 campuses, shows how on top of the stress that comes from time-management and finances, there has been an increase of 5% of students dealing with depression and an increase of 9% of students having their academic performance being impaired by mental-health struggles.

"There's not really a problem that's too small for us to handle



and our idea is that if you're not having the kind of experience that you want out of college, come to the Counseling Center and see if there's something that we can do to help you out," Sneed said. "We're not miracle

workers, but boy, would we like to be able to help you guys figure that out so that you can get back on track and have a better chance."

Students can reach CAPS to Go under UTEP's homepage at www.utep.edu

and can reach the CAPS hotline at 915- 747-5302.

Victoria Almaguer may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

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ENTERTAINMENT

AUGUST 2020

EDITOR PAULINA SPENCER, 747-5161

Minerpalooza celebrates 30 years with first-ever virtual show

Paulina Astrid Spencer

The Prospector

Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and social-distancing orders, Minerpalooza coordinators are determined to keep the tradition alive by hosting the first-ever, live-streamed show in the history of UTEP in celebration of the event's 30th anniversary.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak that has defined 2020, UTEP was challenged with the decision of whether to cancel Minerpalooza, UTEP's annual back to school celebration. Many major festivals such as Austin City Limits and Lollapalooza were canceled because of the growing cases of coronavirus and the stay-at-home orders across the country. Artists and musicians were also forced to cancel world tours, while other shifted to online platforms to continue performing.

Minerpalooza coordinators decided that after a rough year, UTEP students and the El Paso community needed a distraction, ultimately deciding to bring the show to everyone by streaming it virtually. Described as "one of the first hybrid models" by Jorge Vazquez, UTEP's executive director of special events, Minerpalooza will include different elements to provide the best experience possible.

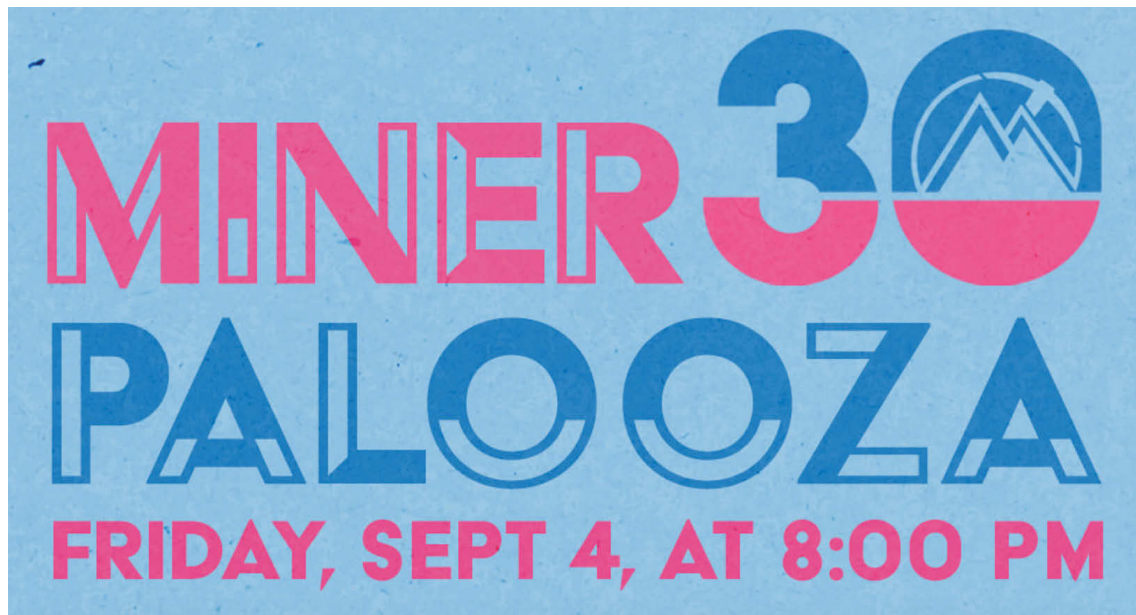


Photo courtesy of UTEP

Minerpalooza, UTEP's biggest back to school celebration, is going virtual for the 30th annual festival.

"We understand that a lot of the students are maybe back home, wherever that is, and we still wanted them to be a part of it, but we wanted to be as pervasive as possible, so that anybody, can have access to Minerpalooza," Vazquez said.

This year marks Minerpalooza's 30th anniversary and the director of student engagement, Nicole Aguilar, was not ready to dismiss the show during a symbolic year. Instead, Aguilar pushed to transform the

event and turn it into something the whole community can enjoy.

"We are not going to let the pandemic stop us and keep us from celebrating another academic school year, the success of our institution, and to support our partners, which are the students and their fundraising efforts, and everyone who has been a part of Minerpalooza," Aguilar said. "Students are the heart and soul of what keeps traditions like this alive, and we made sure that students were

at the forefront."

The decision to go virtual took Vazquez and Aguilar months to finalize. What started as a "vision" for Aguilar, soon turned into a solid idea that made sense. Planning for Minerpalooza began before the pandemic struck El Paso, and many changes were made to adapt to the current health environment.

"We still had this desire to really share UTEP's biggest tradition with

not just the UTEP community, but also with the local community who has always been so supportive," Aguilar said.

Although the line-up of attendees has not been made known, Vazquez assures the experience will be unique and fun for people viewing at home.

"It is kind of a once-in-a-lifetime situation, so we are making the most of it," Vazquez said. "It's going to be everything, there will be live elements, pre-produced elements, hybrid elements. We don't want to just produce a video and then just broadcast it, we want to make it live and minimize the technology challenges, making it a combination of everything."

The announcement was received with mixed reactions from people, some saying they will tune in, while others saying they will not, according to an Instagram poll by The Prospector.

Further announcements, such as the artist line-up and where to stream, will be made available to students via e-mail and through the Minerpalooza social media platforms in the upcoming weeks.

Paulina Astrid Spencer may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

Dinner Theatre Broadway in concert continues

Dinner Theatre will perform and stream live

Paulina Astrid Spencer

The Prospector

UTEP's Dinner Theatre has been a tradition at the university since 1983, and despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the show will go on with a virtual production in the fall, and additional shows in the 2020-2021 school year.

UTEP's Dinner Theatre is the only year-round, full-time musical dinner theatre on a college campus in the United States. Usually, the Dinner Theatre presents four fully staged musicals each season, which are entirely student staged and produced.

Dinner performances typically include dinner and dessert along with entrance to the show, but if you would prefer to skip the meal, matinee performances are also offered. Dinner is catered by Sodexo Food Services who also offer a full cash bar at all performances.

The UTEP Dinner Theatre is open to all students and members of the

community wishing to participate in any production. Auditions normally take place four times a year, however, this season, due to the pandemic, they will only host two castings.

The theatre is always looking for participants such as actors, singers, dancers and students to help with set design, costumes and behind-the-scenes production.

Like many other events in attractions, the UTEP Dinner Theatre has been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak and social-distancing orders. This year, production had to shift in order to ensure the safety of the performers and attendees.

The fall will kick off with "UTEP Dinner Theatre Broadway in Concert" which will be streamed live through various social media platforms. The format will allow social distancing among students and fans of the dinner theatre. Like always, the performance will include an all-student cast and production. As previously mentioned, usually

students of any major and college can audition to be in any performance, but this cast will exclusively feature the UTEP Music Theatre students.

The show will be livestreamed from the UTEP's dinner theatre stage

and will be most likely be available through the official UTEP Dinner Theatre's YouTube and Facebook page.

Gregory Taylor, director of the UTEP Dinner Theatre, is hopeful

the first in-person performance of the season will be in January 2021, will a full production of "Titanic." After, the plan is to continue all other shows normally.

Paulina Astrid Spencer may be reached at prospector@utep.edu



Photo courtesy of UTEP Dinner Theatre

The UTEP Dinner Theatre will feature its first live production of the season with "Titanic the Musical" starting Jan. 29, 2021 at the Union Building West

This season's performances

Titanic the Musical

Running Jan 29 through Feb. 14, 2021

The Wedding Singer

Running April 23 through May 9, 2021.

Head over Heels

Running July 9 through July 25, 2021.

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Coffee House of Hel opens, ready to scare up business

Sasha Minjarez

The Prospector

Coffee House of Hel is serving up frighteningly frothy concoctions in an atmosphere bone chilling enough to make any day of the year feel like Halloween. Owners Helen and Robert Hinojos have conjured up a one-of-a-kind local spot in East El Paso where coffee and horror fanatics alike can convene and indulge in a sinister merger of these two curiously compatible passions.

The couple set out to commit to their first business venture after having discussed their dreams together for several years. Before opening Coffee House of Hel, Helen worked at a call center for 20 years, while Robert worked landscaping, often operating under arduous outdoor conditions.

"Both of us decided it was time to do something. We had always talked about this so we started saying, 'all we're doing is talking if we don't do this now, we're never going to do it,'" Helen said. "I didn't want to have to go to work every day and answer to anybody. I wanted to be my own boss. When you're doing something, you love it's not even a job anymore, it becomes fun."

The couple credits a substantial portion of the coffee shop's concept to the horror comedy film "Burying the Ex," a personal favorite of theirs, with the plotline being a serendipitously romantic representation of what they managed to achieve together with Coffee House of Hel. "In the movie the main guy works at a horror shop and the girl he falls in love with owns an ice cream shop, with the ice creams named after horror themes," Robert said. "At the end, they come together and open a shop together. That was a lot of the inspiration behind it."

Coffee House of Hel opened

its doors June 5, 2020 and while kick-starting a business during the COVID-19 pandemic may have seemed ambitious, the two have managed to achieve their dreams despite facing some inevitable challenges.

One challenge has been obtaining merchandise. Aside from its ever-expanding menu, the coffee house also intends on selling horror merchandise, ranging from T-shirts, lanyards and figures to intricate horror masks and more. However, many of the items they ordered back in April have yet to arrive due to the delay in shipping many online consumers are experiencing as a result of COVID-19.

Despite the pause in merchandise sales, their menu remains in full effect, featuring an array of blood-curdling beverages inspired by prominent horror icons that are sure to lure visitors in. Helen and Robert have experimented with countless ingredients and methods to perfect their final products. Such as incorporating Cap'n Crunch Cereal in the "Captain Spaulding Frappe," a nice touch to tie the components of the drink with Spalding's infamously murderous persona from the Rob Zombie films.

"The Exorcist" is a newly added menu item that takes on the appearance of the projectile retching Linda Blair enacts in the film but with a flavor pleasantly contradictory to the iconic scene. The frappe assumes the taste of a candied green apple confection drizzled in caramel, sure to possess any palate.

Another new item on the menu is the "Re-Animator," a refreshment that radiates a glowing neon green hue, modeling itself after the reanimation serum from the classic horror film "Re-Animator," so refreshing it will resuscitate you right back to life.



Photograph by Michael Cuvillo/The Prospector

Coffee House of Hel, is a newly established horror themed coffee shop East El Paso.

Helen's personal favorite item on the menu is "Killer Clown," a watermelon flavored frappe and Robert's is "Bloody Brains," a drink that combines the flavor of caramel apples and chocolate raspberry. To create the illusion of brains in the "Bloody Brains" drink, Helen whips up a raspberry chocolate fusion that's drizzled over a pink whipped cream "brain," making for a mouthwateringly frightful sight.

The shop is also embellished with all things horror to supplement the experience even further. Red draped windows, a statuesque Michael Myers menacingly stalking in a corner, Chucky and the Bride of Chucky dolls, and a slew of horror movie posters adorn the walls to help set the ominous yet alluring tone.

Patrons can also delight in their drinks, along with a cinematic treat while relaxing in their comfortable lounge area. Helen and Robert curate a different horror movie each day

to loop all day, with two different screens and a projector running, with each playing modern or classic horror films from the 1920s and 30s.

"Eventually, we want to have movie nights. We want to show classic movies like 'Return of the Living Dead,'" Helen said. "We're limited with everything going on right now, so we might have to wait on that a little bit. We wanted to do something where people can bring in their own seats and blankets, where they can just come together and enjoy a movie."

Regardless of encountering these challenges presented during a pandemic, the Hinojos have succeeded in establishing a business together and still have high hopes and plans for its flourishing in the future.

"We have a lot of ideas and of course we want to grow," Helen said. "We want to get to the point where we can collaborate with others."

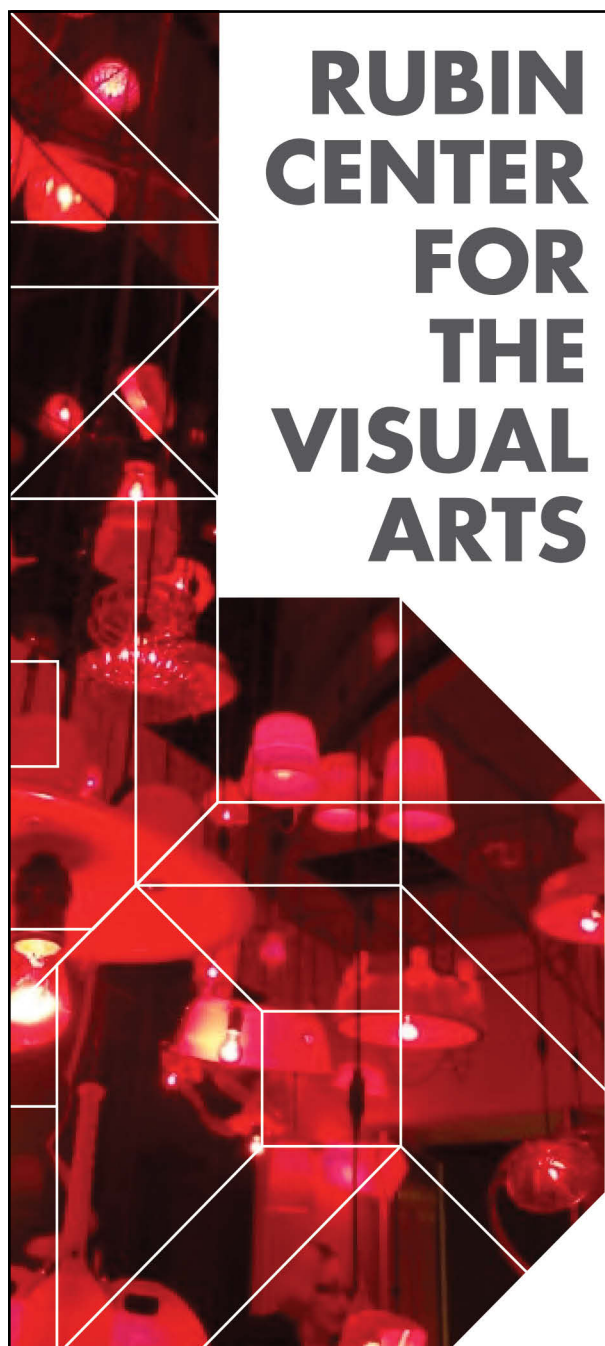
Maybe have a haunted house or do something with the paranormal."

And don't let the name spook you, Coffee House of Hel is actually a clever play on Helen's name, so being dragged to Hel in this case means you'll be greeted warmly to an inviting and relaxing space with a unique experience all its own.

"We want our customers to enjoy their time here, to enjoy the drinks and atmosphere," Helen said. "We want them to want to come back. We don't want them to have any misconceptions of the theme, but to take it in and enjoy the experience because there's nothing else like it in El Paso."

Coffee House of Hel is located at 2200 Lee Trevino. For more information or to contact the shop, call (915) 444-8042 or visit their website at coffeehouseofhel.com

Sasha Minjarez may be reached at prospector@utep.edu



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Stuck at home? Looking for art or inspiration? Visit the Rubin Center's summer exhibitions online. *El Balcón* features contemporary artists voices across the border and around the world reflecting on these times. The *2020 Annual Juried UTEP Student Art Virtual Exhibition* showcases the best new work produced by students in the Department of Art. You can also see online family days, browse past exhibitions and find links to contemporary art across the web.

To learn more about our exhibitions and programming visit our site www.utep.edu/rubin or follow us on Facebook @rubincenter and instagram @rubincenter

Drive-in theatre returns

Michael Cuvillo

The Prospector

El Paso Live and the El Paso International Airport are teaming up to bring the outdoor movie experience back to El Paso for the month of August with Drive-In showings throughout the month.

COVID-19 has brought back a revitalization of sorts to the popularity of Drive-In movies. The El Paso area was once home to multiple drive-ins all over the region. The Ascarate, Bronco, Bordertown and Del Norte Drive-Ins, along with the still in operation Fiesta, were just a few of the locations that were in operation. Ascarate is now an open air flea market and the Fiesta shows adult-oriented films.

In March, all indoor movies in El Paso shut their doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since that time, only the Cinemark chain of theatres has reopened with limited capacity. Movie releases to theaters have come essentially to a halt outside of smaller independent films.

In June, the El Paso County Coliseum ran what it dubbed "carpool cinema" with various screenings on a pop-up movie screen. This was followed by the current showings throughout the city of El Paso by the Plaza Film Festival that included locations such as Cohen Water park, the El Paso Coliseum and others that sold out its first two shows at \$25 per car.

One of the more unique locations was in an old airplane hangar at the El Paso Airport, which is now dubbed Hanger 7 Studios. This

location will now be used for Movies on the Fly running every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from Aug. 14-30 starting at 8:30 p.m.

"We are excited to provide an event to our community that allows for great family entertainment while also practicing social distancing," said Bryan Crowe, general manager for Destination El Paso "We know El Pasoans are looking for safe ways to spend time together with friends and family and we are pleased to present this drive-up movie experience."

Movies are to be shown on a 55-foot screen that was created by painting hanger doors. Parking is on a first-come, first-served basis and all vehicles will be spaced apart in a checkerboard pattern. All guests must wear a mask and remain 6 feet apart when accessing the restrooms provided on-site.

Tickets, \$25 plus facility fee per vehicle, are contactless and available at El Paso Live. There will be no cash sales and patrons are encouraged to bring their own food and drink.

Michael Cuvillo may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

Movie Lineups

Friday, August 14, 2020: Ghostbusters (1984)
 Saturday, August 15, 2020: Nacho Libre
 Sunday, August 16, 2020: Disney's Moana
 Friday, August 21, 2020: The Karate Kid (1984)
 Saturday, August 22, 2020: Shrek
 Sunday, August 23, 2020: The Fast and the Furious
 Friday, August 28, 2020: Ferris Bueller's Day Off
 Saturday, August 29, 2020: Dazed and Confused
 Sunday, August 30, 2020: Sing

Taylor Swift's 'Folklore' one good thing from 2020

Claudia Hernandez

The Prospector

Taylor Swift's popularity has gone through the roof, she did not even need fanfare or weeks worth of promotion for her newest album "Folklore" to be a hit. She can make anyone feel in love or heartbroken without having experienced either.

During the lockdown, brought by the global COVID-19 pandemic, Swift wrote, recorded, produced, and released a whole new album. "Folklore" is Swift's eighth studio album, released on July 24th, not even a year after she released her previous album "Lover".

This album came as a surprise to her fans, after being released without any anticipation. She announced it one day before she released it, sending the internet into a complete spiral. The music video for the first single on the album, "Cardigan", premiered at midnight EST on YouTube that same day, where over 300 thousand people streamed the video live.

According to an Instagram post made by Swift, the album and music video were created during lockdown and abided by safety guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Swift collaborated with her "musical heroes" such as Bon Iver, and The National's guitarist, Aaron Dessner.

While her last album "Lover" explored the multiple emotions of what being in a relationship and deeply in love feels like, "Folklore" brought a more nostalgic vibe.

It is also comforting to rely on her never-ending addition of "Easter eggs" to her music videos and lyrics.



Photo courtesy of Republic Records

"Folklore" is the eighth studio album by American singer-songwriter Taylor Swift. It was released on July 24, 2020, through Republic Records, 11 months after her previous album, Lover.

This time around, she connected some her songs, telling the same story through different perspectives. This is the case for the songs "Betty", "Cardigan" and "August", which fans think are songs written about three people involved in the same love triangle

It is always good to rely on Swift's storytelling techniques, which have personally hooked me since I was a kid. I have been a fan of Taylor Swift since her very first album. I love that all her songs tell a story that somehow are always relatable no matter what. It is mesmerizing to see

how her music has evolved, as my feelings do too.

It was about time for her to shine again after all the disputes she's encountered with her former record label Big Machine Label Group and rapper Kanye West. For her, competition is not an option anymore, she has made peace with herself and her past, and this album shows that tranquility.

Ever since her Netflix documentary "Miss Americana" came out, the world was able to catch a glimpse of Swift's dilemmas, traumas, drives, and fears. I am glad

all that process was turned into art, that way it can remain just that.

"Folklore" is a masterpiece. Swift's music evolves as she has new experiences. Swift is thriving and discovering new ways of expressing her feelings and memoirs into masterpieces that are no longer part of any specific genre.

In the past, in the past she has been criticized for switching from Country-pop to pop, and now to an Indie/Pop/Folk album. But to categorize an artist into one genre perhaps limits their talent, and their opportunity of discovering new



forms of music.

From "Fifteen", where she shares how her first kiss felt like, to "You Need to Calm Down", where she finally took a political stand, all the way to "Cardigan", where she talks about the nostalgia of past relationships, Swift's fans have accompanied her through every step of her life.

There is always one Taylor Swift song for any moment of your life. She is 8 years older than me, so she has lived all the phases before me, and written about it, so I can relate to them as I go through them. I could say she is kind of my older sister.

Her fans, myself included, are now just waiting for this pandemic to be over, so we can spend our money to see her live from close or, far away and cry our eyes out. Well, at least I am ready.

While listening to this album, I re-lived my first heartbreak, my first love, and the nostalgia that comes within growing apart from someone. It was beautiful and painful but in a magical way.

I rate "Folklore" 5 picks out of 5; because it is the silver lining that appeared right when the world needed it the most.

Thank you, Taylor Swift, you shined a light in these dark times. You are the one good thing that has happened in this horrible year.

Claudia Hernandez may be reached at prospector@utep.edu



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Work directly with an elected SGA senator in carrying out all duties and responsibilities requested and assist with any SGA projects.

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Public Defender

Defend students accused of violations of the SGA Constitution, traffic violations, and legislation enacted by the senate.

Judicial Assistant

Assist in the trial procedures of the SGA Supreme Court.



The Excel program allows incoming freshmen the opportunity to be introduced to the working of the Student Government Association as well as the rest of the university. Excel Students will be taught skills required to become leaders of tomorrow.

Fall semester applications open August 17, 2020.
Deadline to apply is September 5, 2020 at 5p.m.

Get involved! Applications available at minetracker.utep.edu/organization/sga

Student organizations remain active despite COVID-19

Paulina Astrid Spencer

With over 200 student organizations, UTEP makes it possible for students to be involved on campus and have access to professional opportunities. Ranging from art to science, students from all colleges can find an organization that matches their interests and future goals. Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic struggles, many organizations, clubs, sororities and fraternities continue to meet and engage with the community virtually. Here are a few organizations UTEP has to offer:

College of Business Administration Accounting Society

The Accounting Society at UTEP is an organization open to all students in the College of Business. Their mission is to provide all majors with information on the profession of accounting, while providing students with internships and job opportunities. Some of the benefits of joining this organization include presentations by local accounting recruiters, field trips to local firms and development in social and communication skills.

Women in Business Association

The Women in Business Association at UTEP strives to advocate equality for women in the workplace through awareness, activism, education, and empowerment. The organization aims to encourage women to be confident and empowered through experiences designed to develop leadership skills, while providing members with the opportunity to meet with accomplished professionals.

American Marketing Association (AMA)

The AMA is the largest marketing association in North America. It is a professional association for individuals and organizations involved in the practice, teaching and study of marketing worldwide. This year, the AMA will focus on helping members brand themselves to be more marketable when facing the business world.

College of Education Bilingual Education Student Organization (B.E.S.O.)

B.E.S.O. is affiliated with the Texas Association for Bilingual Education and strives to help members develop support groups, grow professionally, network, and serve the community through volunteer activities. Joining this organization includes discussing topics such as policy, teaching practices, material development and research to help future educators.

Education College Council

The Education College Council at UTEP's purpose is to enhance knowledge, participation, and understanding of UTEP's College of Education. Joining the organization means serving as a representative to voice student concerns between the education student population and the administration, faculty, and staff.

Higher Education Student Association (HESA)

The purpose of HESA is to foster a sense of community among students interested in Higher Education Administration including students, alumni, faculty, and staff. HESA aims to provide students with a forum for the exchange of ideas on current issues in higher education. HESA also aims to provide members with opportunities for professional and personal development.

College of Engineering American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)

ASCE's student chapter at UTEP is to be a good medium for exercising principles of personal and public relations, such as conducting chapter activities, holding office, and visiting engineering works under construction. Members are given the opportunity to actively participate in their civil engineering or technology education.

Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)

The ACM student organization provides multiple activities that are fun and informative, while providing students with a head start in their careers. The organization is recognized as one of the best for



Photograph by Claudia Hernandez/The Prospector

From art to science, students from all colleges can find an organization that matches their interests and future goals.

emerging computing professionals.

American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)

ASME is committed to lead and inspire students with a common interest in mechanical engineering. The student organization has had the opportunity to promote education and professionalism through various events dedicated to student engagement and development. The organization's main goal is to develop future leaders by enforcing the importance of relationship and communications skills.

College of Liberal Arts Black Student Union

The Black Student Union at UTEP is an organization made up of diverse students with a common interest in promoting awareness of the Black community. Through involvement, the organization provides cultural awareness and educational benefits for the African American student body.

Art History Association

UTEP's Art History Association strives to inform students about the Art History program offered

at the university. They host events to encourage students to engage in the appreciation of their favorite art pieces or art periods. The organization aims to promote career opportunities for members through meetings and events.

AIGA Student Group

AIGA is the largest professional association of designers in the world with more than 70 chapters with over 18,000 members nationwide. AIGA at UTEP aims to provide professional development, networking, and showcase opportunities to students interested in design. They accomplish these goals through programming that includes tours of local design studios and marketing firms, exhibitions, and meet-ups with practicing professional designers.

College of Science

American Society for Microbiology

The American Society for Microbiology at UTEP aims to bring science to the community and foster professional and educational goals in the fields of scientific research. The organization is open to all science majors and offers volunteer

experiences and community outreach to their members.

The Computational Science Student Association (CPSSA)

CPSSA at UTEP aims to support the scholarly and professional interests of the current and future computational science students. CPSSA provides members with opportunities to prepare for graduate school and professional work through opportunities and civic engagement.

Club Zero

Club Zero is a social club hosted by the Mathematics Department with the purpose of providing students who are interested in mathematical sciences with opportunities to interact, make connections, and participate in activities to help members achieve future goals. Club Zero provides research opportunities and possible support from the Math Department to attend research conferences.

To learn more about the various organizations found at UTEP, visit [MineTracker at minetracker.utep.edu](http://MineTracker.atminetracker.utep.edu).

Paulina Astrid Spencer may be reached at prospector@utep.edu

Amid the pandemic, UTEP continues to aid students with many resources

Victoria Almaguer

The Prospector

The current pandemic has changed everyone's daily routines. Thankfully, a new feature has been created for students, faculty and staff to have updated information on the re-opening of the UTEP campus. Shown at the top of UTEP's homepage, the link provides space for frequently asked questions and the recovery level of the Coronavirus.

"Dedicated to students and their families, if you open that up, it's refreshed, if not daily, multiple times a week with new content, new information," said Associate Vice President and Dean of Students Dr. McCorry-Andalis. "So everything from the new course schedules out for the fall to international students linking directly to the officer national program for their support needs."

Although the UTEP campus is closed, following resources have shifted to a virtual approach to continue to provide for all students.

Counseling and Psychological Services

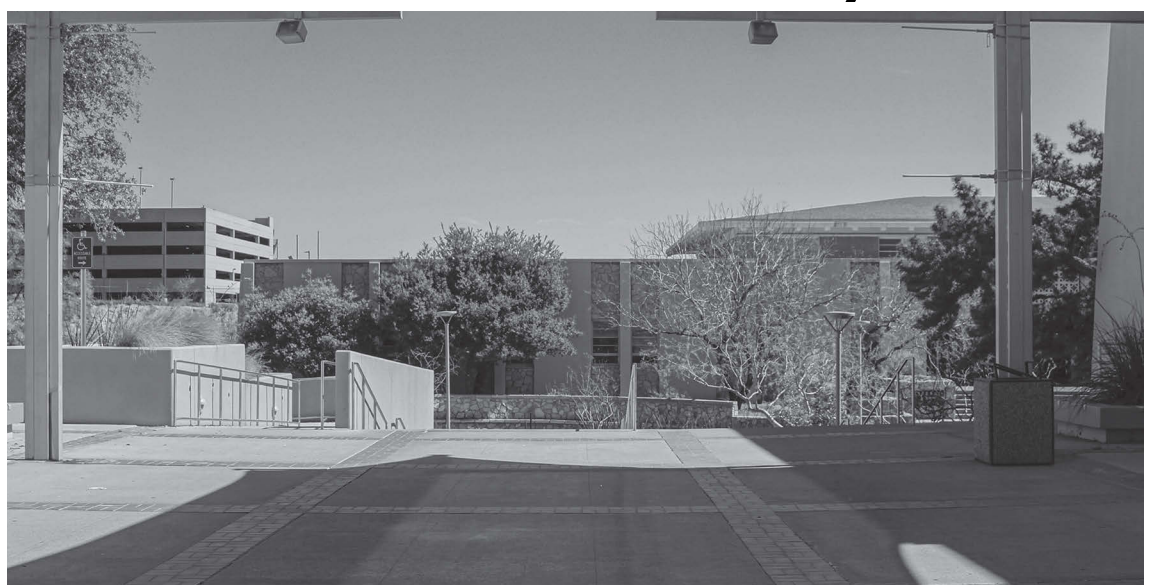
Originally located in West Union, CAPS is still providing their counseling services for students through video or phone. To set up appointments, students may call their number at 915-747-5302 from

8a.m. to 5p.m., Monday through Friday. Although most workshops and sessions have been cancelled, students may use their new service "CAPS to GO". The service gives students online workshops to help with issues such as insomnia, isolation and self-care.

"I think that it's incredibly important for them to be aware that there's a place that they can go when they're feeling stuck or they're not sure, you know, what's going on or if there's something that's having an impact on their, you know, academic success and things like that, that there is a place that they can go to have someone try and help them figure out what's going on," said Dr. Brian Sneed, Director of the Counseling and Psychological Services.

University Writing Center

A major help for students and their papers, the University Writing Center has implemented new features on their website to better assist students virtually. Students can share their screens with a consultant to better assist them with their essay by using a Synchronous system through Blackboard Collaborate. This service will be available to students Monday through Friday, 9a.m. - 5p.m. Students may also



Photograph by Claudia Hernandez/The Prospector

Although UTEP campus is closed, resources as such have shifted to a virtual approach to still provide for students.

e-mail their assignments to the UWC using an online form with a 72 hours turnaround.

Food Pantry

Set inside of Memorial Gym, UTEP's food pantry provides free food to students who need assistance. Their hours of operations are Monday through Friday 10a.m.-3p.m. If students cannot make it during hours of operation, they can contact the Dean of Students to

set up an individual appointment. Students, faculty or staff must take their UTEP I.D. in order to receive service.

"We're all in this together, so I really encourage students to be on the lookout for those pieces of communication, and to be able to go to the website regularly to get updates on what is happening," says Dr. McCorry-Andalis. "At the end of the day, if it's just a question that

no one knows where to go with it, or what you know who to ask, the Dean of Students Office for students is a centralized place to come into those questions."

If you have any questions or concerns, you may visit UTEP's homepage at www.utep.edu or email the Dean of Students Office at DOS@utep.edu

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SPORTS

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EDITOR ISAIAH RAMIREZ, 747-5161

Miner athletes to watch in 2020 fall season

Isaiah Ramirez

The Prospector

In what is a whirlwind of events that have led up to the 2020 fall sports season, the possibility of sports taking place is still on the fence. NCAA President Mark Emery remains concerned about starting the fall portion of collegiate sports and pushing back schedules, where a delayed start might make sense.

If a delayed start to college athletics is the eventual result, then it would allow collegiate athletes the ability to still showcase their talent and improve week in and week out.

Team workouts are taking place at UTEP with the intention that the show will go on as several athletes are preparing for a breakout year in the 2020 season. Here's a look at several athletes to watch for in the fall season.

Jacob Cowing - Football

Cowing ended last season as the Miners leader in receiving yards and a reason for that success were his quick feet and solid route running skills against opposing defenses. The 5-foot-11, 180-pound sophomore was named to the Phil Stelle's Preseason All-Conference USA First Team.

He was a juggernaut in the receiving stat line for the team as he also led the team in yards per game with 45.8 yards per reception and receiving touchdowns with three. The Miners will have a new quarterback under center with most likely redshirt sophomore Gavin Hardison or redshirt freshman T.J. Goodwin, but the consistency of Cowing's playmaking ability will be evident.

Katia Gallegos - Women's Basketball

When the word 'point guard' is looked up in the English dictionary a picture of Katia Gallegos should be adjacent right next to the definition. The El Paso native and 2020 All-Conference USA Freshman team selection simply put on a show her



Photograph by Claudia Hernandez/The Prospector

UTEP junior Serena Patterson looks to be a major contributor for Miner Volleyball in 2020

freshman season with her ability to dish the basketball with ease to set up easy buckets in transition, and the handles to shake opponents ankles in the dust. Gallegos set a program freshman record in assists with 154 and ranked third all-time in assists in a season in program history.

Spacing the floor with the ability to knock down threes with 25 made on the season, along with her ability to provide constant pressure on defensive with 52 steals on the season. Gallegos has only scratched the surface on just how good she will

be for the Miners team in the future.

Tessa Carlin - Soccer

Carlin made an immediate impact for the soccer team as she provided a helpful boot on the field, as the Canadian native paced the squad in assist with seven points with 17. Being named to the Conference-USA freshman team last season, is glimpse into the star this team has in the making.

The talented sophomore forward can not only set teammates up for success, but she can make plays of her own as she scored five goals

last season, which was tied for the most on the team alongside Lauren Crenshaw.

Unfortunately, Crenshaw has left the program due to graduation, but the void of a reliable leader on the field may be filled by someone like Carlin, who can lead the Miners to back-to-back double-digit win season and a possible deep run in the postseason tournament.

Serena Patterson - Volleyball

Patterson has the immense potential to be an All-Conference team selection in the 2020 season

after coming off a well-rounded 2019 campaign. As a sophomore she started 25 games for the Miners and tied the team in kills with 259, while leading the team in aces with 24.

Earning Conference-USA offensive player of the week last season was a notable accomplishment for not only Patterson, but for the program as well, as the 5-foot-10 junior was the first Miner to earn that distinction since 2013.

The Miners are coming off an impressive first year under head coach Ben Wallis, and with Patterson as an anchor for the team, the Miners can be a force for Conference-USA to match up against in the 2020 season which begins at home Aug. 28 versus Tulane.

Bryson Williams - Men's Basketball

Going into the 2019-2020 season many fans expected redshirt senior forward Bryson Williams to be the dominating big man he turned out to be. Williams was dominating on the court and displayed a smooth jumper and sleek post game that catapulted the bruising big man to an All-Conference USA first team selection.

Williams averaged 17.8 and 7.2 rebounds per contest last season in his first year with the Miners after sitting out the 2018-2019 season due to transfer rules. The natural athleticism and inside-out game Williams displayed at Fresno State under Miner third-year head coach Rodney Terry, carried over to this past season.

The 6-foot-8 228-pound Williams has an extremely high chance of repeating as a first team all-conference selection but will have to revitalize a team that was plagued with players leaving from the program this offseason. Williams leadership will be on full display this season and his National Basketball Association level skills will leave those who view his play in awe.

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UTEP Women's Soccer looks to build upon last season

Heriberto Perez

The Prospector

The UTEP women's soccer team is ready for its season opener versus Division II Lubbock Christian University on Monday, Sept. 3 at University Field. The last time these two teams met was back in 2018 when the Orange & Blue defeated LCU 6-1.

In her second season as head coach, Kathryn Balogun is excited to kick-off this season and improve their 10-7-3, 5-4-1 C-USA record from last year.

"Going into the season, my only expectation was that the culture our program developed would help us overcome the many questions and obstacles we were bound to face," Balogun said in a press release. "I am proud to say that everyone buying into our culture helped us find our way."

After earning a double-digit win total for the first time in three years, the team is looking forward to building upon last season in the upcoming 2020 year.

"Our staff put a lot of work into

giving the team the resources they needed to be successful," Balogun said.

One of the most important games that UTEP will have this season will be against Arizona State, a team the Miners have not battled in a regular season since 1997 and will be the first time that the Sun Devils will visit El Paso.

This year's C-USA home schedule was minimized to three league home games due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Miners will host Louisiana Tech on Sept. 20, University of Alabama at Birmingham on Oct. 4, and North Texas on Oct. 23.

"This season brings with it some significant and unprecedented changes, but we are excited to host so many home games amidst the travel challenges our country is facing," Balogun said.

This year's roster was assembled as a young roster, featuring 21 players from last year's squad with just three seniors and eleven freshmen.

Some players who performed well and were among the best of the team last season, are sophomore

goalkeeper Emily Parrott, sophomore forward Tessa Carlin, junior forward Jojo Ngongo and defender Lauren Crenshaw, now alumni.

Born in Frisco, Texas, Emily Parrott was a very important element for the Miners' performance last season. She played in all 20 matches, making 19 starts and cracked the UTEP top-10 single-season list for shutouts, minutes played, most wins and starts. She also had 61 saved placing her sixth on the UTEP freshman season list. Her performance made her be in the C-USA Commissioners' Academic Medalist and in the C-USA Commissioners' Honor Roll this year.

Carlin's resume included 20 games played with 19 in the starting lineup, leading the team, scoring five goals, pacing the squad with seven assists, and named to the 2019 C-USA All-Freshman Team. She became the first player in program history to post an assist in each of the first three matches of the season. Her five goals made her share the squad lead for most goals alongside alumni Lauren Crenshaw.

In her second season with the

Miners Ngongo also played in 20 games, 16 of those she was on the starting lineup, scored four goals and 5 assists making her the second-ranked of the squad in assists.

Ngongo was third for UTEP in goals and shared the team lead for game-winning goals with two. Ngongo improved her play compared with the 2018 season where she played 16 games, started in six of them, scored three goals and two assists.

In the upcoming season, the Miners will lose a player that was very important in last year's campaign.

Lauren Crenshaw was an anchor for the Orange and Blue as a four-year playmaker for the Miners in which she received a series of awards such as being in the 2016 C-USA All-Freshman Team, C-USA Commissioner's Honor Roll in 2017 and 2018. Crenshaw even appeared on the C-USA Offensive Player of the Week on Sept. 3, 2018, while her original position is on the defense of the team.

In her last year as part of the squad, Crenshaw took part in 20

games in which she started in 19 of them. She also shared the team lead for goals with five and game-winning goals with two, lead the team with 53 outright shots and 23 shots on goal target, and shared the third-ranked for assists with three.

Creeshaw was a very important player for Miners the past four seasons and her departure leaves a void that will be filled by other members on this Miner team. It may be a difficult time for the team find someone to replace her in that position, but there is no doubt that Balogun has young playmakers at her disposal such as sophomore defender Lilly Marquez, senior defender Cayla Payne, and senior defender Isabel Trevino who lost last season due to injuries.

The women's soccer team schedule is still being finalized amid COVID-19 concerns. The ability of fans to attend games also remains in question until further details are released.

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2020 Miner football preview season

Offense plans to blend talent and experience

Heriberto Perez
The Prospector

Editor's Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the world of sports is constantly changing and that includes college football. This article is included in a preview of the upcoming football season with the intention that the season will go as scheduled.

UTEP's offense this year may have several question marks as to who will be under center and who will be leaned on to make trips to the end zone. Efficient offensive production will have to be met by for the Miners as they averaged 19 points per game in the 2019-2020 campaign. Let's look at the blueprint for the offense in the 2020-2021 season.

Who will be under center?

Starting with the quarterback position, Sophomore quarterback Gavin Hardison has the potential to be the starter this year. He showed some good things last season, throwing 335 yards in his two games played before redshirting.

If Hardison improves his pass accuracy, he can earn the starting nod over redshirt freshman TJ Goodwin. Goodwin's first year in the program was about developing his quarterback mindset and styles in the quarterback room.

The 6-foot-5 Houston, Texas native has the mobility and arm strength to become the man under center for the Miners.

This offseason can be his opportunity to pressure Hardison and see if he could develop as the starting quarterback.

Talented Running Backs

Redshirt senior running back, Quardraiz Wadley will be back for his senior year after suffering a season-ending injury prior to the 2019 season. Wadley was recently named to the Doak Walker Award List, an. The award that is presented to the nation's top running back. In Wadley's junior campaign he led the team in rushing yards with 627 and rushing touchdowns with seven.

His experience can help and improve this year's offense alongside redshirt freshman and El Paso product, Deion Hankins, who already has a year under his belt. The city's all-time rushing year during his tenure at Parkland High School will look to be the powerful back alongside Wadley.

Other options for this position first are redshirt junior and fellow El Paso native, product Reynaldo Flores, who can contribute to the run game and on special teams.

Senior Joshua Fields is an experience back that could produce meaningful yards for the Miners and

can move the chains rushing for 312 yards last season.

The Miners will look to wideouts to move chains

The orange and blue need to believe in its young talent and its experienced ability at the wide receiver position.

Players such as junior tight end Trent Thompson, and redshirt senior Justin Garrett who earned 446 receiving yards and led the team in receptions with 40, will be leaned on for leadership. Sophomore receiver Jacob Cowing should also be on the lookout, as the breakout star for the Miners after leading the squad with 550 receiving yards in his freshman campaign earning 45.8 yards per reception, which was seventh best in Conference-USA.

Garret and Cowing will be the dynamic duo that the offense will generate a solid amount of production from.

Redshirt senior Walter Dawn Jr. is a talented wideout that will be targeted from whoever is under center as he tallied 78 receiving yards and six receptions in 2019.

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Photograph by Michael Cuvillo/The Prospector

Sophomore wide receiver Jacob Cowing has the potential for another standout season in 2020

Defense looks to rebound from injury plagued season

Isaiah Ramirez
The Prospector

Editor's Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the world of sports is constantly changing and that includes college football. This article is included in a preview of the

upcoming football season with the intention that the season will go as scheduled.

There are many aspects of the UTEP football team that needs some improvement, but one area that needs a revitalization is the defense. Last season the Miners allowed 35.9

points per game, which was towards the bottom tier of college football and the most points allowed in Conference-USA. This season the defense is switching to 4-3 defense in hopes of boosting the defense's performance.

"One of our big goals is to create

more pass rush and be able to get to the quarterback better," head coach Dana Dimel said in a press release. "We feel like by getting our guys spread out and covering up defensive linemen a little bit more, that we're going to be able to create some pass rush angles for our defensive ends."

The 2019-2020 season resulted in just one win for the Miners and a large testament to that was the dismal defense efforts. A large part of that did come as a result of the offenses lack of production, which resulted in pressure for the defense to supply much needed relief. A mere 12 sacks were recorded for the Miners, which was third worst in the nation according to ESPN.

Unfortunately for the defense a much-needed improvement will have to come from fresh faces since its top tacklers, in Michael Lewis, Justin Rogers, and Adrian Hynson have completed their eligibility. A silver lining for the defense is the return of senior safety Justin Prince, who recorded 27 tackles in five games played before enduring a season ending injury, as well as senior cornerback Josh Caldwell, who led the squad in pass breakups with 11 and 52 tackles in 11 games played.

Looking back at the Miners first year under head coach Dana Dimel in the 2018-2019 season, the defense was an aspect of the team that was reliable at times.

Statistically, it was a better defense in terms of points allowed at 32.75 points per game, and passing yards allowed per game at 198.9, which was fifth-best in Conference-USA. Defensively, the Miners were blessed with the reliable playmakers All-Conference USA selection A.J. Hotchkins and all-time leader in pass breakups in Nik Needham.

Fast forward to Dimel's and defense coordinator Mike Cox's third year in the program, the hopes of finding new playmakers will stem from the means of Junior College (JUCO) products. In what is a heavy defensive minded 2020 early signing recruiting class for the Miners with eight players playing on defense. A player that will loom to make an immediate impact will be junior defensive tackle Kelton Moss. Moss excelled at Kilgore College, producing 59 tackles, five sacks, three forced fumbles, and was a Second Team All-America selection by the NJCAA in 2019.

Although the Miners will have several options to plug in to the defensive scheme from the JUCO outlets, experience in the Miner program will look to be another reliable factor. Redshirt senior linebacker Jayson Van Hook is another Miner to watch for as he started all 12 games last season tallying 52 total tackles, one of the squad's rare sacks, and four tackles for losses. El Paso product and redshirt defensive tackle, Josh Ortega, is another veteran player the squad will value on defense as the Montwood High School alumni recorded 27 tackles and two sacks in 2019.

In the grand scheme of things, this UTEP football team will need to improve on both sides of the ball, ball. and defensively with With newly acquired athletic playmakers, as well as veteran leadership in the mix, this defense has the ingredients to see progress.

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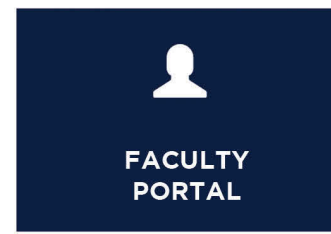
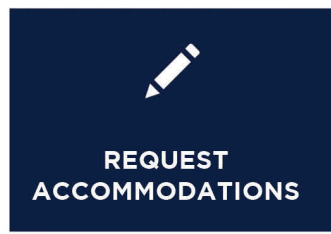
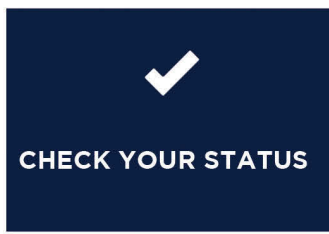
Photograph by Claudia Hernandez/The Prospector

UTEP defensive coordinator Mike Cox watches as his defense tries to stop Northern Arizona Sept. 1, 2018



Online CASS Portal

UTEP.EDU/CASS



The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) is the department at UTEP that helps students with a disability or a temporary disability get accommodations to help them be successful at UTEP.

CASS has a new online portal called AIM. AIM is an online software that we utilize as a way to process a 3 question application for students with disabilities or temporary disabilities. CASS will then meet with students virtually to discuss their case and determine what accommodations the student is eligible for.

AIM allows students to access or request services online from the safety and comfort of their home 24/7.

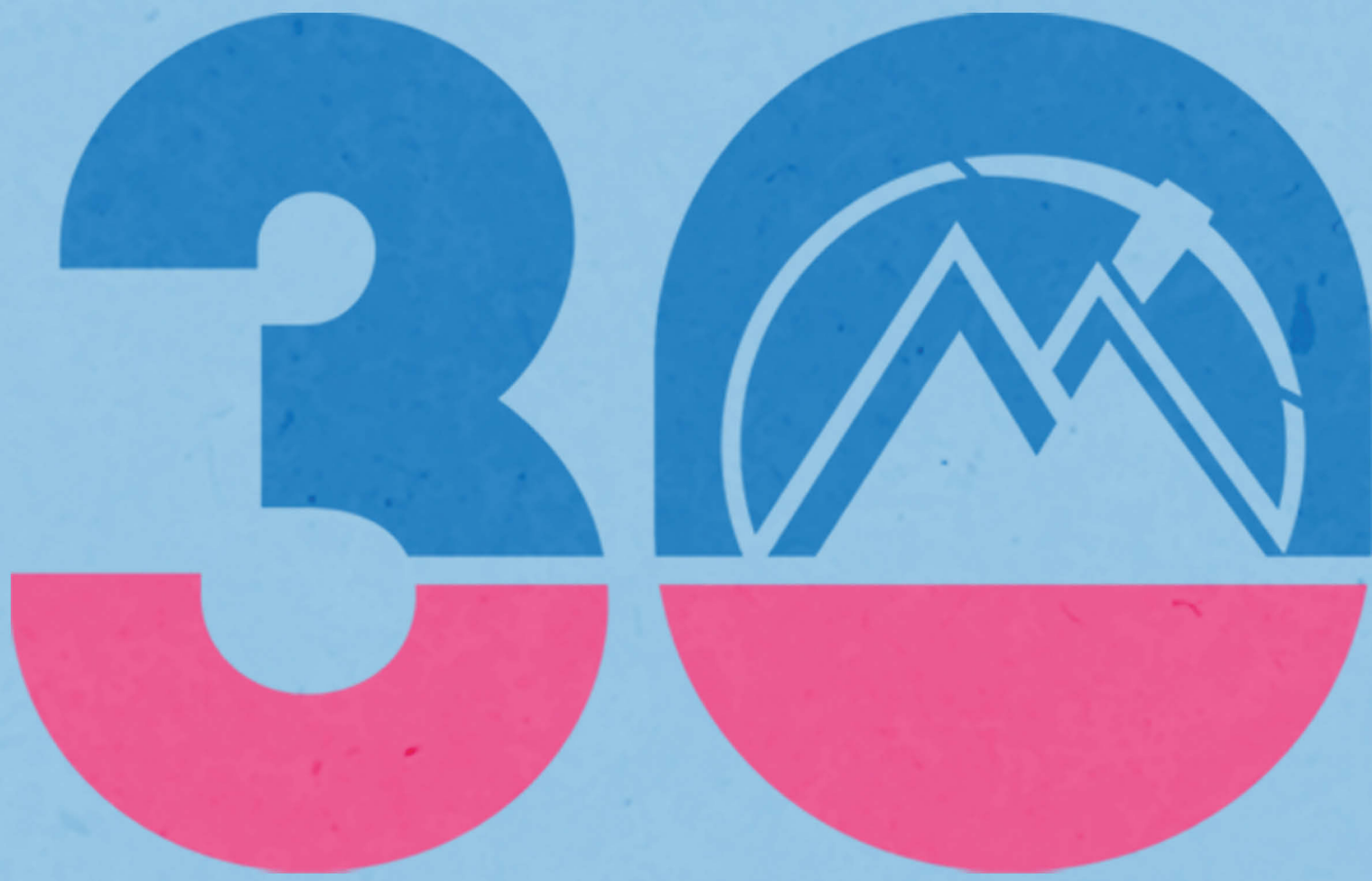
The system will allow you to log on with your single sign on UTEP credentials, so there will be no new passwords or usernames to memorize.

Log on at: utep.edu/cass 



CENTER FOR ACCOMMODATIONS
AND SUPPORT SERVICES

utep.edu/cass
cass@utep.edu
(915) 747-5148



MINNER

PALOOZA

SEPT 4 • 8:00 PM

Minerpalooza, UTEP's biggest back-to-school event, is going completely virtual for our 30th annual celebration. We're gearing up to bring you an event that will bring Miner Nation together for one special evening. Save the date: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2020.

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