

University of San Diego

Digital USD

USD Vista

USD Student Newspapers

2-10-2022

Vista: February 10, 2022

University of San Diego

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital.sandiego.edu/vista>

Digital USD Citation

University of San Diego, "Vista: February 10, 2022" (2022). *USD Vista*. 1126.

<https://digital.sandiego.edu/vista/1126>

This Newspaper is brought to you for free and open access by the USD Student Newspapers at Digital USD. It has been accepted for inclusion in USD Vista by an authorized administrator of Digital USD. For more information, please contact digital@sandiego.edu.

The Official Student Newspaper of the University of San Diego since 1968

THE USD VISTA

Random testing and COVID-19 protocols on campus

Everything students need to know for in-person classes

JENNY HAN
ASST. NEWS EDITOR

In preparation for in-person learning for the upcoming semester, USD released an updated version of their COVID-19 protocols. On their website, they mention three new changes.

First, residential students were required to submit a negative COVID-19 test within 96 hours of their designated move-in date. Second, all commuter students were required to schedule a drive-through COVID-19 test at the university three days prior to the expected return to in-person classes. Finally, USD is implementing a random COVID-19 testing system on campus for all students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, starting on Feb. 7.

According to Ky Snyder, Vice President for University Operations, "At this point, we plan to test 27 percent of the campus community on a weekly basis. Notices will be sent on Friday's for the following week's



Random COVID-19 testing signs lead to the testing location located on the second floor of the SLP.

Karisa Kampbell/The USD Vista

testing that will be conducted Monday through Wednesday."

Both Snyder and the COVID-19 Action Team emphasize the importance of checking one's USD email. Specifically, one must look out for emails from "no-reply@mg.affinityassure.com" with the subject line "University of San Diego - Order Submission with Activation." USD is not shying away from consequences for those that don't follow through on these emails in a timely manner.

"Non-participation with the testing will result in an Interim Suspension for students and disciplinary action by HR for employees" Snyder stated.

Blake Burke, a sophomore living on campus, explained how the random testing process is made simple for students.

"I got an email to get tested on the 31st," Burke said. "You have to register to Infinity, get your code, and then just go in and test."

Burke also mentioned that although he had no choice as to what date he could pick to get tested on, he was allowed to pick from a variety of time

See Campus Life, Page 2

Euphoria: What's all the hype?

Dissecting why USD is enthralled with Euphoria

ANNA VALAIK
A&C EDITOR

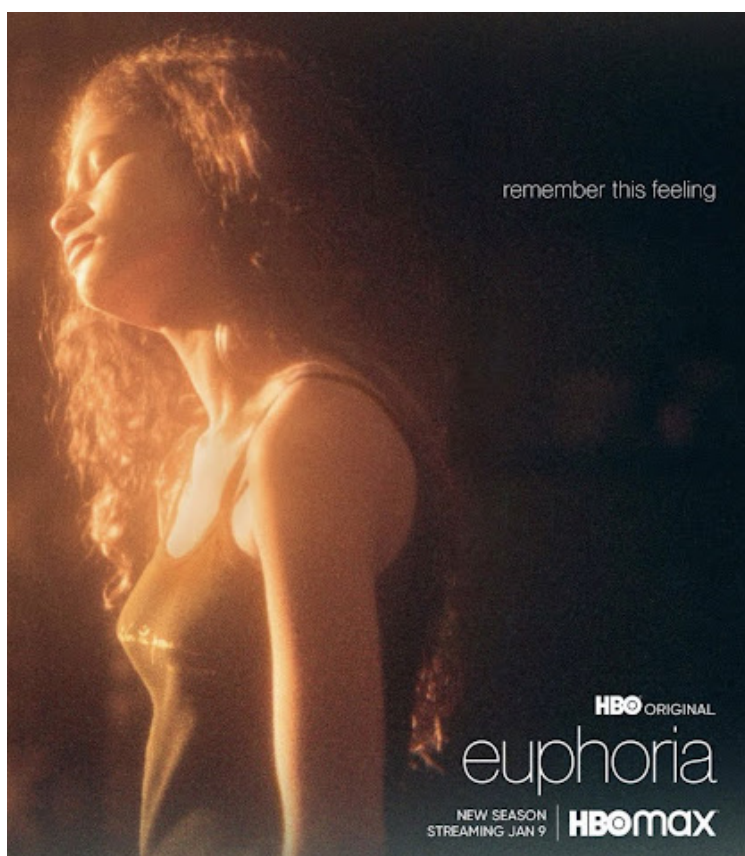
The hit HBO drama series, "Euphoria," is the talk of the town, and there's no denying it. With Season 2 premiering a month ago, the show and the infamous characters are everywhere: TikTok feeds, "Variety" articles, and YouTube interviews, to name a few. "Euphoria Sunday's" have even become a crucial part of people's weeks with everyone patiently waiting until a new episode drops.

Euphoria's plotline revolves around Rue, a troubled high school girl who deals with a drug addiction. As she makes her way

through life, she encounters multiple other characters, all dealing with their own drama, difficulties, and relationships. Slowly, each character has their own narrative, and the viewer sees just how crazy the world of high schoolers can get. Notable names such as Zendaya, Jacob Elordi, Sydney Sweeney, and Alexa Demie star in this drama.

Interestingly enough, according to Variety, Season 2 viewership is up nearly 100 percent from Season 1; the premiere alone drew in 13.1 million viewers, which is an astounding number. Although Euphoria has always been highly-regarded, this dramatic increase in viewership

See HBO Series, Page 10



Riveting HBO drama, Euphoria, takes over popular media.

Photo courtesy of @Euphoria/Instagram

MORE STORIES

Pressing News of 2022

See News, page 3

Controversial Olympics

See Opinion, page 4

New Year New Torero

See Feature, page 6

Lunar New Year

See A&C, page 9

USD vs. Gonzaga

See Sports, page 11

Don't miss the latest news.
Find us online:



@USDVista



@theusdvista

uofsdmedia.com

NEWS

Campus life and COVID-19 in 2022

Students react to the reality of the Omicron variant on-campus

Campus Life from Page 1

slots on that specific day. Burke tested positive from his random test and was given one of two options. The first option was to quarantine for ten days and be exempt from testing for 90 days afterwards. The second option only applies to those who are asymptomatic: quarantine for five days and get a follow-up negative COVID-19 PCR test. However, Burke found these options confusing. “Nobody is going to be showing a negative test (in regards to the test that one would take after the five days) because even if you have no symptoms, you’re still going to show a positive result on that PCR (due to the nature of the PCR test),” Burke said. “I think they should either have one or the other: you’re here for ten days or you’re here for five days.”

Regardless, Burke thinks the university is doing the best they can. “Everyone is required to be fully vaccinated and boosted, they’re doing the testing, and for those who do have it [COVID-19], they’re getting quarantined,” Burke said. “And I think everyone around campus, if they are going out publicly or hanging out, it seems to be just within themselves. So I think, personally, I don’t know what else they could do.” However, not all students feel the same way. Shiara Mateo, a USD sophomore living on campus, had mixed feelings about the efficiency of the updated COVID-19 protocol. Her negative experience started with the process of moving back onto campus; she described it as frustrating due to the lack of direction she was given. Shiara Mateo had a different experience with the new COVID-

19 protocols. She described the process of moving back onto campus as being frustrating due to what she believed to be the lack of communication between the different USD departments. She was required to take numerous COVID-19 tests that the university wouldn’t take for various reasons. Specifically after her third test, she stated that housing wouldn’t let her move in even when the COVID-19 Contact Tracing Team approved for her to move in.

“I just feel like there needs to be more communication between the COVID tracing team, the housing portal, and even like the students working front desks at Palomar.”

- Shiara Mateo

“I understand that I may be an exception; not every not everybody’s moving experience was like this,” Mateo said. “But I just feel like there needs to be more communication between the COVID tracing team, the housing portal, and even like the students working front desks at Palomar.” She also had mixed feelings about the efficiency of the updated COVID-19 protocol. “With the random COVID testing, if you’re just choosing

random people, there’s a chance that in the testing group, you’re gonna have somebody that does have COVID or doesn’t. On the flip side of that, the group you don’t test that day might have COVID so it kind of seems not really effective in that sense. But I understand why they do it,” Mateo said. At the end of the day, only time can reveal the new protocols’ effectiveness. USD has quickly adapted to the possibility of in-person classes again, and they want to assure that they can involve everyone on campus to the greatest with this testing. The most that students can do is play their part in reducing the spread of COVID-19 and checking their emails every Friday. The USD Vista will continue to remain diligent in covering COVID-19 updates as new protocols arise throughout the semester.

Rogue ex-lecturer at UCLA threatens mass shooting

Messages of violence move classes online; mirrors 2019 USD incident

COLIN MULLANEY
ASST. NEWS EDITOR

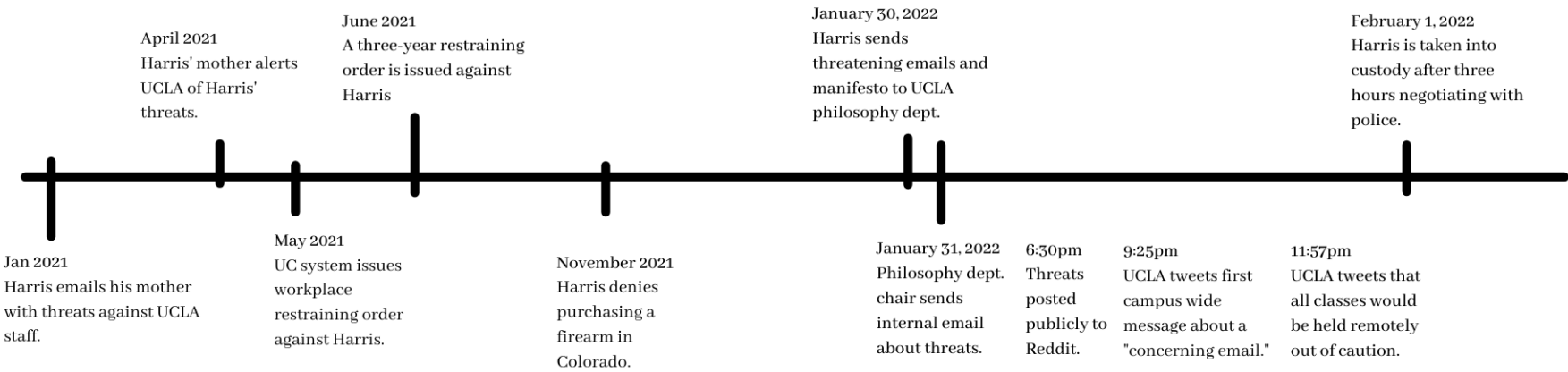
As UCLA prepared for the return to in-person classes, students may have anticipated further delays, given the unpredictable nature of COVID-19 policies. However, likely one of the last things they expected to occur was the extension of online class sessions due to threats of violence against the campus community. The night before classes were set to return, speculation began to circulate on social media about the possibility of a mass shooting on campus; 35 students and faculty associated with the philosophy department received vague and erratic but threatening emails from a former postdoctoral fellow. According to an article from the New York Post, now ex-lecturer from UCLA, Matthew Harris, 31, sent members of the

department various links to his YouTube videos as well as his 803 page manifesto, in which he makes almost 12,000 allusions to the words “kill,” “bomb,” and “shoot,” in addition to, “racist slurs against Jewish and East Asian people.” In response to Harris’ emails, UCLA tweeted an initial statement to students at 9:25 p.m., stating that, “UCLA police were aware of a ‘concerning email and posting’ sent to some Bruins,” and that the matter was being handled. However, some community members were less than pleased with this response, as one tweeted back, “...what @ UCLA and @UCPDLA are failing to inform students and staff of is that this ‘concerning email’ is a major mass shooter threat.” Police were allegedly aware of Harris’ credibility and intent, as they had dealt with him previously in association with threats of violence against UCLA faculty. Harris formerly worked

with the philosophy department until last year, when he was let go for, “widespread complaints about his behavior as a postdoctoral fellow in philosophy,” according to the LA Times. Upon his dismissal from UCLA, Harris’ behavior escalated from conduct issues “involving graphic materials of a sexual and violent nature” to “outright death threats” against community members, an attorney for UCLA told the LA Times. In previous threats last year, Harris, “threatened to hunt down and kill a University of California professor” and “was subsequently barred from going near her” or buying firearms in the United States. Harris had said that he, “planned to shoot the professor with an MP5 submachine gun ‘for giving me schizophrenia,’” according to the LA Times. Although Harris was peacefully taken into custody in Boulder, Colorado, the day after he sent the emails, anxiety continues to

run high at an already anxious and stressed UCLA. Students were offered counseling for any lingering emotional concerns, but more than anything, some students like Lizette Garcia were frustrated with the delay in UCLA’s response, arguing that “the notification of remote classes came so late and failed to mention the mass shooting threat that had been circulating for hours on social media.” This past week’s incident at UCLA is reminiscent of events that occurred at USD in 2019, when a then tenured professor of theology, Louis Komjathy, made threats against his colleagues, urged boycotts of their classes, and slid an image of a rifle/scope crosshairs underneath their office doors, according to a previous article from The USD Vista. The former USD professor’s actions resulted in his termination and a restraining order against him. Additionally, parallel to

last week’s incident at UCLA, USD students in 2019 were dissatisfied with the school’s “lack of transparency on the issue,” and even gathered for a peaceful protest at the time. Even though “USD’s internal threat assessment...came back negative,” USD students three years ago told the San Diego Union-Tribune that “it took quite a while for the university to address what happened” following the outbreak of rumors about possible threats of violence. Fortunately, nobody at UCLA or USD was physically harmed, but the fear that accompanies overt threats of violence can have lasting psychological impact, like the threats made at USD in 2019. Matthew Harris is behind bars, and “expected to face federal charges” according to CNN, but the feelings of unsafety and vulnerability that he instilled in many could continue to run rampant for the foreseeable future.



Timeline outlining the alarming events Harris instigated leading up to UCLA classes reverting back to online for safety precautions.

The 5 most pressing news stories from winter break

Heading into 2022, here's everything you need to know

KARISA KAMPBELL
NEWS EDITOR

Omicron loosening COVID-19 policies

With a new, widespread variant of COVID-19 taking the United States by storm came staffing issues nationwide. Companies, such as United Airlines, were forced to revise operations due to a deficit in staff. According to an article from National Public Radio (NPR), on Jan. 11, United Airlines reported more than 3,000 employees who tested positive for COVID-19, causing many delays and cancellations in flights. This narrative was echoed across the nation as businesses floundered with staffing issues due to COVID-19 sicknesses. As a result, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) released new quarantine guidelines aligned with new research directed to support businesses. Per the new CDC guidelines and the CDC website, if sick with COVID-19, isolation can end five days after a positive test if the individual is fever-free for 24 hours after the five day isolation period

TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID?

- 1. Stay home for at least 5 days.
- 2. After 5 days, if fever free for 24h, isolation can end.
- 3. Wear mask around others for full 10 days after positive test

Marissa Esteban/The USD Vista

Russia-Ukraine tensions

Since the Cold War ended in 1991, Ukraine has been a free, independent democracy. However, Russian efforts led by Vladimir Putin are beginning to threaten Ukraine. According to the Washington Post, Putin's objective is to extract concessions, or grants of right of land or property, and to force Russia into the conversation about Ukraine's future. As of Feb. 5, there are reportedly 100,000 Russian troops along the Ukraine-Russia border. While invasion is yet to happen, members of NATO have been supporting



The 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony.

Photo courtesy of @beijing2022/Instagram



France team figure skaters James and Cipres finishing pose.

Photo courtesy of @beijing2022/Instagram



Betty White was always an avid animal lover.

Photo Courtesy of @bettymwhite/Instagram

Ukraine and preparing for what could be the biggest invasion since World War II.

Supreme Court blocks OSHA vaccine mandates

In an effort to diminish the effects of the January Omicron surge, the Biden administration worked to enact a vaccine mandate for companies of larger than 100 employees. This mandate, called the OSHA vaccine mandate, was visited by the Supreme Court on Jan. 13. The conservative-majority Supreme Court blocked OSHA from requiring private employers to enforce a vaccine mandate, but approved that employees working at healthcare facilities, receiving federal funding, will have to be vaccinated.

Boycott of Winter Olympics

Feb. 3 marked the beginning of the controversial Beijing Winter Olympics 2022. In protest to many questionable decisions and actions on China's part, many countries, including the United States, chose a Diplomatic Boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics. These actions in question include the concern over Chinese Tennis star Peng Shuai and China's treatment of Muslim minorities in the country. The United States still decided to send athletes to compete in the Winter Olympics, however the U.S. will not send high-up officials, such as the Vice President, to the games. Other countries such as the United Kingdom and Canada followed suit with the United States decision to a Diplomatic Boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Betty White

Beloved actress and American sweetheart, Betty White, died on Dec. 31, 2021, just days before the country was set to celebrate her 100th birthday. Most famous for her roles in "The Golden Girls" and "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," White's comedic performances had a lasting effect on many. According to the New York Times, throughout the course of her career, White won a total of seven Emmys, not including a lifetime achievement Emmy she won in 2015. While sad to see an American icon pass, the legacy that Betty White left in the television industry will continue to shine for years to come.

The USD Vista

Editorial – 619.260.4584
Business – 619.260.4714
www.uofsdmedia.com / @TheUSDVista

Taylor DeGuzman - Editor in Chief
Maria Watters - Associate Editor
Samantha Anciano - Managing Editor
Yana Kouretas - Copy Editor
Marissa Esteban - Art Director
Karisa Kampbell - News Editor
Maria Simpson - Opinion Editor

Haley Jacob- Feature Editor
Anna Valaik - Arts & Culture Editor
Mari Olson - Sports Editor
Kai Welsh - Distribution Manager
Julia Sotille - Social Media Manager
Michael Gutierrez - Finance Manager
Morgan Valent - Advertising Manager

Gina Lew - Student Media Advisor
Marie Minnick - Operations Advisor

The USD Vista publication is written and edited by USD students and funded by revenues generated by advertising and a student fee. Advertising material published is for information purposes only and is not to be construed as an expressed or implied endorsement or verification of such commercial venues by the staff or University. The USD Vista office is located on the fourth floor of the Student Life Pavilion in room 403B.

All inquiries should be sent to:
The USD Vista
5998 Alcala Park
San Diego, CA 92110

Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of The USD Vista staff, the University of San Diego or of its student body. Letters to the Editor can be submitted to The USD Vista office. Letters should be limited to 300 words and must be signed. For identification purposes, USD identification numbers and writer's year must be included in the letter. The USD Vista reserves the right to edit published letters. Any content sent to the editor will be considered for publication unless otherwise stated.

EDITORIAL

The guilty 2022 Winter Games

The problem with the Olympics this year

KATHERINE ELY
ASST. OPINION EDITOR

The opening ceremony for the 2022 Winter Olympics started on Feb. 4 at 3:55 am PST. But with their commencement, each of us should ask ourselves one very important question: what’s wrong with the 2022 Olympics?

In December 2021, the Biden administration announced their decision to refrain from sending any U.S. officials to Beijing for the games in protest of the Chinese government’s abuse of human rights. Since then, more countries have followed suit.

As of 2017, the Chinese government has reportedly imprisoned around one million Uyghurs – a mostly Muslim, Turkic-speaking ethnic group primarily located in Xinjiang, a northwestern region of China – to be placed in reeducation camps. Those who have not yet been detained are subject to heavily forced surveillance, religious restrictions, and forced labor. China’s government has refused to share information regarding their detention centers and they have prevented journalists and foreign researchers from accessing them.

When I heard about this controversy surrounding the Olympics this year, I realized the tough dilemma I now faced: I love watching competitive sports, and all the shine and glory that comes with the Olympic events, but is loving the games a justified reason to watch them this year given the political turmoil surrounding it?



The Olympic rings are a worldwide symbol of unity and sportsmanship.

Photo Courtesy of Bryan Turner/unsplash

On the one hand, the Olympics encompass tradition and unify the world in a way unlike anything else. For more than a century, humans have found entertainment in watching athletes gather to compete in the Olympic games. We are excited to see the world’s top athletes come together to show their spectacular skills for a sport we love and know, or even those we’ve never seen before.

On the other hand, in order to do that this year, those athletes have to travel to an authoritarian country where they are skating and skiing in front of adoring crowds, while inexcusable crimes against humanity are occurring just beyond the Olympic ring.

Ethically, it is hard for me to support a cause when I know horrific things are happening

behind the scenes. The Olympics have a rich history that garnered a reputation of bad practices and corruption. For example, Russia was banned from participating in the games for four years in 2019 for running a state-sponsored doping scheme.

What is even more horrifying is that the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the panel that organizes and administers the events, has decided to turn a blind eye to China’s politics, claiming they wish to hold a neutral position. When asked about the topic of human rights, IOC President Thomas Bach responded, “The principle of political neutrality of the IOC applies.” Their reasoning for allowing Beijing to host this Winter Olympics was mainly for their own monetary gain.

Since the announcement of the Beijing games, only a handful of Olympic athletes have spoken out in protest on the matter. Athletes representing numerous countries were preparing to express their support for the victims of China’s authoritarian government during the opening ceremonies. However, these athletes have been heavily discouraged from doing so.

Athletes who publicly speak in opposition to China’s political practices face the threat of punishment from the Chinese government. Additionally, they also withstand pressures from the IOC, as well as the major corporations sponsoring them, to avoid controversy.

Due to these circumstances, Olympic athletes have opted out of attending the opening

and closing ceremonies, denying China’s government from using these ceremonies to sanction and progress their crimes against humanity.

It is hard to endorse the Winter Olympics this year considering China’s apparent violation of human rights. So I implore you all, as you are watching the games this year, to acknowledge the issues surrounding them, and hopefully recognize the sacrifices being made in order for them to continue.

Because of the circumstances in Beijing, I believe that we should refrain from participating in viewing the Olympics this year. Though this might be hard for many of us to do, I think it is ultimately the right decision. You might disagree with me and watch them anyways, but by doing so, you are supporting an organization that has overtly expressed negligence towards a grouping’s basic human rights. We may not be able to stop the games from happening, but what we can do as individuals is make the right decision and oppose an institution with questionable values. It is a sacrifice I believe we must all make.

If you do choose to watch the games this year and would like to support the cause, you can donate any amount you would like to The Human Rights Watch, an organization dedicated to exposing China’s heinous human rights abuses, or to Amnesty International USA, an organization made to help end human rights abuses all around the globe.



American Snowboarder Chloe Kim participates in the 2022 Winter Olympics.
Photo Courtesy of @npg917/Instagram



Canadian Ski Team represents at the Winter Olympics.
Photo Courtesy of @alpinecanada/Instagram

The views expressed in the editorial and op-ed sections are not necessarily those of *The USD Vista* staff, the University of San Diego, or its student body.

EDITORIAL

Is in-person learning here to stay?

USD's confusing guidelines make it hard to know

MARIA SIMPSON
OPINION EDITOR

Last semester, USD was finally able to return to in-person learning after about three semesters of being online.

Students wandered freely across campus, bumping into friends in Aromas, cheering one another on in club sports, gathering in the Garden of the Sea to look at the view, and so much more.

I remember the priceless moment when I was first able to run up to and hug people that I had only known through Zoom for a year, finally meeting them in real life.

We started the Spring 2022 semester back on Zoom, a place that most students and professors hoped they would never be again.

While "Zoom university" was an understandable and justified precaution a year ago, forcing students to adapt to an online format again is damaging to the college experience.

Back in Spring 2020, online class was also intended to be temporary, only to extend for the entirety of the semester. There is fear among students and faculty that this semester will have those same results, especially with the Omicron variant at large right now.

USD has done a poor job of updating the community about moving to virtual learning, returning to in-person, and in general, with COVID-19 guidelines.

This gap in communication becomes more apparent when contrasted with the information provided by other San Diego universities such as the University of California San Diego (UCSD) and San Diego State University (SDSU).

UCSD announced that classes will begin remotely for a period of time on Dec. 22. While USD announced the temporary shift to virtual learning on Jan. 10 when classes were going to begin two weeks later.

As we all know, USD is fully in-person again, but a confirmation was never sent out.

I was on my toes all of last week, worried that an announcement of an extension would come out any minute.

In the end, students were left to cautiously assume that they were allowed to return to class.

Vaccine booster requirements were communicated in an even more rushed manner.

USD sent an announcement



Life on campus returns once again with in-person classes resuming on Feb. 7.

on Jan. 5 officially requiring all students to be vaccinated by Jan. 14, leaving less than 10 days for students to find, schedule, and receive the booster shot.

Due to travel and COVID exposure, this requirement was impossible for me to fulfill so I was put on Interim Suspension until I finally had a chance to get the booster. In comparison, SDSU announced their requirement on Dec. 16 which was to be effective Jan. 18, and UCSD announced their requirement Dec. 22, to be effective by Jan. 31. Over a month in comparison to just over a week.

USD's approach to COVID protocols has been unclear in many other ways. The website is difficult to navigate, especially in comparison to other San Diego school websites. COVID testing is difficult to find, especially in urgent cases when someone cannot wait a day or two to be tested.

Information on COVID guidelines, testing, dashboard, and past announcements is not all on one easy to navigate page.

Requirements for COVID tests before coming to campus also changed as students were returning to USD.

Some information asked for the test to be taken 72 hours before returning, others said 96 hours.

The announcement of PCR tests was not an easy requirement, especially for students who may have had COVID over break since PCR can pick up on antibodies.

Concern migrated from one student to the next that USD would continue to charge full

tuition even if school shifted to an online format past Feb. 7.

The original deadline for full tuition refund was on Feb. 7, the same day class was set to return in person.

Many students feared this was so that if school continued on Zoom after that date, no one would be able to get a full refund. The full refund date has since been pushed back to Feb. 15, but there is no doubt that students are still wary of where their money is going, especially with online school as a possibility.

Forcing students to remain on Zoom is also incredibly hypocritical of the university. USD has allowed students and other guests to be in attendance at indoor sports events for several weeks.

On Feb. 3, the men's basketball team played Gonzaga with an astounding audience of over 5,000 people in the Jenny Craig Pavilion, many of whom were unmasked.

Why should I be able to sit inches away from a classmate with no mask surrounded by thousands of people, but I cannot sit next to that same person in a classroom?

The main concern with returning to in person is the spread of COVID across campus.

Beginning the semester online was a good precaution to keep any budding cases at bay, but there is almost no point in keeping school virtual after Feb. 7.

The majority of college age students are at very low risk for severe COVID symptoms and because all faculty, staff, and students should

be vaccinated, those who are at higher risk are protected.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the peak death rate for both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals in the US showed that an unvaccinated individual was over 16 times more likely to die than a vaccinated individual.

In August, CNBC shared that an unvaccinated person was 29 times more likely to be hospitalized than a vaccinated person.

The CDC also stated that although the Omicron variant tends to spread faster than other variants of COVID, the symptoms are generally less severe.

USD's current in-person classroom set up includes precautions despite the already low risk for

Jaden Hauptman/The USD Vista

vaccinated college students.

Thankfully, in person learning resumed on Feb. 7 as scheduled, but the return to online learning is still a lurking possibility.

USD returning to virtual learning in the future would divide students, harm mental health, and take a toll on grades and involvement.

Students should not have to accept a subpar college experience any longer. Hopefully, we as a community can do our best to keep COVID-19 cases low, so that in-person learning remains a safe option.

However, it is up to the university to clearly communicate what guidelines we should follow and what direction USD will head in the upcoming weeks and months.



Most students are excited to return back to in-person classes.

Photo Courtesy of Chris Montgomery/unsplash

The views expressed in the editorial and op-ed sections are not necessarily those of *The USD Vista* staff, the University of San Diego, or its student body.

Marco Jimenez - sophomore



"My main New Year's resolution was to cook more. It was easier when I was home and had a full kitchen at my disposal, but I've been cooking a lot more at school already too. I like making dinners and meal prepping for future nights when I'm running short on time, so I tend to cook really simple and easy things that can last me throughout the week."

Advice : "My advice for sticking to them would be to make smaller goals rather than really big unattainable goals. You should be realistic with your goals, or else they're going to fall through, and you'll get down on yourself. You should make goals that you can actually achieve."



Brooke Waxman - junior



"I've never really been a New Year's resolution person because I like to reflect on things all year and try to take care of myself in new ways. However, I made a concrete New Year's resolution for the first time ever last year and followed through on it, so that was pretty cool. My resolution was to read more books, and I wanted to read at least one full book every month. Then, I ended up reading 28 books and became obsessed with reading. In the summer, I was reading multiple books a week. But, this year, I didn't make any, but I'll probably keep reading because I really liked doing it, and it's a habit now."

Advice : "My advice is to make achievable goals that are adding something instead of changing something to avoid making negative-minded goals. Add something small that you enjoy instead of using it as an opportunity to criticize yourself."

NEW YEAR, NEW TORERO

Students talk New Year's resolutions (and tips for success).

Jessica Onabanjo - junior



"My New Year's resolutions were to cook and work out more, to basically live an overall healthier lifestyle. I've stuck with them for the most part, but it can get hard with school and not having enough time to go to the gym. However, I think making it work requires a schedule and discipline because you have to want to achieve your goals to actually achieve your goals."

Maria Angst - sophomore



Advice: "A New Year's resolution isn't something meant to be grand or for you to share for everyone. But, I think it's something that will make you smile and feel satisfied once you complete it. And, it doesn't have to start at the new year, it just starts whenever you're ready. The idea of a New Year's resolution is just a mindset of having a whole year to make yourself a little bit better and improve on something you really want to do."

Now a month into the new year, USD students share their progress on resolutions for 2022.

(and advice for sticking to them)!

"The biggest resolution I had was to slowly try to make myself happier. I feel like a lot of people think that's not a big thing, but when you really look at everyone and see what they're going through, I think everyone can make a simple resolution to just be a little happier this year than you were the last. It doesn't have to be anything big, but maybe getting another coffee with a friend or waking up five minutes earlier to see a sunrise. Also, it's important to know that your New Year's resolution starts when you're ready, not just when the New Year begins. It starts when you feel like you can finally begin."

FEATURE

Rating Rate My Professors

Students weigh in on the professor-ranking site

JESSICA MILLS
ASST. FEATURE EDITOR

For many college students, checking reviews on the well-known anonymous professor-ranking site “Rate My Professors” has become an imperative step in the class registration process. By looking up a professor by name or school, students can read through reviews left by peers or write one of their own.

Rating categories include level of difficulty, likeliness to take the course again, and an overall ranking scale from one to five. Because of the site’s anonymity, students frequently leave blunt reviews ranging from highlights to shocking experiences.

With the add/drop deadline approaching on Feb. 15 and classes quickly filling up, there is an added pressure surrounding the importance of honest feedback from fellow students to aid in choosing classes.

However, the site still lacks a verification process for identifying who is leaving the reviews. Which begs the question: are these ratings reliable?

USD Senior Kate Roberts is cautious about taking the reviews too seriously.

“Honestly, there aren’t a ton of comments for some of my professors, and the comments



Rate My Professors is a popular academic resource among college students.

come off as more of someone wanting to rant and complain,” Roberts said. “So, I don’t always make it the end all be all.”

Senior Max Wetter also remains mindful while scanning over ratings.

“Students at USD far too often judge a professor’s quality by how easy, engaging, or kind they are, and don’t often reflect on whether or not they learned anything,” Wetter said. “I have had professors with a bunch of five star ratings who I learned virtually nothing from, alongside many other students in the class. It’s a helpful website, but definitely not foolproof.”

Rate My Professors includes

optional tags that one can add in the review process to best describe the professor. The tags range from “lots of homework” and “tough grader” to “caring” and “hilarious.”

Students searching for a class with a light homework load or flexible professor may benefit from this feature. Additionally, beneath the scale ranking portion on the website, reviewers are also given a comment box for up to 350 characters. Here, students can illustrate past experiences or any other thoughts.

However, despite the diverse reviewing options, Sophomore Piper Murphy shared her disappointment in

Photo courtesy of Tra Nguyen/unsplash the website and the unrealistic expectations it often creates.

“I have actually taken a class based on a rating, and I think I was a bit disappointed because it didn’t live up to how it was described,” Murphy said. “But, nonetheless, it was still an interesting class, just in a way that I wasn’t expecting.”

While some students remain hesitant over the credibility of the site’s reviews, others find Rate My Professors to be a valuable tool in deciding between classes and professors.

Junior Amshu Singh expressed how helpful the site has been throughout her undergraduate years.

“In my experience, I had fairly accurate results from using the site,” Singh said. “Usually, professors are similar to ratings, and most do not get high ones unless they truly meet high standards.”

Senior Breck Damaschino explained the website’s effectiveness in preparing for a new classroom atmosphere.

“The student reviews are pretty insightful and prepare me well for the teaching style and workload that the class will provide throughout the semester,” Damaschino said. “I’ve never personally had an experience where the general consensus reached by previous students about the professor or course on Rate My Professors has been challenged.”

Rate My Professors remains a popular resource across campuses nationwide. According to its website, there are currently 15 million total reviews, including over 1,300 for USD professors. Opinions on the helpfulness of the site’s reviews vary among USD students. While the reviews may never be entirely foolproof, Rate My Professors can provide an insightful reflection of the popularity of a professor and the structure of a class.

Next time registration comes around, consider checking out what your peers have to say first.

Diary of a first-year: students look back

First-year students share insights on their first semester at USD

HALEY JACOB
FEATURE EDITOR

The first semester of college is a pivotal time for first-year students. The sudden introduction of new faces, rigorous academia, and a new environment make for a fast transition from the familiarity of hometown routines. The new class of Toreros stepped onto a fully open campus in fall, left with an overwhelming responsibility to explore opportunities and embrace the art of trial and error. With fall semester under their belt, first-year students reflect on their first semester with gratitude and satisfaction toward their new connections and independence.

The frequent highlight shared by first-year students is the warmth and variety of the campus community. Before coming to USD, many students worried about finding their group on campus. These anxieties were short-lived upon discovering the melting pot of personalities and interests of the student body.

First-year Ana Zbaraschuk discussed the uniqueness of her friends and peers.



First-years look retrospectively at their past few months at USD.

Photo courtesy of unsplash

“I feel like USD is the place for a lot of different people, which is great,” Zbaraschuk said. “None of my friends are exactly the same; I don’t feel like any of us are ‘cookie-cutter’ people. It’s not like there’s a mold that everybody fits into at USD.”

First-year Ally Ezeokeke shared her experience meeting new people on campus.

“It was a lot at first. It was overwhelming because it’s a very different climate and environment for me being from

Minneapolis, but everyone was very warm and welcoming and always made sure to be very inclusive,” Ezeokeke said. “People here are just very bubbly and encouraging.”

Even outside of distinguished friendships, USD first-years constantly made spontaneous memories and connections with new people.

First-year Nina Pignatello shared the story of a Friendsgiving dinner she had planned with her friend group. Eventually, her dorm neighbors joined, turning an intended dinner with close friends into something even more special.

“Everyone was just super happy to be there,” Pignatello said. “I think that was one of my favorite memories. Just knowing that I had that community to fall back on only after a few months of being here.”

Students also applauded the professors and academics. Professors excelled at creating a welcoming, encouraging environment for students, making the transition from online high school to in-person college fairly painless.

First-year Jake Lucko



First-year Ana Zbaraschuk shows off her Torero pride.

Photo courtesy of Ana Zbaraschuk

expressed gratitude for his patient and accommodating professors.

“It was kind of a difficult transition going in-person because the last two years of high school were all online, so it was a little hard getting our brains back to normal functioning,” Lucko said. “But the teachers were really helpful and understanding. They realized that online school probably didn’t push us or prepare us as it should have, and they eased us into college

life and academics. They helped make it a smooth transition.”

Ezeokeke boasted about her engaging coursework and the positive learning environments established by her professors.

“I feel like it’s a common thing for people to be bored with classes, so I’m really happy that I’m in classes that engage me. We have great dialogue, and professors always give opportunities to answer and be part of the conversation,” Ezeokeke said. “I feel like that type of learning environment really makes me excel and challenges me to put in my best effort.”

From social to academic life and everything in between, first-years seem pleased with their fall semester experience.

The variety of clubs, organizations, and events on campus makes it easy for students to find like-minded friends, while supportive professors and compelling course options provide a fulfilling academic experience.

However, for first-year students struggling to find their place, it’s important to remember the opportunities and experiences that still lie ahead.

ARTS & CULTURE

Lunar New Year: celebrating the Year of the Tiger

The importance of the holiday and how people can honor it

ABBY CAVIZO
ASST. A&C EDITOR

The new year brings promises of new beginnings, celebrations, and change. While many use the Gregorian Calendar to commemorate the new year, billions of others, most prominently in China and other East Asian cultures, honor the Lunar New Year.

The holiday (also known as Chinese New Year) falls on a different date every year according to the lunar calendar. This year on Feb. 1, people around the world gathered to say goodbye to the Year of the Ox and hello to the “Year of the Tiger.”

For those who do not know the special traditions of the Lunar New Year, the celebrations last up to two weeks and consist of customs that honor ancestors, protect against misfortune, and celebrate with large parades.

Due to COVID-19, many could not celebrate in the traditional way. However, this did not stop people from partaking in certain “COVID-safe” festivities.

USD sophomore Riley Lim was thankful for the opportunity to spend the holiday at home with his family. As a Chinese-American, he loves participating in his family’s cultural traditions.

“We have a lot of crazy different food that my grandma spends the entire day cooking,” Lim recalled. “After dinner, the married adults all give us red envelopes with money in it, and we put it under our pillows for good luck, which is supposed

to protect us for the year.”

USD junior and member of the Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) marketing and publicity department, Leyun Yuan, had a similar experience.

“When we visit our relatives, the children will say ‘happy new year’ or give their best wishes for the year,” Yuan said. “Then, the elders will give them red envelopes.”

Red envelopes are exchanged for good luck. The giving and receiving of the red envelopes is a universal tradition.

Wearing red throughout the celebratory period is highly encouraged for good fortune. Setting off fireworks, producing loud noises to help ward off evil spirits for 2022, and visiting ancestors’ graves and sending them prayers are other common ways to celebrate.

The Lunar New Year also holds a great deal of significance to USD sophomore Kate Jordan and her family. To her, the holiday is all about spending time with family and honoring those who have moved on.

“We celebrate by going to the temple for the first half of the day, making sure to pray and honor our loved ones who have passed,” Jordan said. “After fireworks are lit in the parking lots of all the Asian neighborhoods, everyone watches dragon dances performed by school kids.”

This year is the Year of the Tiger: a symbol for bravery and tenacity through the hard times.

Everyone is encouraged to

draw strength from the Tiger, welcoming change with an open mind and open arms. Each animal repeats every twelve years within the calendar, and they all represent different virtues. It’s a common belief that if it’s your birth year, the year will be extra lucky for you.

Lim’s family takes pride in the fact that he has a family member born for all twelve of the zodiac animals.

For those who don’t celebrate or don’t know much about the holiday, both Lim and Leyun recommend participating in the festivities by eating the food, spending time with friends, and educating yourself on the history and significance of this holiday.

“In my culture, food is honestly such a big way of communicating. I think it’s really significant during the new year because it’s supposed to represent family and spending time with loved ones,” Lim said. “The best part of the Lunar New Year is that there’s no sense of judgement in the way you choose to celebrate because there’s not one way. Different families have different traditions; there’s solidarity and unity, but it’s also so diverse.”

There are multiple opportunities to immerse yourself in the new year. USD’s United Front Multicultural Commons held a “Lunar New Year Pop Up” on Wednesday, Feb. 9 from 2-3 p.m. at Colachis Plaza in order to spread information about the holiday. The “Chinese New Year Food



CSSA wishes USD a happy New Year.

Photo Courtesy of @usdcssa/Instagram

and Cultural Fair” will be held from Sat. Feb. 12 at 10:00 a.m. to Feb. 13 at 7:00 p.m. located on the corner of 3rd Avenue and J Street in downtown San Diego.

The House of China is hosting their annual “Chinese New Year Festival” at Balboa Park on Sat., Feb. 19, 11:00 a.m. to Sun., Feb. 20, 4:00 p.m.

Yuan also mentioned that the CSSA had planned a traditional Lantern gala for the New Year, but because of COVID-19,

the date is to be determined.

If students would like to attend, the best way would be to follow @usdcssa on instagram for any updates about the event’s date.

Attending any of these events paves a fun and educational way toward honoring another culture’s holiday traditions.

As we welcome the New Year, may this Year of the Tiger further all your dreams of success and bring forth a fruitful 2022.



Lunar New Year is full of traditions and festivities; one of which is enjoying oriental dishes with loved ones.

Photo Courtesy of @thekneadtoread/Instagram

USD STUDENT MEDIA IS HIRING!

- USD VISTA EDITOR-IN CHIEF
- USDTV STATION MANAGER
- USD RADIO STATION DIRECTOR
- HEAD OF OPERATIONS
- DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
- WEB EDITOR

Positions are open for Academic Year 2022-2023.
Email mminick@sandiego.edu for applications and inquiries

USD Student Media is hiring positions for the 2022-23 Academic Year.

Sam Anciano/The USD Vista

HBO series “Euphoria” is the new obsession

Unique plot line reflects on some teenage pressures and trauma



Cast members of the hit HBO series, “Euphoria,” gather together for a themed photoshoot in preparation for the release of the brand new season.

Photo Courtesy of @euphoria/Instagram

HBO Series from Page 1
illustrates that this show now has a “cult-like” following, made up of loyal fans who can’t get enough.

Shows with a strong fanbase have them for a reason, and that’s what the USD Vista wanted to explore more.

Why is this show hyped, and what about it interests younger audiences so much?

Considering Euphoria mostly caters to audiences around the age of USD students, we didn’t have to look far for some die-hard Euphoria enthusiasts.

Euphoria fans and USD students Talia Gorman (Senior), Sarah Richards (Senior), and Megan Cardiff (Junior) were asked the following questions:

What is it about Euphoria that makes it stand out/different from other shows? Why is it so hyped?

Gorman:
“They actually have a show director and a photography director that really focus on the aestheticism of the scenes, which really takes it to the next level. The show goes between having somewhat normal scenes to music video type scenes with amazing music, and I think people really enjoy this aspect of it.”

Richards:
“The majority of Euphoria is carefully crafted. From colors to characters’ makeup to the soundtrack to cinematography. When watching Euphoria, every scene can be discussed for hours, as every detail has a unique purpose. Furthermore, with the age of social media, you can discuss theories and reasons with millions. After every episode, I love going online

to see what everyone thinks. I think the interactive viewing experience in that aspect makes it so hyped and different from any other show I have watched.”

Do you think Euphoria accurately portrays teenagers/young adults? Yes or no, and why? Does it matter if it does or doesn’t?

Gorman:
“To a degree, yes. I think that every show tends to develop archetypes for characters that may not play out as realistically in real life, but are good for drama television. In my experience throughout high school, I see lots of similarities in the personalities and behaviors of people I grew up around that are displayed in the show.”

Richards:
“I think Euphoria does accurately portray teenagers. Regardless of if all teenagers are drug dealers or addicts (which they are not), this show encapsulates dealing with the complexity of a messed up world with an impressionable mind. It also does not matter. I think the characters in this show have drastic and intense actions and stories. However, they are relatable characters in the sense that their underlying feelings and reasons are what most young adults go through or feel.”

Euphoria explores many important topics (sex, drugs, hookup culture, family drama, etc). Why do you think this is important to showcase on TV, especially for a younger audience?

Richards:

“I think regardless of if HBO shows it or not, teenagers will find these topics online. By showcasing these important topics in TV shows, it takes away the heavy burden of teenagers thinking they are going through these things alone. The sheer hype around Euphoria allows teenagers to start a discussion around these important topics even if the discussion starts with how sick Maddy’s outfit was.”

Cardiff:
“Younger audiences may think that all of the issues they go through no one else goes through. Euphoria squashes that. The show differentiates itself from airbrushed shows because it illustrates how life is not perfect and that young people deal with hard things.”

Gorman:
“In all honesty, some of the sex and drugs content probably glorifies the experience of these things which I could see being detrimental for a younger audience. However, there are also a lot of very real identity struggles that each character goes through which I think are important to showcase because they may be relatable to their audience.”

Do you recommend watching this show? Why?

Cardiff:
“I have recommended this show to my friends but tell them it’s heavy. I’m obsessed with the story of every character, and they go into the past of each character which I can appreciate and makes me feel for them, and I think that’s the main reason why I’m so invested in the series.”

Gorman:

“Overall I find the drama enthralling. But in addition, I also love the soundtrack of the show and the costume design. Fashion and music are things that I love and so I really enjoy seeing the artistic choices made with these mediums in each episode. On the flip side, if you aren’t into shows that deal with heavy and explicit topics I would not recommend Euphoria because it contains lots of triggers that could be harmful.”

Richards:
“I recommend watching this show because it is currently defining pop culture. Even if you do not like it, it defines the modern era of young adults and will continue to as more episodes are released.”

Due to Euphoria’s intense, heavy content, however, some people struggle to enjoy the show or see any good in it.

Just as Euphoria receives good press for shedding light on life’s realities, it also receives negative press for possibly glorifying or misrepresenting a realistic teenage experience.

For example, USD sophomore Allie Longo gave up on Euphoria after the first episode.

To Longo, watching television is about escaping and relaxing; Euphoria and its heavy subject matter didn’t necessarily allow for much relaxation.

Another reason Longo might have been turned off, to the show, was because she struggled with the idea that these were portrayals of high schoolers. At times, she felt it was more representative of the college

experience because some of the topics and situations being discussed seemed a bit out of the ordinary for teenagers.

Longo is not alone with regard to her opinions on Euphoria—many people use TV to take a break from reality, and Euphoria does quite the opposite. It forces you to look at the world, more particularly the dark, disturbed parts of it.

However, the question of whether Euphoria deserves the hype or not doesn’t really matter in the end. As Richards said, it’s truly defining modern culture right now, and that’s something all people should take note of.

To most fans, it’s the visuals, the gorgeous cinematography, and the artistic direction that makes Euphoria stand out amongst the rest.

Furthermore, it’s the way in which the show creates an open dialogue for teenagers to discuss their experiences, feelings, and tendencies with others; it’s a reminder that no one is alone through their battles, even if society may make them feel that way.

Nowadays, TV shows and movies are chock-full of cliches, and it seems as though Euphoria is, for once, getting the teenage experience right.

The writers of the show are truly shedding light and giving voices to those who may not always get center stage, especially in the entertainment world.

Everyone can agree that there’s something beautiful about that.

SPORTS

Bouncing back with USD Men's Basketball

On the block against no. 2 in the nation, Zags

JAREK MORGAN
ASST. SPORTS EDITOR

There is no better feeling than coming back to campus and packing out the Jenny Craig Pavilion (JCP) for a much anticipated matchup against the no. 2 team in the country: the Gonzaga University Bulldogs. After winter break, friends and family can come back to support their student athletes. But while everyone was enjoying the time away, the basketball team was still participating in the season, taking the time to keep getting better everyday.

This part of the season is where champions are made. Long school days become twice-a-day practices, study sessions with friends become film sessions with teammates, and late night cramming for a test becomes a 6 a.m. lift at the gym. Fast forward to the new year, Feb. 3, 2022, and students finally had the chance to see the hard work paying off with the men's basketball team live in action and everyone in attendance.

After a long offseason, the men's basketball team was ready to get back on the court at the JCP. No one is more excited than graduate forward Joshua Parrish.

"It's amazing to have our fans and family back in the arena. We have really missed the cheering support from everyone," Parrish said. "It's definitely something we use as a motivator every night we go out there on the court."

The Toreros were originally



The USD men's basketball team regains possession after a Gonzaga basket in last Thursday's game.

Jarek Morgan/The USD Vista

scheduled to play the Gonzaga Bulldogs on Dec. 30, but due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the game was indefinitely postponed. However, the revised schedule moved the game to Feb. 3, which allowed fans to be in attendance safely and cheer on their fellow Toreros.

USD took every measure to ensure all fans' safety given that a large crowd was expected to be in attendance. For this particular game, there were extensive measures put in place to guarantee that USD was upholding the current California laws relating to COVID-19 safety.

USD Vice President for University Operations, Ky Snyder, explained how the athletic department and the school safely handled the large attendance.

"For someone who is not vaccinated, we are requiring a

COVID negative test within the past 72 hours," Snyder said. "For all vaccinated individuals, we are simply requesting that you provide your vaccination status card."

With a David and Goliath matchup, the Toreros gave the Bulldogs absolutely everything they had. San Diego (13-10, 6-4), entering the game in third place in the West Coast Conference standings, fought hard from the opening tip and managed to stay with the Zags for the first ten minutes of the half. The Toreros looked sharp early and tied the game 12-all on a three-pointer by senior guard, Jase Townsend, at the 13:29 minute mark. But the Zags outscored the Toreros 26-12 in the rest of the first half to take a 38-24 lead into the break.

In the first ten minutes of the second half, the Toreros couldn't chip away at the deficit against the bigger and stronger Bulldogs.

After back-to-back three-point shots by senior guard, Joey Calcaterra, and first-year guard, Wayne McKinney, the Bulldogs' highly touted first-year and potential number one pick in the 2022 draft, Chet Holmgren, went on a personal 11-1 run to put the nail in the coffin for the Toreros.

In the end, the Gonzaga Bulldogs proved to be too much for the Toreros. USD fell to Gonzaga 92-62, but they left it all on the court. Townsend led the Toreros overall with 13 points coming off the bench.

After the game, head coach Sam Scholl spoke about how difficult it is to play a team like the Zags.

"I've always said how impressed I am with how together they are, and how they always just seem to find the right guy that is open," Scholl said.

Facing a transcendent

player like Holmgren, Scholl acknowledged the incredible talent displayed by the Zags first-year.

"Chet Holmgren is a generational player who broke the game wide open," Scholl said. "He hit three straight threes and one of them was off the dribble, and he is just very, very skilled."

USD took the court again this past Saturday against Santa Clara, a team they lost to in overtime 74-78 last month on Jan. 24 in the Bay Area.

After a late game surge that cut the deficit to ten points with 10:22 left in regulation, the Broncos held onto their lead.

Another late game rally, with a big time jumper from fourth-year Marcellus Earlington with 3:41 left, cut the lead to 75-64, before the Broncos closed the door for good. The Toreros ended the game with a final score of 66-79. Senior Marcellus Earlington led all scorers with 23 points (10-14 FG) and also led the team with eight rebounds. McKinney added 14 points, including a season-high four steals. Townsend registered seven points and three assists, while graduates Terrell Brown-Soares and Josh Parrish each scored six points.

The team will look to get back on track Feb. 10 when they travel to Saint Mary's to battle with another conference matchup. The Torero basketball team will be back at the JCP on Feb. 12 against the Pacific University Tigers. To keep up with USD basketball, follow along with The USD Vista.

Catching up with the Toreros

A quick recap over break with USD's winter season athletes

JAREK MORGAN
ASST. SPORTS EDITOR

While students took the much-needed break to recover from a challenging fall semester, some of our fellow Toreros were busy crushing it on the court, pool, and everywhere in between.

To catch students and faculty up to date on what was missed during winter break, here is a quick recap of some of the best moments for University of San Diego student athletes at the start of the year.

Women's Tennis

The USD Women's Tennis team competed in several tournaments, including hosting

the Torero Tennis Classic. Teams came from all over the country to play in the Tennis Classic, which included athletes from USD, the University of Kansas, Stanford, the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss), Texas Tech University, and Florida State University (FSU). 10 total players in the event were nationally ranked.

USD redshirt junior Solymar Colling won her individual match, defeating no. 22 ranked FSU senior Petra Hule, 6-4, 6-2. Colling was also paired with sophomore Elizabeth Goldsmith as they took down Kansas, 6-1.

The women's tennis team will look to continue their winning streak as they take on Long Beach State on Feb. 12 at home.

Men's Tennis

Much like their counterparts on the women's side, the men's tennis team fought in several key matchups and showed that they are continuing their winning traditions.

In their first action of the spring, the USD Men's Tennis team defeated the University of California, Irvine (UCI) on Friday Jan 21, 6-1. USD won five singles matches, and added another two wins in the doubles matches to clinch the victory.

Fresh off his stellar fall season performance, earning him the number one ranking in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association singles division, redshirt senior August Holmgren and his doubles teammate, senior Gui Osorio, who is freshly

back from injury, took down UCI in style, winning with a commanding 6-0.

The team will look to continue making headlines when they host University of California, Santa Barbara on Feb. 13 at the Skip and Cindy Hogan Center.

Swim and Dive

In the pool, during several key matchups, the women showed that their hard work in the off-season truly paid off. Facing off against cross-city rival San Diego State University, the team just barely fell short losing the meet 153-123. Junior Callie Johnson won two races, sophomore Mia Griffiths won another, and first-year Jane Riehs dominated in the three

meter dive.

Johnson placed first in both the 100 yard fly and the 200 yard individual medley, recording times of 1:01.63 and 2:15.51, respectively.

Griffiths won the 500 yard free with a time of 5:25.44, with graduate student Adrienne Bilello and sophomore Emma Peters not too far behind with times of 5:25.90 and 5:33.38.

Riehs paced all divers competing with a final score of 238.28 in the 3 meter dive, followed by two other Toreros. Senior Isabel Busyn and first-year Kennedy Turner took the second and third place spots. Busyn had a score of 220.20 and Turner notched a 203.40.

The women will look to **See Catching Up, Page 12**

Sherri Stephens leads the Toreros for final season

USD Women’s Tennis’ head coach will retire after 37 years with the program

MARI OLSON
SPORTS EDITOR

Over winter break, the University of San Diego Athletics Department announced that the head coach of women’s tennis, Sherri Stephens, will be retiring at the end of the spring season after nearly four decades at the helm of the program.

During her tenure with the tennis team, Stephens won over 400 games and a West Coast Conference (WCC) championship. She also led the team to 13 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournaments. Stephens was integral in building the program at USD from a newly Division I team in 1984 into the serially winning powerhouse that it is today.

At the beginning of this year’s campaign toward another WCC title, Stephens decided that it would be her final attempt.

“It is a bittersweet decision for me. I absolutely love what I do, so it’s a tough one,” Stephens said. “But, you know, it’s just time to move over and let someone else take the reins.”

Summing up her experience with USD Women’s Tennis over the years, Stephens emphasized that leading the program has meant “everything” to her.

“It has been an absolute dream. I’m so blessed to have had the job that I had,” Stephens said.

For Stephens, the most important part of her job was in the development of her athletes as people.

“I feel that I play a very important role in the development of young women student athletes. The changes that happen in these four years, in my opinion, are tremendous and very, very important,” Stephens explained. “So I feel like it’s my job to help them develop the passion for whatever it is they choose that they want



Sherri Stephens has been an integral part of the USD Women’s Tennis program, and a mentor to all her athletes.

Photo courtesy of usdtoreros.com

to do.”

Not only does this approach help Stephens build lifelong relationships with her athletes, she has also seen results from this approach manifest in successful teams over the years.

“That also helps on the court because they become stable, happy, fulfilled individuals. They’re very talented on the tennis court, and they take that to a higher level because they’re happy and well rounded,” Stephens said. “So it’s just been a wonderful thing for me, and to have them come back years later, they’re amazing moms and doctors and lawyers. One of their daughters is playing for me now, it’s just very, very satisfying in my heart.”

Stephens identified her proudest moments as a coach through the years not necessarily as the biggest titles she won, but in the biggest upset wins she led the team through.

“The big wins that we got, whether it was a national championship or a win over [University of California] Berkeley when they were [ranked] four[th] in the country, those are for me the icing on the

cake,” Stephens said.

Stephens emphasized those wins as the most satisfying because they required her to get the most out of her athletes, who step up to the plate.

“We were USD and we worked our butts off to get to where we got to, to be able to win some of these things. So when we won them it was very satisfying because we deserved it and we worked really hard to get it,” Stephens explained. “We did it together, we worked hard, on the court, off the court, personality wise, socially, all of it. When you get that win, it just means that much more.”

Stephens recognized her athletes as the main thing she will take with her when she exits the program in May.

“We all stay in touch. Almost all of them I have some sort of relationship with, and I hope to continue that. Maybe in my travels I’ll get to go see them all over the world, keep up with what they’re doing with their families,” Stephens said. “I might have more time to be able to hang out even more with them!”

Redshirt junior Solymar

Colling, who earned multiple All-WCC awards during her four years with the program, as well as a bid to the 2021 NCAA singles tournament, talked about how important Stephens is for her success at USD.

“I have goals of becoming number 1 in the nation and winning NAAs,” Colling said. “It [is] reassuring that Sherri [knows] the drill and [knows] how it was competing at the highest level, which made my experience becoming an all-American [in 2019] even more special.”

Colling noted how Stephens has made an impact on she and her teammates both on and off the court.

“Her legacy will forever stay at USD. She cares so much about growing me and my teammates as people and is always there to remind us that to grow on the tennis court we have to grow as people too because there is always life outside of sport,” Colling said. “She’s the best and has made my college experience thus far the best years of my life.”

Stephens is still with the program for one final season,

and she feels confident that she will exit the program on a high note with the team she has now.

“I’m extremely fortunate that this team has really pulled together and we’re very close, we’re very accepting of one another. Talent-wise, last year we were top-30 in the nation, and we didn’t lose anybody. We picked up another player that was a world-class junior player, so we feel like we’re even a better squad than last year,” Stephens explained, noting how lucky she feels with this group of athletes.

As a top-30 nationwide program last season, Stephens emphasized that the team wants to prove that they are even better this year.

“Our goal is to be in the top-16 so that we can host the first round of the national championships,” Stephens said.

Unfortunately, the team’s matchup against the University of Southern California (USC), scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 5, was postponed due to COVID-19 precautions within the USC program.

Other important matches for the Toreros this spring include San Diego State University on Mar. 2 and Saint Mary’s on Mar. 12, although Stephens noted that every match is a big one.

She also emphasized what this specific group of athletes means to her.

“I just want to say how proud I am of them,” Stephens said. “Especially after going through COVID and all the things we’ve been through, we’re learning to enjoy one day at a time, whether it’s practice or a match or running sprints or lifting weights, that we do it together and we feel grateful that we have the opportunity to be there doing what we do.”

USD Women’s Tennis plays next against Long Beach State University on Saturday, Feb. 12 at the Skip and Cindy Hogan Tennis Center on the west end of campus.

Catching Up from Page 11
finish their season strong as they compete in the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation championship on Feb. 16 in Los Angeles.

Women’s Basketball

The women’s basketball team started winter break with a last minute back-to-back contest. First up at the Jenny Craig Pavilion on Dec. 18 were the Arizona State University Sundevils. A game that was exciting from the opening tip ultimately came down to a few extra rebounds and some

timely free throws, which gave the Sundevils a slight edge, 79-60. Senior guard Steph Gorman led all Torero scorers with 14 points and added a career high eight rebounds. Graduate guard Jordyn Edwards added another 13 points to go along with three steals and three assists.

After the conclusion of the game and with less than 24 hours notice, the team was informed that they would be traveling to Las Vegas, NV to take on the no. 11 team in the country: the University of Texas, Austin Longhorns.

USD replaced the University of Arizona in the Pac-12 Coast-to-Coast Tournament after Arizona cancelled due to COVID-19 protocols. The Toreros rallied from their loss to the Sun Devils, traveled to the T-Mobile Arena, and battled with guts, glory, and determination to play well on the big stage.

At the time USD (7-4) held their own against the Longhorns (8-1). The team had a total of 29 rebounds, 12 steals, and 14 assists. On offense, redshirt junior guard Kiera Oakry was the leading scorer with 16 points,

followed by sophomore center Laura Eristrup, who added another nine points.

That Texas won with a final score of 74-58 was not indicative of how hard the Toreros competed from start to finish.

The Toreros triumphed in a 20-point victory over the Texas State University Bobcats to end their last non-conference game of the season. Still fresh off the last minute battle against Texas, the Toreros were determined to end their non-conference schedule with a win. San Diego defeated Texas State 78-58.

The team has since gone on to play in a very tough conference this season that earned head coach Cindy Fisher ESPN coach of the week in the middle of December. Coach Fisher’s ability to handle the difficult games with such grace was best shown by her team’s response to playing through adversity.

USD is back in action this weekend on Saturday, Feb. 12 when they travel to Malibu, CA, to take on Pepperdine University. The Toreros will be back at the JCP Feb. 17 when they battle with Pacific University.

THIS WEEK
IN SPORTS

USD WBB vs. LMU
Thursday, Feb. 10
6 p.m.
Jenny Craig Pavilion

USD WTEN vs. LBSU
Saturday, Feb. 12
12 p.m.
Hogan Tennis Center

USD MBB vs. Pacific
Saturday, Feb. 12
5 p.m.
Jenny Craig Pavilion
Mari Olson/The USD Vista