Working Together
To Meet Challenges of 134th Fall Semester

President Thayne McCulloh and his cabinet held a Staff Town Hall Aug. 12, outlining fall plans, as known at that moment in time, and answering several questions from staff employees.

Several questions revolved around equity in work options offered to faculty and staff. President McCulloh explained that options are available to staff members, and those with health or family concerns should connect with their supervisors for accommodations.

“We will be challenged in how to meet all of the needs and we may not be able to accomplish that completely. But many departments have been able to come together, identify individual issues, and create plans to make it work. Now, with lots of staff and faculty with children in school, we’ll have to work together as to how we best navigate that space,” President McCulloh explained.

Because some staff and faculty do work that can only be performed on campus, he said, “Supervisors will have to find a balance between individual and departmental needs.”

Questions also revolved around budget, and how we’re doing as a whole.

Chief Finance Officer Joe Smith said net revenue will be down about 10% this fall, due largely to enrollment decline and the loss of housing and dining net revenues. Additionally, Gonzaga has and will continue to incur expenses related to the pandemic, i.e. PPE, campus changes, off-campus rentals, classroom technology upgrade, and personnel for pandemic response assistance.

“Now we have to be creative and adjust as there is pressure on our net revenues. We’re feeling good about what we are seeing, however. It reflects how we are communicating and engaging with our students and their families,” Smith said.

“We have asked our budget managers to be thoughtful about their expenses. Travel is limited because of safety concerns, and that will save us some dollars. We have a reserve and can employ some of those resources to survive and advance,” he said. Benefaction can help defray expenses, and Smith says Gonzaga has received some grants from the CARES Act, and may receive other forms of government financial stimulus.

“There seems to be tremendous interest in continuing this work on behalf of our students and their families, by students and families,” President McCulloh said. “We need to find successful ways of supporting our students and each other in helping our students be as successful as possible.”

---

FALL ENROLLMENT OUTLOOK

Note: Counts are expected to change through the census date, Sept. 30; this year more than others

4,865 undergraduate enrollment as of Aug. 25

• compared to 5,222 Official Census Enrollment in fall 2019
• 1,058 freshman enrollment as of Aug. 25
  - 824 plan on-campus Orientation
  - 234 plan online Orientation

RESULTS FROM AN EARLY-AUGUST SURVEY OF 4,553 RESPONDING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
84% plan to return to campus

• 2,345 (50%) plan on taking classes on campus
• 1,573 (34%) plan on taking combination of in-person/remote delivery
• 722 (15%) plan on taking remote delivery for all classes
• 1,931 to live on campus - down about 700 from recent years

GRADUATE NUMBERS UP
Numbers as of Aug. 25

• 1,411 more credits registered than this date last year
• 222 increase in headcount from fall 2019

THE ACCELERATORS

• +256 credits Doctorate of Leadership Studies
• +208 credits Master’s of Organizational Leadership
• +143 credits M.B.A.

TREND RISING IN LAW SCHOOL
155 Fall 2020 projected head count for first-year class as of Aug. 25; compared to 139 in 2019

ACADEMIC OFFERINGS BY CLASS SECTIONS
As of Aug. 19
Undergraduate Courses Only

• 1,354 sections of fall classes offered
• 598 sections (44%) remote at scheduled class times
• 623 sections (46%) hybrid delivery (in-person & via Zoom or other remote capability)
• 119 sections (9%) in-person only
• 14 sections (1%) remote delivered asynchronously
Ethicist and Associate Philosophy Professor Ellen Maccarone likens preparing to teach in the pandemic to cooking from her grandma’s cookbook… “What is a pinch of this or a dash of that?”

“The landscape is changing often and it is unknown from day to day,” she says. Nevertheless, Gonzaga’s 460 faculty members are preparing to launch into a fall semester like no other in the University’s 134 years.

Significantly, everyone is learning new things, whether they are teaching remotely and getting acquainted with new technology and software applications, or learning how to project better while wearing face coverings before a scattered group of students waiting to be engaged.

But it doesn’t come without concerns. Chemistry and Biochem Assistant Professor Shannen Cravens suffers from asthma. The thought of teaching six hours a week in her lab makes her uncomfortable. In addition, as a junior faculty member in her third year at GU, at a time when her research and professional development should be reaching a crescendo, her work is stunted by fear of COVID-19 and its potential impact on her and her research students.

But she’s grateful to be at a place that honors its faculty with a voice that is heard.

“Serving on the Academic Instruction and Learning Committee of the Pandemic Response Task Force, I was able to listen to fellow faculty members, and our committee was able to address many concerns. Back in early July, the University was planning the vast majority of classes to be face-to-face. The faculty expressed their discomfort with that and needed more flexibility. President (Thayne) McCulloh responded by giving the choice of teaching modality back to the faculty,” Cravens says.

Cravens chose to teach her two lecture classes fully remotely as it would have been difficult to facilitate group work in a classroom with physical distancing and masks. “With Zoom, I can put students in breakout rooms, and they will have the chance to work with and get to know different people throughout the semester,” she says.

“On a positive note, I appreciate how this campus community has come together in the wake of the pandemic. We had 20 faculty members from different disciplines on our Task Force committee and formed a single mind, that being: We are here to create the best experience for our students. That makes me want to build my career here,” Cravens says.

English Assistant Professor Jeff Dodd sees the University being very active in doing its best for its faculty. “I think the frustrations some faculty are feeling come from mixed messages, or when students learn about what we are doing before faculty are notified. Time to plan for this semester was inhibited by the University’s lack of clear directives early on. Part of this is normal complaining, part of it legit, I think. But things are changing daily, so I think most can understand,” Dodd says.

He has learned new teaching platforms that he says will definitely improve his class delivery. “There’s this whiteboard app called Miro. It’s really dynamic. It allows students to work on the same whiteboard, whether they’re in a classroom or on screen, and all can contribute. This pandemic and changes in modality offer us a chance to catch up with technology and teaching innovations that have developed over the past decade.”

Dodd was hailed by Task Force committee chairs as a significant contributor to fall planning, but he credits our community. “Faculty and support staff are committed to providing the highly engaged Ignatian education that students and families have come to expect, regardless of teaching delivery methods. The vast majority of faculty are moving forward intentionally to create for their students the full Gonzaga experience,” he says.

Maccarone echoed those sentiments: “Given some enormous constraints, while it’s a lot of work, what our faculty are doing is serving our students in the way they deserve to be served.”
DISMANTLING STRUCTURAL BIAS

Despite being on summer recess, in the aftermath of George Floyd’s murder, many faculty members were saying, “I want to do something, but what?”

In a collaborative workshop sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Advising and attended by more than 75 faculty, CTA Director Mia Bertagnolli, Institute for Hate Studies Director Kristine Hoover, Business Professor Molly Pepper, and Associate Provost Raymond Reyes responded to this faculty desire to have a sustained institutional response to ongoing racism and other forms of bias.

Faculty from multiple disciplines translated workshop ideas and words into action. They began with the syllabus as a central mechanism from which to do something structural in nature. The workshop included two parts – to address diverse, discipline-based ways to self-initiate a type of implicit bias/equity/inclusion “audit” of syllabi, and classroom management – face-to-face and remote.

“The syllabus serves as the relational and governing instrument between students and faculty,” Reyes says. “It defines the experience of teaching and learning in the classroom. An evaluative consideration has enormous potential for addressing structural issues at a Predominately White Institution (PWI) where white instructional spaces in many instances ‘don’t know what we don’t know.’”

The series began with a presentation by Associate Chief Diversity Officer Robin Kelley on common vocabulary regarding topics such as racism, anti-racism and implicit bias, and included a discussion of a social justice syllabus tool by Assistant Professor of Communication Studies Juliane Mora.

Here are a few ideas offered by those in attendance:

• “Call in” people to dialogue while calling out examples of bias recognized in class discussion: let someone know their words or actions are unacceptable, interrupt or redirect conversation that could lead to harm. This allows us to hit the “pause” button and break the momentum
• Facilitate deeper, more meaningful conversations to help find mutual understanding, help imagine different perspectives and outcomes, make way for paradigm shifts, focus on reflection, not reaction
• Recognize unintended bias in a syllabus that may present inequities to some students, i.e. class attendance requirements during a pandemic, deadlines and expectations that don’t allow for family circumstance
• Clarify “office hours” so students understand a professor’s availability and interest in connecting, not just when there is a problem. Some faculty have an assignment at the beginning of the semester for students to take a selfie at their teacher’s office door to help ensure that students can find their location. Others say they hold office hours in Hemmingson or another more casual location to be more accessible and less intimidating.

Faculty suggested other topics for future workshops, including current events relating to racism, eugenics, contemplation pedagogy, Ignatian pedagogy, teaching strategies to support students’ emotional well-being, and caring for others.

Faculty may visit the Blackboard All-Campus Teaching Support, Diversity and Inclusivity section, www.learn.gonzaga.edu and my.gonzaga.edu/events for recordings, schedules and other resources.

Shaping Teaching’s Future

Marianne Poxleitner and Jolanta Weber, co-chairs of the PRTF Academic Instruction and Leaning Committee, thank the following faculty members for their volunteer hours during summer break to help create the plan to guide faculty this fall through teaching in a pandemic.

Julie Beckstead, Biology; Mirjeta Beqiri, Business; Mia Bertagnolli, CTA Director; Shannen Cravens, Chemistry & Biochem; Patrick Crosswhite, Human Physiology; Jeff Dodd, English; Tim Fitzgerald, Mechanical Engineering; Mike Hazel, Communication & Leadership; Jessica Kiser, Law; Molly Kretchmar-Hendricks, Psychology; Peggy Sue Loroz, Marketing; Ellen Maccarone, Philosophy; Justin Marqui, Instructional Design & Delivery; Sue Nizegoda, Civil Engineering; Joan Owens, Nursing; Michele Pajer, English; Karen Rickel, Sport & Physical Education; Jonathan Rossing, Communication Studies; Anthony Tardiff, Foley Library.
You might have seen him on campus or at one of your events. If it’s fall, winter or spring, he’ll be wearing a zip-down sweater, cargo pants, Carhartt’s or an occasional kilt. Regardless of season, his long hair pulled back in a ponytail, topped with a beret, has become his calling card.

That earned Kurt Nolen recognition during his 15 years in Hollywood as a set camera operator, not to mention his outstanding work, which has been honored by the industry. He worked motion pictures and television, documentaries and industrial shoots. But his favorite work, and biggest paychecks, came from shooting commercials.

He tells about shooting a Japanese cosmetic company commercial with a model on the lava fields of the Big Island in Hawaii. His biggest worry was jumping across a deep and wide crevasse and missing his landing, or shearing his leg on the razer-sharp spines of the field’s outcropping, just to get the right shot. It all worked out, the commercial was a success, and it was one of his favorite projects.

In October 2018, Nolen made the third – and he hopes final – career change in his illustrious life. He loaded up his wife and kids, and moved away from Beverly Hills that is; no more swimming pools or movie stars. He came to Gonzaga as its first fulltime videographer, working in Marketing and Communications. Here he shoots video for projects and presentations, marketing campaigns and presidential events. He helps plan the shoots, executes them, creates the video story and when needed, creates original music to complement the visual. Through his creative endeavor, he tells impactful stories through his lens.

Like those of residents and shopkeepers, educators and administrators in the Northeast neighborhood, for the introduction of the Opportunity Northeast project through Gonzaga’s Center for Community Engagement.

“It’s one thing to know our mission, but another to see it in action,” Nolen says. “Seeing the impact our mission and community focus has had on where we live is very rewarding. It makes you realize you picked a great place to work. When I left Hollywood, I wanted to use my craft for something good. I’m actually filming the essence of my workplace and what makes this community great every day.”

“Kurt’s process and work speaks to who we are at Gonzaga – a community that seeks to recognize the beauty and the dignity of the person (or persons) in front of us,” says Molly Ayers, director of the Center for Community Engagement. “He takes time to understand the “why” behind the work and it is seen in the quality of his digital pieces. We are lucky to have a colleague like Kurt who brings with him a level of professionalism, quality and understanding that speaks to our mission.”

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

As a teen, Nolen moved to North Carolina and met his wife Tracy during high school in Raleigh. Influenced his by his grandfather’s love of music, Nolen spent 15 years as a musician, doing studio and touring work as a guitarist, drummer and aficionado on the Chapman Stick (a guitar with a keyboard).

That career, while enjoyable, provided an unreliable stream of income. He sold his last Chapman Stick for a down payment on a car.

“When I was 12 or 13, I saw this behind-the-scenes featurette on the making of the movie Aliens,” Nolen says. “It showed footage shot by a Steadicam operator, and it looked like a blast. The equipment weighs 100 pounds, people yell at you all day long, but it seemed like a real cool gig.”

So, he went to work earning a bachelor’s degree in broadcasting and cinema, with a concentration in cinematography, at University of North Carolina-Greensboro. He took a number of seminars in experimental film
and the art of the moving image at Duke University, perfecting his skills. Then he and his wife moved to Hollywood, where he earned a heralded reputation for his work on a Steadicam – an operator-worn passive video camera stabilizer system.

WELCOME TO HOLLYWOOD

He found himself in the presence of stars, but always avoided conversation with them. “A movie set is a very fast-moving, political place.” It turned out to be a mixed bag.

“One Oscar winner would be a jerk on the set, while another would send their assistant to get you a cup of coffee,” Nolen says.

“The film industry is not like people think it is,” he continues. “There’s nothing glamorous about it. It’s more like construction work.”

He was ready for a change when the Gonzaga job opened up. The industry was no longer the workplace for precision professionals like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, who perfected their craft. He found himself shooting film for shows trivializing school shootings as an intro to humor. “When you see the finished product, you don’t feel like you have done a good thing.

“We had a second child. My shooting schedule involved a lot of travel. From early on, I always wanted to be involved with higher education. My job here is to make something look very polished, without a lot of money and resources. ‘The house film maker.’ I do the same thing that I did every day in the film industry, but now I edit my own stuff,” Nolen explains.

Here he is often producer, shooter, editor and audio specialist. He likens shooting video to playing music. And the artist in him loves it. See his own presentation on What I Do Here: https://youtu.be/jriDiY8JAt8

“I get to work better hours and get home in time to have dinner (most nights) and put my kids to bed,” he says.

He finds the best part of Gonzaga is not only its commitment to its mission, “but in how we act on that commitment and back that up with our deeds. Knowing I’m doing my work in a positive environment makes it feel like it’s not work at all,” says Nolen.

Heralded in Hollywood for his Steadicam work, Nolen has found his true home here at Gonzaga.
Arts and Creativity Go Together; And COVID has Faculty Pushing the Envelope

Seems like every story starts out, “Because of the pandemic . . .” Gonzaga’s visual and performing arts are no different. Significant adjustments have been made to fall plans and schedules to give artists new ways of sharing their skills.

For example, Theater & Dance Chair Charlie Pepiton had to face the hard decision, made for him by COVID-19, to cancel the fall production of “Pirates of Penzance.”

“Theater programs always talk about how they can get their classes involved with each other. But we always lack time to do so as we’re working on productions outside of class,” Pepiton says. “For the fall, we’re focused on what we call ‘deep practice.’ We’re going to be making theatre that adjusts to our new circumstances.”

This fall, the Theatre Arts faculty plan to thread together four classes – playwriting, performance text analysis, acting 1 and directing 2 – to create a festival of new short plays. Students will write, research, analyze, act and direct these performances for a 10 Minute Play Festival, Oct. 9-10, delivered to live and online audiences. In the spring, the Theatre program will present Elmer Rice’s award-winning play “The Adding Machine” on March 18-28. That production will be created to be responsive to the distancing and streaming needs of that moment. It’s a play that explores, among other things, the relationship of technology to our humanity. “The Wolves” by Sarah DeLappe on April 29-May 1, is a student-directed, contemporary play about a women’s soccer team. Theater is exploring staging it outdoors on one of Gonzaga’s practice fields with chairs physically distanced for a live audience.

Gonzaga Dance Program intends to engage in performance opportunities even if that means audiences must experience them remotely, says Director Suzanne Ostersmith. Raven Spirit, an indigenous/contemporary dance company from Vancouver, B.C., will work remotely with the Gonzaga Repertory Dance Company in creating a work that will present in Seattle, Bellingham and Vancouver in March, if restrictions ease. Dance will be looking at other channels of presentation for a number of other dance performances previously scheduled this fall, including 60-Second Dance Works and Ballet Ensemble.

The Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center will not be bringing any presenting events to campus this fall, with hopes that three touring events canceled last spring will be able to return this spring. “Only if the state and regional health officials ease restrictions to allow for public performances will the MWPAC be used for much more than possible class space this fall,” says Director Laura Sims.

Gonzaga music programs are all taking new looks at how they present student performances. “We are going to work on a lot more repertoire – covering a different array of music,” says Orchestra Director Kevin Hekmatpanah. “I would like to give students opportunities to be soloists with the orchestra – this is a valuable experience without the high stakes of public performance. If there is a student who would like to try their hand at conducting or composition, this will be a unique opportunity for them.”

Choral collaborations are the theme for Gonzaga’s choirs, which will be connecting music and Black Lives Matter, music of First Nations composers and international music. Director Tim Westerhaus plans to create recorded videos of his choirs singing in outdoor Spokane spatially-distanced spaces. Chamber Chorus will stage theatrical scenes in duos, trios and small ensembles, with streamed performances in mid-November. The Choir’s final project will be a pre-Thanksgiving Christmas concert, streamed with watch parties.

Meanwhile, the visual arts also are taking a COVID hit. Jundt Art Museum Director Paul Manoguerra says the Museum is open to the University community for educational purposes by appointment only. “We will open to the public, with restrictions, when the county gets to Phase 3, or if and when the museum industry gets the go-ahead from state health officials.”

The performing arts will take a new direction this fall with performances more-than-likely online and streamed.
The south end of campus is growing with the addition of a new facility dedicated to medical and health sciences education and research. Ground will be broken in September on the new 108,000-square-foot building that will enhance the partnership between the UW School of Medicine and Gonzaga University and advance the health and vibrancy of communities in eastern Washington. The four-story building, located at 840 E. Spokane Falls Boulevard, is expected to be completed by June 2022.

Emerald Initiative (an affiliate of McKinstry) and Gonzaga University are co-developing the project and have closely collaborated with UW leadership and GU staff to ensure users’ needs are met. The new center will feature dynamic teaching classrooms, laboratories, anatomy and physiology suites, and research and innovation spaces to serve medical, physician assistant, and Gonzaga’s human physiology students. While remaining housed in Hughes Hall and Tilford Center, GU’s biology and nursing majors will also benefit from resources available in the new building. Faculty, administrative staff and students will relocate from the Schoenberg and Peerless centers to the new center. GU and UW will lease the first three floors of the new facility and the top floor will be available for lease to health sciences organizations.

The new facility will help UW and GU amplify robust and cost-effective medical education and research to ensure rural communities have better access to high-quality health care.

“UW and GU share a legacy of graduating community-minded students. We are honored to help both universities achieve their goals of helping communities thrive by enhancing medical education and access to rural healthcare,” shared Patrick Farley, principal with Emerald Initiative. “This modern facility will enable deeper collaboration between the universities. Additionally, the extra space will support the growth of existing programs and attract innovators that want to nucleate around this healthcare cluster.”

Construction Starts on New Facility for Health & Medical Education

Taylor Jordan has taken leave from her job as Clery compliance & behavioral intervention team coordinator in Campus Security & Public Safety to serve as COVID-19 coordinator under Kristiana Holmes in Health and Counseling Services. Jordan will oversee COVID testing, tracking and reporting for Gonzaga, as well as accommodations for those students who need to quarantine or isolate. She is a 2015 GU biology grad, and earned her Master’s in Public Health from the Oregon Health Science University/Portland State University School of Public Health.

Gonzaga’s Corey Kispert is one of 11 student-athletes on a newly-formed National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) Player Development Coalition, a diverse collection of Division I men’s basketball student-athletes that will provide perspective and feedback on college basketball issues.

Gonzaga professors Dung Tran, Shann Ferch and Larry Spears, with Jiying Song (Northwestern College), edited a book recently released on “Servant-Leadership: How Leaders Help Heal the Heart of the World” (SUNY Press). It is a compilation of essays on the nexus of servant-leadership and forgiveness in everyday life, the organizational world and international contexts. Sixteen of the authors are Gonzaga leadership graduates. www.sunypress.edu/showproduct.aspx?ProductID=6947&SE
NOTEWORTHY

GOODBYES
Dan Beltran, graphic design director; Athletics; Melissa Heid, asst director, Global Engagement; Kevin Rounsley, sr. academic adviser, Academic Advising & Course Enrollment; Egan Berne, asst women’s rowing coach; Jaymal Jones, custodian, Plant; Julie Claar, office manager, Law Clinic

POSITION CHANGES/PROMOTIONS
Marc Baumgardner, assoc professor, Mechanical Engineering; Tim Fitzgerald, assoc professor, Mechanical Engineering; Sue Nizegoda, professor, Civil Engineering; Suzann Girtz, professor, Teacher Education; Justin Morschke, assoc professor, Finance; Monica Bartlett, professor, Psychology; Andrea Bertotti Metoyer, professor, Sociology; Chase Bollig, assoc professor, English; Carla Bonilla, assoc professor, Biology; Sarah Arpin, assoc professor, Psychology; Melissa Click, assoc professor, Communications Studies; Caomhín De Barra, assoc professor, History; Tim Fink, assoc professor, Physics; Luis García-Torvisco, professor, Modern Languages; Peter Hamlin, assoc professor, Music; Mary Kearney, assoc professor, Math; Ann Ostendorf, professor, History; Suzanne Ostersmith, assoc professor, Theater & Dance; Ray Rast, assoc professor, History; Vinal Norasakkunukit, professor, Psychology; Danielle Teague, sr. academic adviser, Academic Advising & Course Enrollment

POSITION CHANGES/PROMOTIONS
Chou-Hong Chen, professor, Management Information Systems

35 Jerri Shepard, assoc professor, Education; Paul De Palma, professor, Computer Science; Scott Bozman, professor, Marketing

25 Nancy Yamaura, custodial shift supervisor, Plant; Colleen Goodwin, sr. lecturer, Math; Quanhua Liu, assoc professor, Philosophy; Gary Weber, professor/chair, Accounting; Stefania Nedderman, assoc professor, Modern Languages

20 Ross Windhorst, working maintenance supervisor, Plant; Jean Pugh, asst to chair/sr. faculty asst, Social Science; Kelly O’Brien-Jenks, assoc professor, Foley; Michele Pajer, sr. lecturer, English; Kevin Chambers, assoc professor, History; Joseph Haydock, assoc professor, Biology

15 Shonna Bartlett, formation director, Ministry Institute

10 Sarah Guzman, director, Alumni Engagement & Strategic Initiatives; Law: Deb Ellis, program manager, DICE; Heather Hoecch-Mills, sr. lecturer, Physics; Gregely Gidofovali, assoc professor, Chemistry; Todd Finkle, assoc professor/chair, Entrepreneurship, Business; Logan Axon, assoc professor, Math; Joseph Mudd, assoc professor, Religious Studies; Carolyn Cunningham, assoc professor, Communication & Leadership; Rebecca Marquis, assoc professor, Modern Languages; Rebecca Bull Schaefer, assoc professor, Management; Timothy Westerhaus, assoc professor, Music; David Oosterhuis, assoc professor, Classical Languages; Elizabeth Goldstein, assoc professor, Religious Studies; Deborah Harmon, supervisor, Graduate Admissions Operations; John Wilson, sr. lecturer, Physics; Colleen Kinney, sr. operations specialist, Admission

5 Dana Jacobson, lecturer, Nursing; Laura Hutton, User Services manager, Foley; Robin Dare, art handler/preparator, Jundt Art Museum; Kristin Telin, admissions & advising specialist, Leadership Studies; Erin Morrison, psychiatrist, Health & Counseling; Kristina Manchester, buyer, Plant; Elizabeth Bancroft, assoc professor, Biology/Environmental Science; Joseph Johnston, asst professor, Sociology; Nagnhe Morlock, asst professor, Sociology; Matthew Geske, asst professor, Physics; Masaomi Matsumoto, asst professor, Chemistry; Chase Bollig, assoc professor, English; Rhonda Young, professor, Civil Engineering; Adam Fritsch, assoc professor, Physics; Timothy Fitzgerald, assoc professor, Mechanical Engineering; Marc Baumgardner, assoc professor, Mechanical Engineering; John Orcutt, asst professor, Biology; Timothy Weidel, assoc professor, Philosophy; Karen Petruska, asst professor, Communication Studies; Eric Moss, Infrastructure operations asst director, ITS; Joan Owens, asst professor, Nursing; Nicole Moore, assoc professor, Physics; Brandon Harmon, asst baseball coach; Katharine Shultz, asst professor, Math; Sarah Arpin, assoc professor, Psychology.

OUTLOOK ON ATHLETICS THROUGH AD’S EYES

With all fall intercollegiate sports postponed until spring for the Zags, and NCAA fall championships canceled, the conundrum for coaching staffs in men’s and women’s soccer, men’s and women’s cross country and women’s volleyball is awaiting word from the NCAA as to whether the fall championships will be rescheduled in the spring, and creating their new spring schedules accordingly, says Athletic Director Mike Roth.

Of course, playing fall sports in the spring is dependent upon a drastic reduction across the country in COVID-19 spread.

“We will work every avenue under appropriate safety protocols to allow our fall sport student-athletes to compete in the spring, and that’s universal throughout the West Coast Conference,” says Roth.

If, and when the NCAA sets dates for fall championships in the spring, then coaches can schedule backwards from there. If the NCAA chooses not to stage fall championships at all, the WCC is prepared to stage conference championships in those sports to honor athletes.

Playing fall sports in the spring presents some obvious obstacles. For example, a vast majority of Gonzaga’s cross-country runners also compete in winter indoor track and spring outdoor track and field.

Perhaps the bigger question, based upon fan base, is whether men’s and women’s basketball will occur this year.

“The WCC and each individual school is working on playing the complete basketball season as scheduled,” Roth says. “Obviously, COVID factors will dictate what we are able to do. We’ll abide by the mandates of the NCAA and health officials, and will play within state and regional guidelines, protecting our student athletes and all those involved. The NCAA is doing everything within its power to see that men’s and women’s basketball will be played this year. As it right now, our first men’s game is scheduled Nov. 10.”

Another big question is how many fans, if any, will be allowed to attend basketball games in the Kennel.

“College athletics needs to be open to new ideas, not set in our ways. We have to be flexible, think outside the box to make things work. Gonzaga has always been a place able to dream. That has been true over these past 22 years for our basketball teams, and now I feel the same about this pandemic. We’ll be successful because of it,” Roth says.

Roth would rather have a choice to not play with fans than have to determine which fans can attend the games. “Gonzaga is a place we welcome everyone, a community. To have to start splitting hairs in a community would be an awful task. We hope to play basketball with a full house.”

Stay tuned.