

Thomas Brennan announces firing on Twitter

After three months of investigation, professor officially fired

Cora Hall
Editor in Chief

Thomas Brennan has been officially fired from Ferris, according to a Saturday morning tweet from the former physics professor.

"I've been officially fired from Ferris. Here's the defense statement that I gave to the administration on February 15, 2021, along with supporting documents," his tweet reads. Brennan linked two PDF documents, one a 15-page long defense with evidence, and one a six-page statement. His website, which is linked to his Twitter profile states he was fired on Feb. 25, 2021.

Ferris news services and social media manager Sandy Gholston confirmed that Brennan's employment was terminated on Thursday, Feb. 25 in an official statement and said, "The university has no further comment." Brennan had been on administrative leave since Nov. 19, 2020, when Gholston released Ferris' only other official statement on the matter.

Brennan's termination of employment comes just over three months after The Torch reported Brennan's ties to a Twitter account under his name that posted tweets calling COVID-19 a hoax, amongst other conspiracy theories and both racist and antisemitic language. Brennan also used the account to tweet his lecture video.

Since The Torch's original reporting on Brennan's Twitter, he wrote a letter to the Ferris community, claiming the Twitter as his own.

According to Brennan, he acted and spoke out of "despair caused by personal crisis involving extremely painful migraines, emf sensitivity and a series of repeated break-ins into [his] home." He goes on to explain "emf sensitivity" as being able to "feel" WiFi and cellphones.

In a termination letter from Provost Robert Fleischman obtained by MLive, Brennan's employment was terminated for serious misconduct. The misconduct cited in the letter included a "pattern of unprofessional and harassing behavior", Brennan's "views against science" and "numerous comments on social media pages which created a hostile environment, both working and classroom," Fleischman wrote.

In the statement, Brennan said he believes himself to be a "targeted individual" and is working against the stereotypes of "mad scientist" and "nutty professor."

Brennan's statement details the initial incident at Ferris that

led to requests by human resources for a fitness for duty evaluation in 2019. The university became aware of his migraine pain and alleged emf sensitivity on Nov. 8, 2019, when Brennan called the Mecosta County Sheriff to report alleged break-ins to his home. Brennan was on campus at the time of the call, so a Ferris DPS officer was dispatched to his office in the Arts & Science Commons.

The Ferris DPS report, which was included in Brennan's statement, stated that at 10:24 a.m. on Nov. 8, 2019, the officer spoke with Brennan about harassment he said he was receiving. "Brennan advised that strange things had been going on for fifteen years," the report read. The report details Brennan's account of his experience with sensitivity to electronics and migraines and can be read in full online.

The report stated that Brennan believed he was being "gang stalked," which he explained as "a lot of strangers will approach him and say things to him out of the blue." He told the officer he believed it was being done to make him "appear insane." The report details the break-ins Brennan believed were happening at his home and his belief that there was possibly a microchip in his brain. Brennan provided the officer with MRI scans of his brain and "insisted [he] take the photocopies as evidence in case anything happens to him," the report said. According to Brennan's statement, the alleged home invasions became frequent enough for him to install security cameras and change his locks.

"In the end the thing that finally stopped the break-ins, in mid-May 2020, was when I fully nailed all of my windows shut," Brennan said in his statement. "A fresh breeze was a luxury I couldn't afford."

Following the Ferris DPS report, the fitness for duty evaluation of Brennan was requested by human resources in order for him to continue teaching in the Spring 2020 semester. A letter was also sent to Brennan and his physician, who sent a letter in return on Dec. 30, 2019 that said "I do not find any clear or convincing evidence of delusion or other mental or physical health condition that would interfere with the performance of your job or cause a threat to yourself or anyone else."

Ferris Faculty Association president Charles Bacon sent an email to human resources after the incident in 2019, saying he was "saddened by this continued harass-

ment of Professor Brennan." Bacon clarified to the Torch in an email Saturday that the email mentioned in Brennan's statement had "nothing to do with his current situation," but offered no other comments.

In the fall of 2019, Brennan said he turned to Twitter as "a result of my frustration at not being able to stop what was happening to me and since I couldn't express myself at work, I started to fall into despair." He stated he "decided to become verbally violent and harmful, but only on Twitter."

"But out of spite for myself and what my world had turned into, I decided to say all the things that are some of [the] worst things you could say. My attitude was 'f* it, f* everybody and everything.' That's what chronic head trauma will do to you," Brennan said in his statement.

The Torch originally reached out to Brennan on Sept. 26, 2020, which he confirms in his statement. He stated that he rejected requests for interviews multiple times, however, after Brennan initially canceled his interview, The Torch received no responses from Brennan - via email or otherwise, despite a phone number being offered - after Sept. 26, 2020.

The Torch reached out again on Sept. 28, Oct. 7 and Oct. 23 - nearly a full month before the story was published, contrary to Brennan's statement that it was received two days before the story ran - as the investigation went further. Brennan was given both a phone number and email to communicate with The Torch, and he did not respond to any further requests, even to decline.

Brennan ended his statement by calling his migraines "evidence of a disability."

"Therefore the things I said on Twitter were not expressed in order to discriminate against people of different races or social categories but were uttered as a result of my disability," Brennan wrote.

Brennan said he was exercising his rights to free speech on his Twitter. In President David Eisler's only statement on the matter, he said he and the university were "shocked" and "outraged" by the tweets.

"We strongly reject these statements, condemn them and will not tolerate them," Eisler wrote. "We have worked diligently to become a more diverse university, and these statements demonstrate vividly how one person can set back the work of many."

Warrants out for racist stalker

57-year-old white man banned from campus for stalking

Rebecca VanderKooi
News Reporter

A Big Rapids resident is being accused of misdemeanor stalking and harassment with an anti-Black bias.

The suspect, Terry Lee Carlson, is a 57-year-old white man. He has been reported following at least one Ferris student on multiple occasions, both on and off campus, since October of 2020. Carlson has been reported driving a red pickup truck with Trump stickers and two small American flags located on the back.

"We currently have an active arrest warrant for stalking for him," Captain Gary Green of the Ferris Department of Public Safety said.

On Jan. 10, 2021, a report was filed when Carlson followed a Ferris student into the parking lot at Finch Court on campus.

Sergeant Timothy Jacobs, the lead officer on the case, explained in his police report that the victim was concerned that Carlson was going to harm him.

"He said there are other students in which this guy has followed people on campus and in the student apartments through town," Jacobs wrote in the police report.

When questioned, Carlson said that he was the one who was being followed. However, the victim provided video evidence of Carlson's truck following them.

According to Jacobs, the victim had recorded the suspect following him on Oct. 29, at the Arts and Science building, Dec. 27, at the Hillcrest Apartments and Jan. 8, from Family Drive to Sports Drive.

When Carlson was provided with this information, he "said he videotaped the person following him, but it did not take or save," Jacobs wrote.

Using the Michigan criminal history file, a background check was run on Carlson that did not reveal any previous charges. However, throughout the past year, there have been multiple reports of stalking levied against him.

"Meceola dispatch has received numerous calls regarding Terry Carlson's disturbing behavior. There are a number of reports of Mr. Carlson harassing minorities in the city and township of Big Rapids," the police report said.

In Jacob's reports, there was information on an Aug. 11, 2020, incident when a family called to tell authorities that Carlson had been known to carry firearms and had been coming to Big Rapids to harass African Americans. In addition, USDA from Newaygo called because Carlson had been acting oddly.

"(Carlson) followed two African American students to Campus Creek apartments, where they reported he said racial slurs at them. When interviewed, it was found that he had no reason to be on Gilbert drive," the Mecosta County Sheriff's report said.

Lastly, in a Big Rapids Police Report from Dec. 20, 2020, Carlson was said to have followed an individual from Curries lot. Prior to this, Carlson was also seen driving by this person's house numerous times.

Due to the nature and pattern of Carlson's offenses, Green issued a letter banning him from the Ferris campus for six months. After that period, he could apply to come back to campus.

A warrant is currently open for Carlson's arrest. If found guilty, the misdemeanor charge is punishable by imprisonment for not more than one year, a fine of not more than \$1,000, or both.

Carlson's photo can be found on the Ferris Department of Public Safety trespassing list. Any on-campus sightings of Carlson can be reported to Ferris DPS at (231) 591-5000.

Becca Witkowski contributed to the reporting of this story.



Terry Carlson

NEWS

Noah Kurkjian | News Editor | kurkjin@ferris.edu

Remembering Alisha Jaynes: 'she was truly an angel'

Team says three-year cheer team member had an impact on everyone

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

Ferris' cheer team tragically lost universally loved teammate, friend and student Alisha Jaynes on Tuesday, Feb. 16.

Jaynes has been a member of the Ferris cheer team for three years and was a human resources management major looking to help people in any way she could.

Jaynes' best friend La'Keia Watson said she was little sister she didn't know she needed. Watson and Jaynes met in 2018 at the cheer team try-outs and the two were inseparable ever since.

"Alisha was the closest person to me here at Ferris, our home away from home. We talked every day, laughed every day, seen each other every single day," Watson said. "She helped anybody where she could and never asked for anything in return. She was a great friend, you didn't have to teach her to be one. She knew loyalty and if she loved you, she always had your back. I could never forget a soul like hers, she was truly an angel."

On the evening of Jan. 17, Jaynes was found by firefighters unconscious in her on-campus apartment in the 100 block of Cardinal Court. She was rushed to the ICU and placed on life support so she could be treated for smoke inhalation and burns. She remained in the ICU until she passed away.

After the Jan. 17 fire, a GoFundMe was created to help Jaynes family cover her medical expenses. It has since been updated to raise funds for the cost of her funeral.

"This hurts beyond belief, I'm so heartbroken. She didn't deserve this death. No words can ever describe how much I love and will miss her, howev-

er, even though I feel like the weakest person, I'll continue to try to stay strong for her family, our friends, and Alisha," Watson said.

Fellow cheer team member Bailey Reiter said none of the team could find the words to truly capture Jaynes, and they were in shock and devastated by her passing.

"Alisha had such a bright personality. She could light up a room with her smile and laughter. She had an infectious spirit that permeated through everyone," Reiter said. "Alisha has had an impact on all of us and we are so lucky to have gotten to call her a friend – the word friend doesn't even encapsulate how important she was to all of us – and are devastated to have to say goodbye."

Support of the Jaynes family flooded social media upon announcement of her death. The GoFundMe her family set up has raised over \$17,000 with several comments of support and donations from campus organizations and pillars of the Big Rapids community.

First-year cheer coach Jessica Davis reflected on her time with Jaynes and said even through their limited contact, she became very fond of Jaynes and the joy she brought to the team.

"In the short amount of time I did experience with her, I became very fond of her. Her smile was contagious, welcoming, and warm. Her personality showed she had an enormous heart," Davis said. "Her commitment to herself and her team as an athlete was impressive. Without question, she had a close bond with some of her fellow teammates. Our team definitely lost an asset and a friend. We will remember, honor, and cherish Alisha, always."



Photo courtesy of Will Holden

Alisha Jaynes will be remembered for her generosity, her talent and her huge heart.

Professor making strides in Alzheimer's research

Pharmacy professor's promising lead compound in trial to treat Alzheimer's

Jessica Oakes
News Reporter

Ferris Professor of medicinal chemistry and medicinal biochemistry Dr. Tracey Ward has reimagined and redesigned prescription Alzheimer's treatments.

Ward has studied Alzheimer's disease for over a decade and is currently working on her treatment in a clinical trial phase.

"I've designed a series of molecules that work via a completely different mechanism than the ones currently in the market," Ward said.

Alzheimer's disease, also known as senile dementia, progressively destroys mental functions, such as memory, through the degeneration of brain cells and their connections. Mayo Clinic reports more than

three million annual cases of Alzheimer's disease in the United States alone.

"We only have a handful of drugs on the market and all they do is delay the symptoms for six to 12 months. And after that, there's not a lot of hope from a therapeutic standpoint and it progressively gets worse," Ward said.

Someone suffering from Alzheimer's disease produces limited levels of the chemical acetylcholine. This chemical messenger aids in memory, motivation and attention by sending signals from nerve cells to the rest of the body. The average Alzheimer's drug prevents symptoms by boosting the ongoing production of this chemical. As the amount of available acetylcholine decreases with the disease, these drugs lose their effectiveness.

Ward is setting out to produce a drug that does more than postpone inevitable effects of Alzheimer's disease. According to data shown in animal trial tests, she is potentially on track to finding a cure.

Third year Ferris student and previous lab manager Nicholas Crall worked with computational software that informs researchers on the binding ability of their compounds. Once this is discovered, a lead compound may be built in a lab for further testing.

Crall explained that this prospective treatment for Alzheimer's all comes down to Ward's lead compound. In testing, Ward and a research partner from Auburn University gave this compound to mice.

"These are a group of mice that all have late-stage Alzheimer's and we have shown through electrophysiology studies that we've been able to almost take them pretty much

back to the pre [Alzheimer's] state," Ward said.

After treating these mice for only 30 days, Ward and her team saw up to 400% improvement in neuro-activity.

To understand how Ward's compound differs from existing drugs, it is important to note how she discovered it in the first place.

Ward described the story as "serendipitous." For many years, she had been studying type two diabetes. While applying for a grant, she and her team were asked if their molecules could reach the central nervous system – home of the chemical messenger acetylcholine. Molecules reach the CNS by crossing the blood brain barrier. Cancer.gov describes the BBB as a network of blood

Alzheimer's research | see page 4

THIS WEEK IN MICHIGAN NEWS

Catch up on news around the state



Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

News

LANSING Mich. - Rep. Laurie Pohutsky, D-Livonia introduced House Bill 4297 last week. This bill aims to add sexual orientation and gender identity as well as the expression of each to the list of protected classes of the Elliott-Larson Civil Rights Act.

The bill currently has 51 co-sponsors, but a similar effort made in 2014 failed due to lacking Republican support. However, the group Fair and Equal Michigan has collected almost 500,000 signatures in an effort to make this amendment a ballot measure in 2022 if not passed by legislators.

Mich. - Michigan has distributed over 2.1 million vaccines as of Feb. 26 according to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Michigan is still in phase 1B, this includes the remainder of frontline healthcare workers, frontline general workers and those over the age of 75.

Phase 1C which includes other essential workers, persons 65 to 74 years of age, and individuals 16 to 64 years of age with underlying medical conditions is expected to start in May. Phase 2, which includes the rest of the general public isn't expected to start until August.

Sports

EAST LANSING - Michigan State made their final tournament push with upset wins over Illinois and Ohio State University before losing to Maryland on Sunday.

Michigan State beat No. 5 Illinois on Tuesday, Feb. 23, winning by nine points. They would score over 80 points, winning 81 - 72 against the Fighting Illini. Aaron Henry led the team in scoring with 20 points to go along with six rebounds, and five assists.

On Thursday, Feb. 25, the Spartans would then beat No. 4 Ohio State 71 - 67 to improve to 13 - 9 on the season. Henry led the team in scoring again with 18 points, four rebounds and four assists.

The upset streak would end Sunday, Feb. 28 against the Maryland Terrapins, where the Spartans lost 73 - 55. Joshua Langford led the team in scoring with 12 points. Joey Hauser led the team in rebounds with eight on the evening.

ANN ARBOR - The No. 2 Michigan Wolverines continued their Big Ten dominance with wins Indiana and Iowa.

On Thursday, Feb. 25, the Wolverines blew out the No. 9 Iowa Hawkeyes, winning 79 - 57. This onslaught was led by sophomore guard Franz Wagner, who led the team in scoring with 21 points. Hunter Dickinson led the Wolverines in rebounds with eight rebounds to add to his 14-point evening.

On Saturday, Feb. 27, Michigan once again clinched a dominant victory over the Hoosiers of Indiana, notching a 73 - 57 victory. This improved Michigan's record to 18 - 1 on the season. Franz Wagner once again led the scoring for the Wolverines, scoring 21 points to go with six rebounds. Isaiah Livers scored a double-double on the evening with 16 points and 10 rebounds.

- ON THE RECORD -

A roundup of this week's crime at Ferris State University

Vanderbaked pt. III

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

Vanderbaked pt. III

Feb. 24, 11:14 p.m., DPS officers were dispatched to the third floor of Vandercook Hall after the smell of marijuana was reported. The suspect presented as under the influence to officers and refused search. They were issued a citation.

Ridin' Dirty

Feb. 27, 11:50 p.m., a man was arrested at Taco Bell for driving without insurance. The suspect was originally pulled over for not having plates on his vehicle and claimed that he had just recently purchased it. The suspect was arrested and charged with misdemeanor no instance.

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Ferris State Torch

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Garrett Stack at garrettstack@ferris.edu

DEADLINE: Wednesday, March 10, 2021

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Updated August 13, 2020

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY



Photo by: Cassidy Jessup | Multimedia Editor

Ward never actually intended to work with Alzheimer's disease, the original trial was for diabetes,

ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH

Continued from page 2

vessels and tissue that protect the brain from harmful substances.

Because the researchers had not previously investigated this, their grant application was denied.

"We had to investigate that before we could reapply and so we found out that, oh my word, these things are actually getting into the blood brain barrier very well. And then we had to find out what's going on. That's when we stumbled upon it. Wow, I mean it's inducing these proteins that cause improved memory," Ward said.

With this breakthrough of a discovery, the team of researchers shifted their focus entirely and have not looked back since.

Ward has "tinkered" with the structure of her lead compound to come up with a series of second-generation molecules. With the help of a National Institutes of Health Small Business In-

novation Research grant, this compound is on its way through animal clinical trials.

"I have a number of patents on this work and it might get purchased. Who knows, maybe one day we'll see it on a pharmacy shelf? It's cutting-edge research, it's extremely promising," Ward said.

To contribute to this promising future, Ward has a philosophy that transcends pharmacy.

"Regardless of what profession people have out there, we have an obligation to give back to our youth and inspire them. And so, I involve a lot of students in my research," Ward said.

Because of this principle of inclusivity, Crall has been able to work on computational software, drug design and drug synthesis in Alzheimer's research. To him, it is exciting and rewarding.

"I will say that it's challenging, you know, it's because it's a lot of chemistry and it's very difficult," Crall said. "Things don't always go the way that you want them to go. So you must be resilient and you must be willing to try new things and make mistakes."

Esports finds a new home



Photo by: Dylan Bowden | Torch Photographer

Vandercook Hall to be demolished for the new Center of Virtual Learning, which is planned to be finished in December of 2022

Vandercook Hall set to be demolished for \$29.5 million academic building

Trenton Carlson
Freelance Reporter

After almost a year of setbacks due to COVID-19, Ferris is ready to break ground on the Center of Virtual Learning.

Designs for the building are set to be finalized in May 2021, followed by an asbestos abatement that same month and the demolition of Vandercook Hall. Construction of the new CVL will begin Aug. 2021 and is planned to finish in December 2022.

"As we were going through the design process, it became very apparent that it was going to be more costly to renovate Vandercook and there are some limitations trying to work with an existing structure," Vice President of the Ferris physical plant Michael Hughes said. "Residence halls tend to be long narrow rectangles, which don't work well for academic buildings."

With that being said, the project's budget has remained the same and sits at \$29.5 million. 75% of the funds were provided by the state, while 25% come directly from the school. The state favored the design plans of a completely new building, rather than the previous remodeling plan.

With these new plans comes freedom of creativity. One of the additions to the new building will be an esports arena.

"We are excited to have a home for e-sports students in the heart of campus," Esports coordinator Jonathon Eaton said. "The ability for classes, broadcasts and tournaments to have a dedicated space

on campus will do wonders for the growth of esports at Ferris. Having the esports arena be the first-floor showpiece shows the world Ferris is taking esports seriously. The Ferris esports organization has been growing rapidly and is ready to take the next step."

In taking that next step, Ferris plans for the arena have some unique additions, such as operable partition, allowing walls to open and close to create more space for larger venues, or sectioning off areas to create a more focused environment, according to Sr. Project Manager Joe Haupt.

"We are going to be looking at acquiring some of what is considered state of the art gaming furniture," Haupt said. "That has screens that are on the front of the furniture, so that spectators can watch on screen like they are watching TV."

Ferris is hopeful that the CVL and esports arena will be a focal point for recruiting future students. They are also optimistic that youth esports teams will use the facility, similar to R.L. Ewigleben sports complex and the countless youth sports tournaments it hosts.

In addition to the esports complex, there will be two floors of an academic structure as well. Finally, giving a home to majors like television digital media production, digital animation and game design, graphic design, information technology, radio and television broadcasting and many others.

For more information and graphics of the design plans, visit the Ferris State Physical Plant website under projects.



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LIFESTYLES

Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor | russem22@ferris.edu

Reintroducing herself

Zoe Wendler and the joy in 'being seen as who you are'

Cora Hall
Editor in Chief

Zoe Wendler has spent this Spring semester happily teaching as herself. If you had asked her if she felt this way last semester at midterms, she may not have answered the same.

On the Tuesday of finals week last semester, Zoe sent an email to the students in her program titled, "Reintroducing Myself." It contained a letter that was the first step of a long journey ahead. "My name is Zoe Ann Wendler, and I'm transgender. I'll be presenting as a woman when I teach from now on," she wrote.

Zoe, who is a technical communication professor and coordinator for the journalism, technical and professional communication majors, was moved by her students' response, in the best way.

"Not only did all of them two days – less than two days after I came out, their final projects were due – not only did all of them put my real name as the professor contact name on there, they went to the trouble of hunting down my correct email address, which IT dropped the ball on, and didn't go active until the night before the project was due," Zoe said. "Every group, like it was no thing. I was legitimately in tears over it."

She said the best trans ally "just treats you the way that you are." One of her "deepest joys" in coming out was the reaction of her friends and family.

"As I was coming out, I was kind of realizing, 'Holy crap, I have a lot of women friends, how did I not notice this?'" she said. "And, well, the most common reaction of everybody I came out with was basically some variation on, and my brother said this verbatim when I came out to him, so I'm just going to quote him on it: 'You know, that makes perfect sense.'"

"But for the women in my life, the most common response has been, 'Oh my god, welcome to the best gender ever.' That's the thing I always wanted to be most... is to be just part of the circle of women. To be just like all the other girls. I mean, it's such a basic thing, right? I've had five friends say, 'We need to go on a spa day; I can't believe you've never had a spa day before.'"

The day she told her therapist she didn't think she was cisgender was the first time she had said the words aloud. Her therapist pointed her towards a support group, and when she got home, Zoe said she couldn't even repeat it to her wife. "It was too new and too tender and too fragile in my heart," she said. She simply told her wife the support group her therapist had recommended, and her wife understood.

She said her wife immediately stopped treating her like a man and started relating to her like she would any of her friends who are women. "I wasn't even to the point yet that I had figured out I was a woman. I just knew I wasn't a boy. I cried for joy," she said.

"I've been with my wife for seventeen years," she said quietly. "She told me on that day that she didn't think she'd ever seen really smile before."

Zoe didn't realize she was transgender until she was 35, which she said isn't uncommon. She wondered how she had missed it for so long, as she had been connected with the LGBTQ+ community for a long time and had close transgender friends for well over a decade.

"I had all of the role models in the world. I had all the knowledge in the world, for goodness sakes... Like, how do you miss that?" Zoe said. "And the truth of it is that the trans experience is very, very broad. Each of us has a very, very different path than pretty much any other. There's a few things that are super common, but my experience is different from the next person's experience in a really fundamental way."

The question of "How could I have missed this?" crossed her mind over and over. Part of the answer for Zoe was that she had believed in order to be transgender, she had to have significant physical dysphoria.

"I have physical dysphorias, and they're nasty," Zoe explained. "But they're the sort of things that I could just chalk up to body image issues. And pretty much everybody has body image issues, and despite my connection to my friends, and to the community, and to scholarly research on this subject, I had just had this idea lodged in my head that you had to have significant physical dysphoria to be trans."



Photo courtesy of Zoe Wendler

Technical communication professor Zoe Wendler.

"So I thought it was a story, and it was a deeply inspirational story, but it couldn't possibly be my story. And of course, that wasn't true."

She began to think of the things she wished she had known, or things she wanted people to know about her now. The wish to educate her family and friends combined with her background in technical writing and design led to the creation of Zoe's Trans Tutorials. She posted them to her Facebook, explaining different topics such as transgender vocabulary, gender itself, dysphoria, euphoria and her personal experiences.

"That's why I talked about a lot of stuff I talked about, because dysphoria is a good example," Zoe said. "My dysphoria trans tutorials talk a lot about what it felt like for me to be dysphoric, but I didn't understand how that plugged into or correlated with the experiences of others."

In her Trans Tutorials, Zoe defines dysphoria as "the dissonance between a person's sense of self – socially, physically and emotionally, and their larger physical reality. Some trans people feel it to a debilitating intensity, while some feel little or even no dysphoria. They're the lucky ones..."

Coming from a medical family, she said a phrase immediately started running through her head when she began to come out to herself: you can't just ask the right question, you have to ask it in the right way.

"That's kind of how it felt to me, is that I might have been asked the right question over and over and over again, but not quite in the right in the right way," she explained. "So that was the idea behind it: to try and show that there were a lot of different ways to ask those questions."

Coming out publicly – while it has been a largely positive and happy experience for Zoe – still presents significant risks. Zoe said a number of her transgender friends and her therapist all asked her, "Are you sure you want to do this?" It was a bell she said she couldn't un-ring; she felt a nervousness she likened to a deep breath before a dive. Some of her risks related to her employment.

June 13, 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the language in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 applied to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Be-

fore that ruling, it was legal in over half the states to fire employees for being gay, bisexual or transgender, according to the New York Times.

"There's very obvious employment self-protecting reasons why a lot of us have been historically pretty low key, except in situations where we felt absolutely safe," she said.

Other risks are significantly greater.

The FBI report in November of 2020 revealed that hate crimes based on sexual orientation represent 16.7% of all hate crimes – the third largest category after race and religion. In 2018, gender identity based hate crimes were 2.2% and rose to 2.7% in 2019. According to the Human Rights Campaign, reporting hate crimes to the FBI is not mandatory and "these alarming statistics likely represent only a fraction of such violence."

The 2020 FBI annual report found that at least 37 transgender and gender non-conforming people were killed in the U.S., and 25 of the victims were Black or Latinx women.

Because of this reality, Zoe said many cisgender people will say transgender people are brave for coming out. However, a lot of people she has talked to don't feel comfortable with being called brave or courageous.

"The reason is pretty simple: bravery implies a choice," she said. "If you are trans and transition is in your future, like it was in mine, I may look and sound very different than I did six months ago. Coming out is almost a prerequisite. It's the beginning point for the transition for inhabiting the social and physical space that you belong in."

"So it's not as much a question of choice or bravery as it is necessity, you know? Is it brave to breathe, even when it's dangerous to do so? Is it brave to eat, even when it's dangerous to do so? I'm sure [there are] plenty of us who are fine with that. But when I think about it, there's a reason why I opened with a reintroduction. Because for me, from my perspective, it wasn't a question of bravery. It was a question of, 'Hey, there's been a misunderstanding, and I'd like to clear it up.'"

Zoe's transition thus far has been one of "blossoming joy," in her words. Things like her email signature with her full name – Zoe Ann Wendler – or playing the kids version of Dungeons & Dragons with her nieces for the first time have inspired gender euphoria for her. In Zoe's Trans Tutorials, she defined gender euphoria as "the sense of joy and relief that a trans person feels from bringing their gender identity and presentation more closely into alignment."

When Zoe had come out to her family, she told the grown-ups first, letting them explain her transition in the best way to their kids. She sat in front of the webcam with her wife and called her four-year-old and six-year-old nieces. Zoe said her four-year-old niece was still getting the hang of using her name, and each time she made a mistake, her older sister was quick to correct her, saying, "No, it's Auntie Zoe."

"You have not lived until you've had your identity defended by a six year old," she said laughing. When the game ended and they were saying goodbye, Zoe said her niece turned to her mother and said, "Mommy, Auntie Zoe's so pretty."

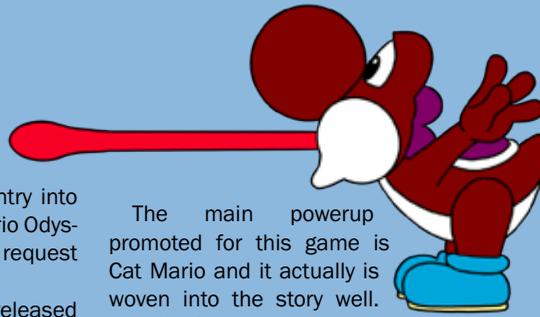
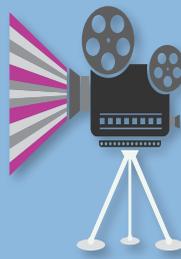
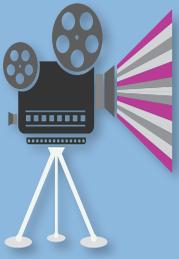
"I was sobbing for, like, the rest of the day," she said. "That was so incredibly validating and empowering early on... the thing with little kids is that they tell the truth, even when they're not supposed to. So if a six-year-old says you're a girl, she sees you and knows you."

Zoe said to question gender, one of the first things learned about human existence and identity, can be terrifying. But to anyone questioning their gender, she said they are never alone.

"You have friends in places you've never imagined. You have faculty who understand. We're here to help you. That questioning is inherently healthy. If you're cis and you question your gender, awesome. You walk out of it with an understanding of the things you love best about being your gender. And if you're not... Well, then you can do something about it, instead of [continuing] feeling the way you are," she said. "It can feel like staring down a bottomless pit, like the earth is going to be pulled away from under you and like you'll tumble uncontrolled and blind through space."

"You are still you. You always were, you are right now and you will be, no matter who you are. And there is such joy, not in just being yourself, but being seen as who you are."

Media Minute



Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

I have been waiting for a new entry into the Mario franchise since Super Mario Odyssey and I still have yet to have that request fully fulfilled.

Back in September, Nintendo released their Mario 35th anniversary collection, this collection included Super Mario 64, Super Mario Sunshine and Super Mario Galaxy. While this kept my attention for months, it wasn't new or anything special.

Alongside the announcement of their 35th anniversary collection they teased a rerelease on switch of Super Mario 3D World with an expansion called Bowser's Fury that released on Feb. 12.

I luckily got a launch day copy and have played through both the main story and Bowser's Fury. I haven't previously experienced this game as I never owned a Wii U, so I got a fresh first play.

The main story was fantastic, I don't tend to enjoy the 2D Mario games as I struggle with the timing, however, this game beautifully melds together the 2D style with the amazing 3D control scheme. It still for the most part runs like a platformer, but Nintendo added dimension but letting the player move in all four directions even if it is limited.



The main powerup promoted for this game is Cat Mario and it actually is woven into the story well. Usually I find these powerups gimmicky, but Nintendo did a good job at adding in instances where it's actually very useful even if another non-climbing route is available. Furthermore, in some levels you need it to get one of the three greens stars.

Speaking of green stars, three of them are placed throughout most levels and while they're not required to complete the main storyline, they do unlock certain levels in each world.

As for Bowser's Fury, I wasn't as impressed as I had hoped I would be. It has really good controls and the boss battles are difficult, it just feels too small to justify the purchase of this game if you already previously owned it for the Wii U. There are sections to a large map where you complete a challenge and get a shine with intermittent boss battles, it got very repetitive very quickly.

I went into this knowing that it wasn't a "new" game, but I did have high hopes for the expansion, but to me, if you already own a copy for the Wii U, don't waste your \$60. However, if you are like me and have yet to play this, run, don't walk to your nearest game retailer and pick up a copy.

Events calendar

WEDNESDAY

March 3

Gardening in Small Spaces: How to Grow Vegetables in Your Backyard

Contact: Lynn Miller
lynnmiller@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 12 - 1 p.m.

First-Gen Wednesday Workshop - Obstacles First-Generation Col- lege Students Face

Contact: Dave McCall
davidmccall@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 3 - 3:30 p.m.

B	I	N	G	O
15	27	42	55	72
10	29	41	56	73
7	26	Free Space	52	64
13	21	36	59	61
8	23	32	58	74

LGBTQ+ Resource Center Coffee House

Contact: Sarah Doherty
SarahDoherty@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 4 - 6 p.m.

Virtual Bingo

Contact: CLACS
clacs@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 8:30 - 9:35 p.m.

THURSDAY

March 4

Spring Graduation Fair

Contact: Lynn Miller
lynnmiller@ferris.edu
Location: Zoom
Time: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

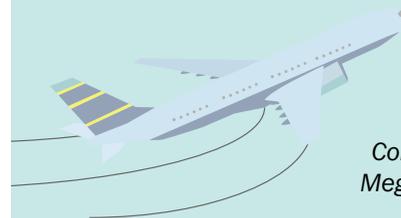


FRIDAY

Feb. 26

Virtual Study Abroad Workshop

Contact: Megan Hauser-Tran
MeganHauserTran@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 1 - 2 p.m.



MONDAY

Feb. 22

Spring Graduation Fair

Contact: Lynn Miller
lynnmiller@ferris.edu
Location: Zoom
Time: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Being a Good Virtual Team Member

Contact: Karen Royster-James
(231) 591-3771
Location: Virtual
Time: 11 - 12 p.m.



For more events, check out calendar.ferris.edu

Graphics made by Production Manager Charlie Zitta

TUNE IN TO OUR PODCAST: THE FIREPIT

HOSTED BY:

MARISSA RUSSELL, BRENDAN SANDERS & NOAH KURKJIAN

SCAN THE SPOTIFY LINK TO
LISTEN TO OUR PODCAST



The miracle pill

The reasons and benefits of taking birth control pills

Alyssa Hubbard
Lifestyles Reporter

Women, imagine taking one pill that helps you survive the dreaded week that comes around every month with ease, while clearing up acne and acting as a contraceptive.

Well, thanks to modern medicine, this seemingly miracle pill exists. Although the birth control pill is commonly known as a contraceptive, women can use it to help their bodies in other ways.

According to Pandia Health, the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Gregory Pincus and John Rock invented birth control pills in the 1950's. However, other birth control methods date back to around 1850 BC when ancient Egyptians used ingredients like honey, acacia leaves and lint to create contraceptives.

Over the last few decades, scientists have found that birth control pills also have the ability to regulate periods, ease menstrual cramps, clear up acne and even balance hormone levels. This has helped many women feel better and more comfortable during their "times of the month."

"I had periods that were very heavy, lasted 7-8 days and left me feeling sick to my stomach with cramps that sometimes made me miss out on activities," Ferris pre-pharmacy sophomore Macy Ilmberger said. "My periods were also extremely irregular, sometimes coming twice a month and sometimes only coming once every three months. My decision to use birth control was purely for health reasons."

Ilmberger has been taking birth control every day for almost two years, and the results took her by pleasant surprise.

"Since taking birth control, my periods have shortened to about four days, my flow has decreased considerably and my cramps are more mild and less frequent," Ilmberger said. "It is also nice to know exactly when my period is going to come every month, since before I started taking birth control it was a bit of a guessing game. I no longer feel like my period affects my ability to complete everyday activities."

Ferris television and digital media production junior Bethany Berger began using the pill about two and a half months ago to also help regulate her period. Berger

hadn't experienced a period in over two years before she started taking birth control.

Like any prescription medicine, birth control can have side effects that affect each individual differently.

"I have gained a little bit of weight since starting the pill, and my mood has been a little rough," Berger said. "Obviously, [the mood changes occur] when I'm done with a round of the actual pills and am then taking the placebos, because it's a loss of a hormone that my body had been getting used to." Placebos taken while on the birth control pill are sugar pills taken in place of the contraceptive during the menstrual cycle.

For Ilmberger, she doesn't experience any negative effects. However, Ilmberger does get cramps or an early period if she forgets to take the pill one day.

Surprisingly, both Ilmberger and Berger didn't know about the other benefits of birth control until their doctors mentioned it. Since many women deal with similar issues, they believed it makes sense to see birth control advertised more.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Preven-

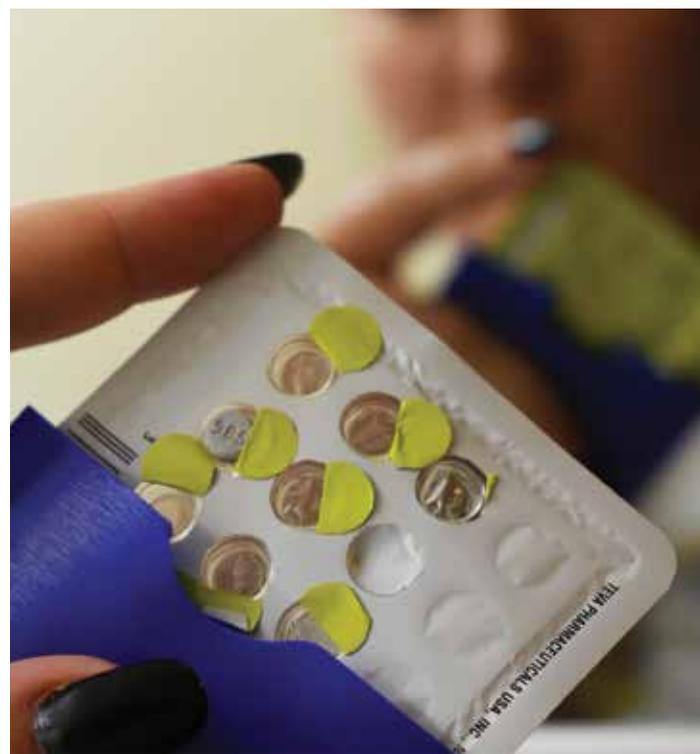


Photo by: Cassidy Jessup | Multimedia Editor

Many women take birth control pills to clear up acne and regulate periods.

tion, only 14% of women ages 15-49 take the pill.

"I think girls need to know that if their periods are out of control or their cramps hurt so badly that they can't get up in the morning, there is something that can help fix that, not just a pain killer," Ilmberger said. "Since society has largely treated periods as something disgusting that shouldn't be talked about, girls are not always aware when their periods are not

considered 'normal.' If birth control is advertised as something to treat period-related health issues, it would de-stigmatize the use of birth control as well."

There are various forms of birth control besides the pill such as injections, intrauterine devices (IUDs), patches and more. If you believe birth control is something that could help you, talk to your primary doctor for more information.

Behind the scenes | How TDMP students produce their own show



Kendall Rooks
Freelance Reporter

"For Students, By Students" is the tagline for the Ferris Out Loud talk show produced by Ferris students. Ferris Out Loud provides insight to the student experience at Ferris State University while also hitting on current events, trends, and music. Television and digital media production students put a lot of time into producing these shows each week, and not many know about the work they do.

Ferris Out Loud is produced in the IRC by the Television and Digital Media Production students as a part of their TDMP 385 Television Studio Production course. The goal of the course is for students to learn the various roles that are involved behind the scenes of live production and to produce content weekly to gain those experiences. Some of the roles students have in producing Ferris Out Loud include producer, director, camera operator, stage manager and technical director. Each week students are graded on their ability to perform in these different positions.

"As part of the class, lab students produce two half-hour shows," TDMP 385 professor Glen Okonoski said. "For each show, students rotate through different crew positions. The first time slot of the lab each week rotates through a few different shows. This semester those shows are Making the Grade, FSU Student Life, Expect Diversity and It's Academic. These shows are produced once a month, on a rotating basis—three [shows] per semester. The

second time slot then is producing Ferris Out Loud, which is produced weekly—11 times per semester."

Okonoski explained that a student producer is assigned to each show, and that student is responsible for developing the topic and content for their specific episode. The producers typically start working on their content weeks in advance, and the whole crew will do a practice run on Wednesdays before their lab.

"It's a lot of content that you have to come up with. Another thing that gives people trouble is being aware of how long each segment should be. This is hard to determine depending on what kind of hosts you have to work with," TDMP student Junio Ellie Hardy described regarding the difficulties of being a producer.

There are three hosts chosen each semester: one main host and two co-hosts. The hosts do not have to be a part of the TDMP program and is usually someone selected by the TDMP students.

"As a co-host, I help fill in the topics that the main host leads. There are times where co-hosts lead the conversations, but that is usually up to the main host to decide," said digital animation and design sophomore Derek Franciosi, a co-host on Ferris Out Loud.

Public relations students have also been co-hosting Ferris Out Loud for years. Public relations professor Patrick Bishop said, "My students have partnered with the TDMP program for years in co-hosting Ferris Out Loud. Typically, one of my seniors will co-host one episode

as part of a class assignment. After being a co-host, my PR student uses their communication skills to help promote awareness of the episode and gain viewers."

Bishop finds that his students do a great job and really break out with something most people would find very stressful. He said, "When a student achieves something they once thought was impossible, their confidence soars, and you can see it come out in everything they do."

Hardy confirmed Bishop's statement, "I love the adrenaline rush and the pressure to do well. It's cool to see how live TV is produced. Gaining knowledge with this kind of technology makes me more confident within the other areas of the industry. It is challenging, and that's why I like it."

As a non-TDMP student, Franciosi finds that being a co-host is a great opportunity for him.

"Being able to work on your speech and language with a show like this is really an honor, as many don't have this opportunity to be able to expose themselves to public speaking like this," Franciosi said.

If you are interested in being a host of Ferris Out Loud, Franciosi said, "It doesn't hurt to reach out to TDMP facility at the start of the next semester and see if they have an opening to host." Check out the end results of the TDMP students production skills online at www.ferrisstate.tv (shows are available each Wednesday), or learn about upcoming shows on their Facebook page, Ferris Out Loud.

Photo by: Cassidy Jessup | Multimedia Editor

Ferris students get ready to shoot Ferris Out Loud in the studio on campus.

OPINIONS

Cora Hall | Editor in Chief | hallc36@ferris.edu

The Ferris State Torch is published on 27 Wednesdays throughout the academic year. This student-run newspaper is printed by The Pioneer Group.

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To advertise with the Torch, contact Danette Doyle at the Pioneer Group: (231) 592-8391 or ddoyle@pioneergroup.com

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EDITOR'S COLUMN: Stop expecting us to work for free

By Cora Hall

Unpaid internships shouldn't exist, period.

My Twitter timeline (which I guess would be considered sports journalism Twitter) found its main character on Monday, March 1 as one writer put it. It all started with a tweet from a NFL Network reporter, who I will leave unnamed because she doesn't deserve the mention.

She tweeted about her disappointment in the comments she got about "an opportunity for an unpaid internship" that she "would have jumped at" in college. Her following tweet reads "One other layer...for future journalists... your first few years feel unpaid. I made 16.5k my first two years and worked harder than I've ever worked. There is a reason not everyone makes it in this business. I don't have time for those of you who don't understand grind" with a peace sign emoji at the end.

Unsurprisingly, she comes from a family with money. Many people fired back that she had a safety net. Others came out and acknowledged that the unpaid internships they took wouldn't have been possible for them without their family's help financially.

Unpaid internships are for students who don't need to work 40+ hours a week all summer to keep themselves afloat during the school year. They're for students who can afford to take four months of the year without income, with parents to pay their rent or tuition once they get back from a summer full of work and nothing to show for it in their bank accounts.

That group of people is ... small. And typically, white. Students from marginalized communities are far less likely to have generational wealth to fall back on when it comes to taking

unpaid internships. First generation students who come from a family with little to no money and take on substantially more student debt are shut out of these opportunities.

I've had multiple jobs year-round since I got to college. The idea of me being able to take four months off working - during the time of year I have the most free time, at that - and keep myself financially stable going into a school year is laughable.

The only internship offer I had after my sophomore year paid me a decent hourly wage, but they only allowed me to work 15 hours a week because that's all they could afford. If I hadn't been able to live with my aunt that summer, there's no way I could have taken that. If my parents hadn't offered me a little financial cushion if I needed it when I transitioned back to school and got back to my other jobs, I couldn't have taken that internship.

The entire idea of unpaid internships is exploitive and undermines the value of the work done by the intern. I've seen the work that student journalists do. A lot of it is high quality work that is damn near on the same level that many entry level reporters produce and better, so there is absolutely no reason not to pay them.

The other infuriating part of this woman's argument was the last bit of her tweet: "There is a reason not everyone makes it in this business. I don't have time for those of you who don't understand grind."

Does the need to be paid for the work I do mean I "don't understand the grind"? Does the fact that I refuse to produce my work for free mean I don't have work ethic? That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard.

I'm going to quote Pistons beat writer Omari Sankofa II's tweet because I don't think I could say this any better: "Being willing and able work for free in college says little about your work ethic and a lot about your families' financial situation and ability to support you. People need to understand that privilege and merit are not the same thing."

The fact that someone can afford to work for free says a lot more about the privilege they came from than the work ethic they possess. This business is demanding and competitive, having a strong work ethic is a given if you want a chance of making it. Your willingness to work for free has absolutely no correlation to your dedication and hard work. And in this industry, the internships you get can literally change the trajectory of your career. How is it right in any sense of the word to limit these opportunities to people who have their family's money to fall back on?

Unpaid internships shrink application pools and effectively perpetuate the gatekeeping in this industry. They are barriers for people who simply cannot afford to work for free.

The students who cannot afford to work for free most likely work at least one job while going to school full time. Yet, because we need the income, we don't understand "the grind"? Because we are not willing to let ourselves get taken advantage of for the high-quality work we do, we don't know what it means to work hard?

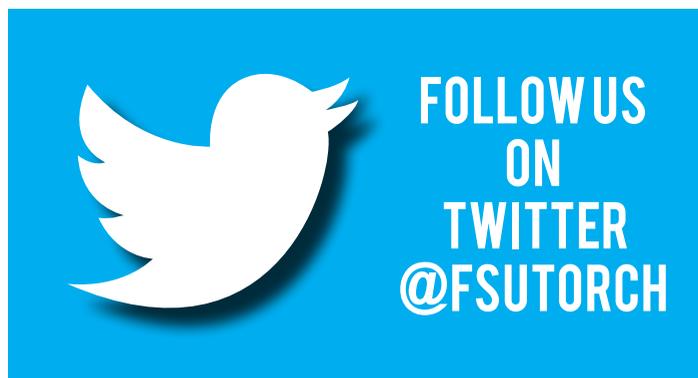
It's 2021, let's all wake up and stop spreading this toxic idea that working for experience and no pay is a fair and equitable way to structure internships.

GOT AN OPINION?

HOW TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Deadline for submissions every Friday by 5 p.m.
Cora Hall | Editor-in-Chief | Email: hallc36@ferris.edu

1. Think of a topic that you feel strongly about.
2. Write out your thoughts in a coherent and respectful manner.
3. Include a headshot and some information about yourself (location, age, etc.).
4. Email your opinion to the editor for a chance to have your work published in our next issue!



Rush Limbaugh's hateful legacy

Accurately remembering the infamous radio personality



Jessica Oakes
News Reporter

The passing of longtime radio personality Rush Limbaugh has sparked discourse on media bias and speaking ill of the dead.

To me, Limbaugh is one of many people on the American right who have dressed up bigoted hate speech as free speech, therefore making it patriotic.

A prime example of this behavior is Limbaugh's public slander of Georgetown University law student Sandra Fluke. In 2012, Fluke stood before congress in support of covering medicinal contraceptives with health insurance from religiously affiliated institutions such as her aforementioned alma mater. The following quote was taken directly from Limbaugh's program The Rush Limbaugh Show.

"What does it say about college coed Sandra Fluke who goes before [a] congressional commit-

tee and essentially says that she must be paid to have sex? What does that make her? It makes her a slut, right? It makes her a prostitute. She wants to be paid to have sex. She's having so much sex, she can't pay for her own contraceptives," Limbaugh said.

This statement heavily aids the argument that men should not be involved in decisions made about contraception. A month's worth of nearly every birth control is the same no matter how sexually active the woman using it is. Because hormonal birth control is used to treat symptoms such as acne and menstrual cramps, this includes women who are not sexually active at all. Limbaugh did not stop there.

"Ms. Fluke and the rest of you feminazis, here's the deal. If we are going to pay for your contraceptives, and thus pay for you to have sex, we want something for it. And I'll tell you what it is. We want you to post the videos online so we can all watch," Limbaugh said.

The list of abhorrent and hateful statements Limbaugh directed towards women, Black people, indigenous people, and the LGBT+ community is extensive.

"I am ashamed to share the field with someone like this man."

Jessica Oakes

It is important to note that this commentary would not have been allowed on national airwaves one year before Limbaugh's syndicated radio premier.

For almost 40 years, the Federal Communications Commission upheld a policy called the Fairness Doctrine. Under this doctrine, the FCC expected radio broadcasters

to inform listeners on controversial issues in an honest and balanced way. President Ronald Reagan vetoed congress' effort to turn this doctrine into federal law in 1987, as recorded in the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library online archives.

By August of that year, the policy had been entirely abolished in a 4 - 0 vote by the FCC. While only two of the commissioners on this vote were Republicans, three were appointed to their position by President Reagan and the last was appointed by President Richard Nixon. The Rush Limbaugh Show was purchased and premiered only months later in 1988.

When speaking about paying respect to those who have passed away, I am reminded of a segment from Limbaugh's show entitled "AIDS Update." According to a 1998 article from the Los Angeles Times, Limbaugh used this segment to say "gays deserved their fate," and play Donnie Warwick's song "I'll Never Love That Way Again."

I want Limbaugh to be remembered in a way that is accurate. By this, I mean that his legacy must include his blatant misogyny, homophobia and racism. This man profited off of hatred as soon as the FCC permitted it, and rode it all the way to the highest honor an American civilian can receive. In 2020, former President Donald Trump awarded Limbaugh with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, putting his name with the likes of Stephen Hawking, Rosa Parks and Niel Armstrong.

As a woman, and someone with goals of working in political media, I am ashamed to share the field with someone like this man. If free speech on American airwaves allows for bigotry and conspiracy, perhaps it should be reconsidered. To quote the court ruling of the 1969 case Red Lion Broadcasting Co. v. FCC, free speech is "the right of viewers and listeners, not the right of the broadcasters."

Political posts lack moderation they need

The little content warnings were never enough



Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

After the absolute dumpster fire that was the 2020 election cycle, there is call for social media companies to tighten up their terms of service and increase the moderation on their platforms.

This all came to a head when former President Donald Trump was having his tweets get flagged by Twitter for posting misinformation. His supporters as well as himself were insanely angry about these flags. This event made the "conservative social networking app" Parlor, surge in popularity, however, they were at the other end of the moderation spectrum in the sense that there was absolutely none.

Misinformation was spreading like head lice at an elementary school on social media during the last two presidential cycles. Take a look back at the 2016 election "Cambridge Analytica" scandal. The gist of that was a British company was harvesting Facebook users data to serve them targeted, sometime misinformed, political ads.

I'm not advocating for censorship, but those little warnings became just that: little. This led to them becoming quickly ignored by the masses, myself included. They just faded into the background very quickly, especially on TikTok where they were on any and every politics related video for months.

The misinformation problem grew so much during the 2020 election cycle, so much so that multiple government officials were publicly buying into wild, disproven conspiracy theories because of how popular they'd become online. Look at Georgia Republican representative Marjorie Taylor Greene. Besides campaign updates, all she posts are disproven conspiracy theories with absolutely no moderation by the platform they're posted to.

I personally got insanely tired of seeing political-based content towards the end of the election

cycle. I feel as though if social media companies can flag a post for potential political misinformation, that they can then set an option to limit, if not totally disable political posts from appearing in a user's feed.

I feel as though this would be the absolute least they could do, but they likely never will for one sole reason: ad revenue.

Looking back at the election, I recall seeing so many accounts that were blatantly breaking terms of service for the platforms they were posting content on. I can't even pick out the worst offender because of how bad they all were, I mean Twitter, Facebook, TikTok - all of them were terrible at keeping their TOS enforced.

This is especially true for politicians. Donald Trump's accounts were left unchecked for five years while he was spewing hate speech and misinformation. The only checks that were put in place were tiny little warning that were ignored by his "aggressively enthusiastic" supporters. They shouldn't get special privilege because of their status. Social media companies need to retake control of their platforms, that fact is clear, and they can only do this with huge, sweeping changes.

For starters, re-familiarize their users with the terms they agreed to when they joined the app. Second, they need to step up their game and enforce the terms they have laid out. Third, they need to stop giving public figures free rein to break their terms of service as I feel it gives "permission" for said public figures supporters to do the same. Finally, they need to take user reports more seriously. There are countless times have I reported accounts for clear TOS violations just for the app to spit back that what they posted was fine.

Fixing these blatant short comings is a must and I don't think they can wait until another election cycle to do so. The users of these social media apps need to reach out to them and tell them what change they want to see, or there just won't be any.

FERRIS STATE TORCH



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SPORTS

Brendan Sanders | Sports Editor | sandeb16@ferris.edu

The underdawgs



Photo by: Brendan Sanders | Sports Editor

Sophomore defenseman Brendan Rons played a major part in both matchups against Minnesota State as a defensive enforcer for the Bulldogs.

Bulldogs' loss sets them up to play first place Minnesota State to start WCHA playoffs

Brody Keiser
Sports Reporter

A rough regular season record of 1 - 20 - 1 for Ferris hockey will give way to a difficult first round playoff matchup.

Ferris is locked into last place in the WCHA. A last place finish in the conference results in a first-round playoff matchup with the first-place team in the conference and nationally ranked No. 3 Minnesota State.

The Bulldogs had a chance to draw a different first round opponent in the playoffs. If they beat Lake Superior State University in their two final regular season games and Alabama-Huntsville lost their final three games, Ferris would move up one spot in the conference standings. However, Ferris lost their Feb. 26 matchup with Lake State, meaning they will play Minnesota State first in the playoffs.

In their 4 - 2 loss to the Lakers Feb. 26, Ferris got goals from freshman defenseman Luke Farthing and sophomore forward Dallas Tulik. The goals were both players' first of the season. Junior goaltender Roni Salmenkangas recorded 25 saves in the loss.

Head coach Bob Daniels liked the way his team fought in the game against Lake State and the past Feb. 19 and Feb. 20 matchup against Minnesota State but recognized that it was not enough.

"There's not much any of us can do in the way of building confidence other than to win," Daniels said. "I have a lot of faith in the guys, and I let them know that. I like the fact that they continue to work hard and compete. Last weekend against a very good Minnesota State team we battled tooth and nail. We gained some confidence from that, but the only way to gain true confidence is to win."

Locked into their playoff seeding, Daniels wants his team to end the regular season Saturday, March 6 against Lake State on a high note.

"I'd like to see us win," Daniels said. "I've seen some pretty good development from this team. Our young defensive core has matured and played better. I'd like to continue to see that growth. We've played some good teams recently and played them pretty tough, so I want to see some continued growth. At the end of the day, we want to see some wins too."

A win in the last game of the regular season would help the Bulldogs heading into their matchup with the first-place team in the WCHA. Daniels spoke on what a win would do for his team.

"It would give us some momentum and some confidence, which we would need," Daniels said. "Winning this game would go a long way."

Daniels likes that his team has back-to-back single-game weekends to close the regular season, adding that it gives his team some "much-needed rest."

Looking towards the playoffs, senior forward Coale Norris said that playoff hockey is "just different."

"When playoff time comes, everything is off the table and it's a different type of game," Norris said. "Once you get to playoff hockey, it's more of a team game. Playoff hockey comes down to competing. You have to out-compete the team you're playing for the series, so when it comes down to it, it comes down to competing."

The Bulldogs played Minnesota State four times in the regular season, losing all four games but taking the Mavericks to overtime in one of those games.

"Seeing them multiple times in the regular season helps to know some of their tendencies and how they play, what they do well and what they don't do well, but they know the same things about us," Norris said.

Daniels echoed similar thoughts regarding their playoff opponent, adding that because both teams know each other well, they might "throw in some wrinkles" to their game plans.

Ferris battled hard against the Mavericks the last time the teams played. When Ferris last met the Mavericks on the ice, there

were a combined three player ejections between the two teams. For the Bulldogs, one of those players was junior forward Jake Transit.

"All four games we've played against them this year have felt like playoff games, they've been that intense," Transit said. "We don't really get along, so it's been a grind playing them."

Transit also talked about what his team aims to do in the playoffs to give them the best shot of winning.

"We want to force the action against whoever we play against and be hard to play against," Transit said. "I think that's the main thing. In playoff hockey, it becomes a little bit more serious and intense, so having everybody a little bit more focused and ready to play is huge."

According to Daniels, playoff hockey "brings out the best in everyone." The Bulldogs will face one of the best teams in the entire nation, but Transit is excited to see what his 1 - 20 - 1 team can do against the 16 - 2 - 1 Mavericks.

"Once you get to playoffs, anything can happen," Transit said. "You could see eight seeds in the NHL win the Stanley Cup. That's why hockey is such a unique sport; anybody can make a run."

WEEKEND SCORECARD

Women's Tennis

Sept. 14 - Ferris 7, Hope 0
Sept. 15 - Ferris 4, Hillsdale 3

Volleyball

Feb. 26 - Ferris 3, Lake Superior State 0
Feb. 27 - Ferris 3, Lake Superior State 0

Men's Tennis

Sept. 14 - Ferris 7, Hope 0
Sept. 15 - Ferris 4, Hillsdale 3

Koupil: Far from home

Swedish freshman already making impact on the men's tennis team

Brendan Sanders
Sports Editor

Playing on a team is something new to freshman tennis player Jan Koupil.

Koupil has been around the world during his tennis career, competing in tournaments that have brought him to the continents of Australia and Africa along with living in Stockholm, Sweden. But at Ferris, he seeks a new adventure.

As the number No. 2 singles player on the tennis team, Koupil has already found some success with the Bulldogs as the team's record sits at 4 - 2. His personal singles record sits at 3 - 3, with his only two losses coming against Western Michigan before a loss to Hillsdale in his singles match. He is also 4 - 2 in doubles matches.

Koupil wanted to compete for a university, for a team. For his entire career, the most teamwork he had seen was working with a partner in a doubles competition. Now, he is part of a team of eight other players.

"Universities back home don't have the facilities like here, like tennis courts, all the athletic facilities, everything that we have here," Koupil said. "We don't have this back home, as collegiate sports aren't the thing. So that's one big difference that we have all these facilities on campus, which makes it possible for me to combine my studies and my tennis."

Koupil came to America as a highly ranked tennis prospect, ranked as the No. 10 Swedish prospect in his age group, and held an 11.5 Universal Tennis Rating. He is competed in tournaments across the world, including matches in both Australia and Kenya.

"I've played for a long time. I've competed nationally in Sweden, and like internationally, like the Swedish Championship tournament, regional tournaments, something like Under-18 international tournaments," Koupil said.

The main team that he played for growing up was the Royal Tennis Club of Stockholm. The club was founded in 1896 and has been home to some of Sweden's largest tennis events.

"I played for my club, I was playing for the Royal Tennis Club of Stockholm, which is a very big club in the in the capital of Sweden, Stockholm," Koupil said. "And I played there for a very, very long time. And I was fortunate enough to play for them. I was very happy to represent my home club. It's just, a couple top clubs that recruit players internationally. But mostly is just any regular, recreational players."

One may ask how a prolific player in Sweden could find his way to a team such as Ferris State. Koupil explained that a major part



Photo by: Brendan Sanders | Sports Editor

Freshman tennis player Jan Koupil has been very successful in the first matches of his college career.

of the process is sending out his film and seeing which coaches respond.

"One way that we get recruited by producing a video of us playing tennis, as well as coaches, looking through our results and that kind of thing," Koupil said. "If there's a match, somewhere, you get in contact, you can reach out to coaches, or coaches can reach out to you. I got in contact with Coach Doren."

Koupil explained how talking with future teammates helped make the decision for him to come to Ferris even easier.

"When I was in talks with Coach Doren, he had me speak to a couple guys on the team," Koupil said. "Speaking to the guys I got to know the coach from their perspective, learn about how the place is from a student's perspective. And I think that was really nice to be able to get to know someone or a couple of people before I committed. And that in combination with the team atmosphere that everything is there just felt right."

Luckily, there was not much of a change in playing style when it came to playing here

in Michigan compared to Sweden, with the seasons being relatively similar.

"Well, differences I mean, back home. Like outside, as I said, we play on clay during the summer," Koupil said. "And Sweden, we have a similar climate to Michigan. So, we have our winters when we play indoors, and then we have our summers when we play outdoors."

Michigan also allows Koupil to participate in some of his other hobbies, along with the chance to play somewhere that had snowy winters that were like Sweden.

"I had never been to Michigan before, but I felt like I wanted a place where it wasn't insanely hot," Koupil said. "But, I mean, it's a nice place. Personally, I like skiing, or like I like winter activities. I don't mind the cold. So, I felt like it was a good fit for me. Instead of having rainy winters. So I'm happy with Michigan and the way it is just like home."

Currently, Koupil is studying Business Data Analytics and is planning to get a Master's degree in the program.

"And, being in business, data analytics, there's a lot of data and data analytics, fields you can go into," Koupil said. "It is very broad as, a lot of different industries revolve around data. So I feel like I'd be interested in doing, exploring, and I haven't gone to depth into what exactly I want to do. But, I'm a freshman, so I mean, there's not many decisions that I've already made. But I feel like I'm interested in technology. I'm interested in nature. There's a lot of different stuff. I'm interested in. I feel like, being able to incorporate data and data analytic into these different fields, I think could be a good fit for me."

Jan Koupil and the rest of the men's tennis team will be competing once again on March 13 against Lewis University in Plainfield, Illinois. The team's sights are on the success in the GLIAC tournament, with the GLIAC season starting March 19 against Wayne State.



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2021 MAY COMMENCEMENT

Saturday, May 1, 2021

Virtual Commencement

College	Contact	Phone #	Location
Health Professions	Richelle Williams	(231) 591-2263	VFS 210
Arts, Sciences & Education	Gayle Driggers	(231) 591-3666	ASC 3052
Business (Undergrad Students)	Carri Griffis	(231) 591-2493	BUS 200
Business (Graduate Students)	Shannon Yost	(231) 591-2168	BUS 200E
Engineering Technology	Joyce Mudel	(231) 591-3983	JHN 200
General Studies Graduates	Shelly VandePanne	(231) 591-2360	ASC 1017
Optometry	Michelle Balliet	(231) 591-3700	MCO 231
Pharmacy	Karen Ottobre	(231) 591-2252	PHR 201
DCCL	Megan Biller	(231) 591-2710	ALU 113

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Commencement Electronic Program - Graduates must complete their online graduation application by **Friday, February 19, 2021** for their names to appear in the **Spring 2021 Commencement Program** or their name will not appear in the Commencement Program.
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Saturday, May 1, 2021 at 9:00am

Ceremony 1	Michigan College of Optometry College of Health Professions
Ceremony 2	College of Pharmacy Doctorate in Community College Leadership College of Arts, Sciences and Education University College
Ceremony 3	College of Business
Ceremony 4	College of Engineering Technology

Diploma Cover & Alumni Pin Pick up - For those Graduate who selected yes to walk you may pick up your diploma cover and Alumni Pin during the following times in the University Center on main campus in Room 123.
 3/2 10:00 am - 4:00 pm 3/9 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
 3/4 10:00 am - 4:00 pm 3/11 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

For special accommodations or for more information regarding the Commencement ceremony, please visit the Commencement website www.ferris.edu/commencement or call (231) 591-3803.



Every game counts

Men's basketball locks in fourth seed for GLIAC tournament

Austin Arquette
Sports Reporter

The men's basketball will have some work cut out for them this week in the GLIAC tournament.

Ferris men's basketball landed the fourth seed in the GLIAC tournament with a first-round bye as they head to Indiana.

The journey to this tournament was more challenging than other years due to COVID-19. Several games have either been postponed or cancelled due to the protocols, and to make up for the cancelled games, every team makes the GLIAC tournament this year due to the pandemic. With the bye heading into the postseason tournament, the Bulldogs have the extra advantage of rest.

To end the regular season, the Bulldogs faced off against Wayne State University, who is currently slated to be the No. 1 seed heading into the GLIAC tournament.

The team showed some of their potential as they were able to split the pair of games against the Warriors, with an 84 - 71 win on Friday in Detroit, before falling in a close battle 70 - 68.

As the regular season played out differently for the GLIAC within conference-only games the Bulldogs finished with a 9 - 10 record and was .500 in conference play. Ferris scored over 1200 points in the full 19 games played with just under 1100 of those points coming from conference action. When playing away from Jim Wink Arena the Bulldogs are 5 - 6 on the road compared to having a record of 4 - 4 at home.

Senior wing Michael Peterson said that it's nice for the team to have a bye week because playing three games in four days is tough. This bye will also allow for the team to gain extra preparation time for their first round of the GLIAC tournament.

"We've been playing pretty well just by playing hard and connected. Our mentality pretty much stays the same," Peterson said.

"Our focus level had to rise up a notch, however."

Peterson has been a key player for the Bulldogs this season, being the team's second leading scorer with 9.2 points per game to go along with leading the team in rebounds with 6.7 per game.

In the 19 regular-season games, the Bulldogs tallied 68.2 points per game with a team field goal average of 42.1%. While the field goal percentage looks low, the main problem is the Bulldogs' three-point shooting as the team has made 28.5% of their shots from behind the arc. As the offensive struggles illuminate the Bulldogs their strength comes on the defensive end.

Rebounds and holding opposing teams under .500 shooting percentages have helped the Bulldogs chase another NCAA tournament run. Ferris has grabbed an average of 35.2 rebounds per game with 25.3 on the defensive side. The Bulldogs as well average 6.1 steals per game and block 4.3 shots per game. As Ferris continues to play

tough holding opponents to 70.1 points per game and only allowing 45.6% of shots to go in.

In order to make a deep run into the GLIAC tournament, the Bulldogs have to find a strong offensive groove while they continue to play tough defense both physically and mentally. They will also need to clean up their turnover ratio as they allow 12.2 turnovers per game. As the Bulldogs gear up to face Ashland in the first round, they will look forward to a tough competitor.

Earlier in the season, both teams faced off in Ohio where they split the two road games. The Eagles had an impressive 74 - 52 win over the Bulldogs the first time around, however, Ferris turned things around the next day with a 69 - 68 win to cause the road split.

Ferris State is set to face fifth-seeded Ashland on Thursday, March 4 with a 3:15 p.m. scheduled tip-off of the GLIAC quarterfinals in Hammond, Indianapolis.

Warriors deal heartbreaking losses

Women's basketball concludes regular season with back-to-back losses



Photo by: Cora Hall | Editor in Chief

Freshman guard DeShonna Day would score 9 points in Friday's close loss.

Brody Keiser
Sports Reporter

The Ferris women's basketball team lost consecutive games against Wayne State to close their regular season.

On Friday, Feb. 26, the Bulldogs played strong defense and recorded a season high number of steals but fell to 48 - 47 on a last second made shot by the Warriors.

The next day, Ferris fell again 59 - 54. They got 21 points from freshman guard Kadyn Blanchard and 13 points from senior guard Samantha Krauss.

Wayne State's 48 points on Friday were the second fewest allowed in a contest by the Bulldogs this year. Ferris also recorded a season high 15 steals.

The Bulldogs needed a strong defensive effort, as they shot just 25% from the floor, well below their season average of 38%. Their 47 points were also their second fewest in a game all season. However, their strong defensive play was not enough to beat the Warriors.

"Mentally, we were locked into our defensive game," head coach Kurt Westendorp said. "This is four games in a row where we've held our opponents to under 50 points in regulation. We executed on that end of the floor really, really well. Offensively, we couldn't knock down the big shot when we needed it. We got a lot of looks that we liked, but we have to do a much better job of focusing and finishing around the basket."

Freshman guard DeShonna Day said her team prepared to play strong defense.

"In practice we all locked into the game plan coach was giving us for the week," Day said. "We executed the plan, forcing them to make extra passes and get them out of their comfort zone."

The first quarter concluded with the Bulldogs on top 13 - 8. They forced Wayne State into eight first quarter turnovers and capitalized with nine points off those turnovers.

Ferris got off to a slow start offensively in the second quarter, scoring just five points in the first eight minutes of the quarter. Sophomore guard Mallory McCartney hit a three-pointer with two minutes remaining in the quarter to end a Warrior 7 - 0 run and pull the Bulldogs within one point.

To close the half, the Bulldogs had the ball and got down the floor quickly. Junior forward Zoe Anderson hit a three-point shot to beat the buzzer and give her team a 26 - 24 lead heading into halftime.

The Bulldogs recorded eight steals in the first half, forced 12 turnovers, and recorded eight second chance points. Anderson, McCartney and Day each had six points for the Bulldogs in the half.

Wayne State started the second half with a strong 6 - 0 nothing run in the first two minutes of play, forcing Bulldog head coach Kurt Westendorp to burn a timeout. Anderson scored a two-point shot out of the timeout to end the Warrior's run and start an 8 - 0 run for Ferris to give them a 34 - 30 lead. Ferris ended the quarter up 39-34.

Ferris had a 46 - 39 lead with two minutes remaining in the game. Wayne State cut the Bulldog's lead to 46 - 44 with one minute left on the clock. The Warriors had the ball and a chance to tie or take the lead, but Anderson stole the ball and passed the court to Blanchard.

Blanchard was called for an offensive foul while dribbling up the court, and Wayne State capitalized with a game-tying two point shot on their ensuing possession with just over 30 seconds remaining in regulation.

With seven seconds remaining in the game, Anderson was fouled on a shot. She hit 1-of-2 free throws to give Ferris a 47 - 46 lead.

"I stepped up to the line with confidence ready to go but when the first one left my hands, I knew instantly it was off," Anderson said. "I knew I needed to just take a deep breath and knock the second down."

Wayne State missed a layup with three seconds remaining but corralled an offensive rebound and scored to take a 48 - 47 lead with just over one second to play.

"It was frustrating that 95% of the game we controlled defensively and then didn't box out the missed shot with 2 seconds left," Anderson said. "We just need to close out those rebounds and missed shots in crunch time."

Ferris had a chance to win the game on their last possession, but McCartney missed a three-point shot.

"We had a really good look," Westendorp said. "That's all you can ask for with a little over a second left on the clock. We'll take Mallory shooting that shot every single time. We have a ton of confidence in her, so if we get that same situation tomorrow, we'll try to get the ball back in her hands."

For the game, Anderson, Day and Blanchard each recorded nine points. McCartney had six points on 2 - of - 15 shooting and recorded four steals and zero turnovers while playing all 40 minutes of the game. She also played all 40 minutes of Saturday's game.

The losses knocked Ferris to 6 - 12 to conclude the regular season.

Ferris will begin the GLIAC tournament March 2 as the ninth seed against Wisconsin Parkside, a team they split their regular season matchups with.