

Spring break travel abroad canceled

By Alyssa Stewart
EDITOR IN CHIEF

With less than two weeks away, USF World announced that all study abroad programs occurring during spring break — March 14-15 through March 21-22 — have been canceled because of the ever-evolving coronavirus (COVID-19).

Vice President of USF World Roger Brindley announced in an email that the charges for the trip will be reversed on students' accounts. However, students had to pay out of pocket for their flights, which could have been anywhere from \$500-\$1,300.

Some major U.S. airlines are taking full refunds or providing a refund in the form of credit which can be used over the next year.

Although the threat in Florida is still low despite the three confirmed cases, in Europe the spread of the virus has caused schools and universities to temporarily shut down. The number of cases in Italy has climbed to 3,000 with over 100 deaths, according to The New York Times.

USF is choosing to cancel the programs because of recommendations from the U.S. State Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as out of caution.

No cancellations or details about summer education abroad have been announced at this time.

Through her eyes: Dr. Marlene Joannie Bewa The stories behind USF's women leaders



Dr. Bewa, a Beninese physician, is pursuing a Ph.D. in public health at USF alongside advocating for HIV awareness across the globe. **SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE**



Leda Alvim

MANAGING EDITOR

Some people may see difficult times as obstacles in the way of goals, but for Dr. Marlene Joannie Bewa, 29, her biggest challenge turned out to be her biggest opportunity.

Born and raised in Cotonou, Benin, West Africa, Bewa discovered her passion in the health field at a young age after almost losing her life during an asthma attack. Grateful for the

These stories are a part of a continuing series that features women leaders at USF during Women's History Month.

doctors who saved her life, she was inspired to join the field.

"I decided to become a physician very early on, because of a public experience that I have faced myself and I witnessed," Bewa said. "At 9 years old, I had this respiratory attack that broke suddenly. So from that moment, I decided that I will give back, you know, it was like a key moment in my life."

A breakthrough moment in Bewa's life was when she was a teenager, and one of her best friends passed away due to complications following an abortion. In shock after losing one of her closest friends, Bewa was determined to become a

doctor and advocate for women's reproductive health.

"I realized, well, I want my medical practice to be focused on sexual reproductive health to also help my community work to reach girls and boys to educate them," Bewa said.

The early episodes in Bewa's life led her to set up a nonprofit organization to address sexual and reproductive health in her community — and also around the world.

Bewa started the Young Beninese Leaders Association (YBLA) while she was in high school through volunteering while doing preliminary work.

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Students and USF Dining at odds over halal options



Lauren Pieper

STAFF WRITER

The amount of students at USF who eat halal meat for religious purposes is growing, which makes the demand for the product greater each year — a demand that students say isn't being met.

"Halal" means "permissible" in Arabic, and this type of meat is eaten typically by Muslims because of dietary beliefs. The difference between halal meat and regular meat is how it is derived from the animal.

Ameer Khawaja, a sophomore majoring in civil engineering, is one of the many USF students who only eats meat if it is halal.

"What differentiates this meat from normal meat is it is a sacrifice in the name of God. The process of sacrificing is that you use a really sharp object to slit the animal's throat so it feels little to no pain, and the animal must be conscious and healthy when this takes place," Khawaja said.

USF Dining Marketing Director Jessica Cicalese said "USF is a melting pot of

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HALAL

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many different ethnicities and religions," so Dining Services takes into account all dietary restrictions.

Many students have raised concerns about halal options at Champion's Choice, the dining hall near the Yuengling Center.

Cicalese assures students can find halal products at all campus dining halls.

"We have halal proteins at all our all-you-care-to-eat facilities, that includes Champion's Choice," Cicalese said.

She also said that halal options are found at all dining locations that are not a chain.

However, Omar Zafar, a freshman majoring in electrical engineering, said Champion's Choice does not have halal options.

"I asked the staff, but I was told that they don't serve halal at Champion's Choice," Zafar said.

According to Falak Abbasakoor, a freshman majoring in biomedical sciences, only Juniper Dining, located in Juniper-Poplar Hall (JP), and The Hub carry halal products.

"My experience with halal food on campus has not been the best," Abbasakoor said. "Champion's Choice does not have any halal options, and neither does Argos Exchange."

Khawaja, a former employee of Argos Exchange, said Argos does not carry halal products.

Argos Exchange manager Cheyenne Van Helden echoed Khawaja's statement.

"We actually do not have halal options," Van Helden said. "We have vegetarian and vegan options if they would like that instead."

Khawaja testified to there

being a lack of halal options last school year.

"They said they serve chicken, turkey and hot dogs, but they don't have turkey or hot dogs," Khawaja said. "At JP I know this because last year multiple people, including myself, have asked and they said they did not have it."

Biomedical sciences sophomore Adib Khan said that Juniper-Poplar had more variety of halal options than The Hub.



Many students find halal options on campus dining halls to be inadequate — if not absent entirely. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE

"I am very grateful USF has halal options on campus," Khan said. "However, I wish there were healthier options because the chicken patties and beef burgers are fattening."

Abbasakoor, who also frequents Juniper-Poplar, said the options are still the same this year.

"I do wish there was a better variety of halal options because the only option really is just from the burger station," she said.

Zafar has been pleasantly surprised with the amount of halal food in the U.S., and is pleased with the selections on campus, but does think it could improve on variety.

"Usually my constant meal is halal burgers, chicken [patties], and beef," Zafar said. "Most of

the time I am happy with it, but would like to see more options, like grilled chicken.

Dining Services now offers halal meat on Taco Tuesdays, according to Zafar, so improvements are being made.

He also enjoys the "Flavor of the World" section at JP because of its good choice of halal options.

Cicalese stressed the importance of students asking dining managers questions

concerning their dietary needs.

"We have students call our managers at like 11 p.m. and ask 'Can you make me a halal hot dog?' It's not out there, but we have them, so when in doubt, ask," Cicalese said.

As for healthier options, Sierra Ditto, USF Dining's registered dietitian, said students who eat halal can also find vegetarian and vegan options in all the dining halls.

"There are plant-based protein options as well that students may not be aware of," Ditto said.

Ditto is working on emphasizing a vegan and vegetarian guide across campus.

Aside from a lack of options, Khawaja said that the dining halls ran out of halal protein about six to eight times last year.

"In the first month of the school year they had a lot of halal food," Khawaja said. "But, two to three months in they didn't have a lot of it anymore."

It came to the point where the dining halls would be out for extended amounts of time.

"I asked an employee why they were out of stock for the past three to four days, and he said it was because a lot of people would ask for it, and it would run out and they didn't have any backup," Khawaja said.

Khan, although mostly pleased with what he found in the dining halls, also said dining halls were often out of protein options for over a week.

"There was a point for about a week to a week and a half it took to restock halal options, which obviously makes it hard to eat," he said.

This year, there has not been as many cases of halal options being out.

This is Zafar's first semester at USF, and he claims that halal options have been out in the dining halls one time since January.

They were out for two to three days and he ate the vegetarian options as a substitute.

Agreeing that halal food is usually available, Abbasakoor said that in her first year here, the dining halls have been out only twice and just for a day.

Cicalese mentioned Dining Services has not received complaints about a lack of halal food on campus.

"I wouldn't say complaints, but we used to receive suggestions four to five years ago on what we should offer, and we would make it happen," she said. "Because it is a premium product, and it's outside of our everyday vendor,

it might take a week or two to get in, but we absolutely would accommodate."

Director of Operations at Dining Services Ryan McElhane said that running out of halal protein should not be happening, but halal products do present a challenge because it is a premium product.

"It is absolutely a specialty vendor, so we do not have access to it as frequently as we would other products, but we do not want that to seem like an excuse," McElhane said. "We need to do a better job with managing our inventory around that."

"We use Midamar [halal vendor] for all grill items and Koch brand [halal poultry vendor] for all of our chicken breast that we carry in-house. For P.O.D. Market products we go through UNFI for those products," Cicalese said.

Midamar is a food distributor specializing in halal options, and Koch offers "halal chicken" on their website.

The directors and operators at Dining Services encourage students who have a suggestion for them concerning dining options to use the "Be Heard" online campaign. "Be Heard" is a set of online surveys offered to students regarding their dining experiences and how USF Dining can improve.

According to McElhane, these suggestions go straight to senior management.

"I think the program has grown tremendously based on feedback and demand, so we will continue to do so, we are always open to all kinds of feedback. There is room for improvement, and we will continue to do that," McElhane said.

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SERRAT

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right knee. She had surgery in Spain in June 2018, then again to clean it up after returning to the U.S. She missed the entire 2018-19 season as a result.

"After that, I started running, I started doing things," Serrat said. "I was just saying, 'It feels weird. I mean, I know it's going to hurt, but I know there's something still not working.'"

An MRI revealed Serrat had a torn meniscus and she had surgery again in November 2019.

Shortly after the surgery, she started running again and felt something still wasn't right. An MRI revealed she had arthritis, bone edema and cartilage damage.

"And I was like, 'Oof, OK, well how do we fix that?'" Serrat said. "My first thing was, 'Does that mean surgery again? How long is it going to take me to get back?'"

"And they said, 'I don't think surgery is the solution this time.'"

After consulting with at least a half dozen doctors as well as her parents, Serrat decided that rather than getting injections that may allow her to play for a few more years at best, but still likely keep her from her ultimate goal of playing professionally, her move should be to medically retire.

Though they only began once Serrat came stateside, the constant barrage of injuries and setbacks was not the first challenge she faced in her lifetime. Diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at the age of 6, she had a few more considerations to factor in than the average basketball player before her career even got off the ground.

"It was hard when I came here, because before, I had a routine, and I would do the same every day," Serrat said. "Practice at 6 a.m. and then at 4 — the same every day. When I came here, it was like, 'Today, we have weights

at 11, then tomorrow at noon, and it was hard.

"But when you get used to the routine and everything, you just need to know what you eat and get the right insulin."

While it's possible that diabetes has made it more difficult for her to recover, as diabetics are prone to longer recovery times, Serrat doesn't believe it's made her more injury prone, nor is there any medical evidence saying that.

"They just say it takes more time to heal," she said. "If your sugar levels are in range all the time, it's easier. If not, it takes longer."

Serrat's blood sugar levels are relatively good, though. During Serrat's freshman year, her A1C — the average of a person's blood sugars over the previous three months — was more than 7 percent. Right now, it's 6.5 percent, which is generally considered a good number for a diabetic, though a person without diabetes would be considered "normal" at 5.7 percent or below.

Regardless, Serrat has had to watch from the sideline for three straight years — and has done so pretty much always in some sort of pain, to the point where just the act of sitting down becomes uncomfortable after a short time.

But she's as active a member of the team as any other player — perhaps one of the most energetic on the bench even — frequently jumping up and high fiving teammates after 3-pointers.

"Life's always going to throw you adversities," Fernandez said. "Everybody has bad days. Not everybody wakes up in the morning feeling great, but you've got to go to work. You don't go to work, you don't do your job. You don't do your job, you don't get paid.

"It just shows what type of character she truly has."

It's an attitude and work ethic that her teammates look up to.

"Just to know that she always has her head up, always encouraging us, always smiling — she's a role model," junior Bethy Mununga said. "She's an example for all of us, and I just wish her all the best."

The feeling for her teammates is mutual, and in fact, Serrat would not have made it this far without their support.

"That's why I'm still here, because I love the team and I love everyone here," she said. "If they wouldn't be here with me, I probably would have gone home the first year."

She'll still be a member of the team next season, her academic senior year — though she would have had three more years of NCAA eligibility had she come back next season — though Fernandez said exactly at what level remains to be seen.

As far as the rest of this season goes, Serrat will travel with the team to the AAC Tournament in Connecticut this weekend.

Beyond the rest of this and next season, Serrat's time with basketball isn't over, though she plans to step away for a bit. Coaching might be in her future, though it's not really something she ever thought about until recently.

"Now that I'm not able to play, I'm starting to think about it," Serrat said. "Coach [Fernandez] is always saying, 'You should, because you know a lot,' and he keeps pushing me, 'You should try, you should try.'"

"Maybe he's going to convince me one day."

If he does, Serrat can leave her legacy on the game with her piece of the human experience.

"I think she would be a great coach because she sees the game from a different lens," Fernandez said, "and I think she has an incredible story to tell as well."

MODELContinued from **PAGE 8**

ability to be better student-athletes, since they will not miss as much class time in the Fall.”

Schmid's proposal is in line with dozens of college coaches across the nation. USF coach Bob Butehorn is one of the outspoken proponents of change in the structure of men's college soccer.

“It's a critical time in the college game,” Butehorn said. “If we can get this split-season model to be accepted and understand it's the movement toward the 21st century of our game, I think it'll be a great thing for everybody involved, especially the college soccer game.”

Aside from restructuring the season, the model proposes changes that would also improve the overall experience of college soccer athletes by emphasizing wellness and making sure the athletes spend the least amount

of time away from the classroom as possible.

The issue of the current model stems from a hiccup in the transition between collegiate and professional soccer. Players are getting burned out in their first professional season because they aren't physically and mentally prepared for the toll a full season of pro soccer takes on the body.

There are 238 days in the MLS regular season. A Division I college soccer regular season is only 72 days, over three times fewer. Extending the season would just be a temporary fix, as college games are separated by an average of four days. MLS games are a whole week apart on average.

With the transition from collegiate to professional soccer in mind, the 21st Century Model is meant to benefit the athletes first. But professional coaches are welcoming the idea of change with open arms.

“For me, it's a must,” Tampa Bay Rowdies coach Neill Collins said. “Three or four-month seasons are not long enough. Players are not ready to come into a professional environment. It will help the coaches, it will help the players and it'll help, more importantly, the structure of U.S. soccer.

“I'm a big supporter of it and I hope it happens.”

The movement is banking on more than just wayward hopes — an official vote will take place in April at the 2020 NCAA Division I Council Meeting.

The legislation is sponsored by the Big Ten and the ACC, with the Pac-12 also in support. The 21st Century Model needs 33 votes out of 64 to pass. The three supporting conferences make up 12 of the votes.

While the reaction to the model is generally favorable, redistribution of a season comes at a cost. With the proposed



USF coach Bob Butehorn is an advocate of the “21st Century Model,” which would split the season up into two semesters.

ORACLE PHOTO/BRIAN HATTAB

season now taking up two semesters, there's a need for more staff and expenses are expected to rack up.

Administrators and athletic directors are the ones to convince, as they hold the most weight in the final decision. Once they see how the model benefits athletes in more than one way, Butehorn said he hopes the high costs are

forgiven.

“It's going to come down to them to really look at the facts,” he said. “They worry about the budget, they worry about the people, they worry about getting more staff, they worry about too many games on the field.

“When they look at the benefits to the athlete, then it's a no-brainer.”

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Florida should make it easier for college students to vote



Nathaniel Sweet

OPINION EDITOR

As early voting for the 2020 Presidential Primary kicks off in Florida, it's worth reflecting on the many challenges that college students face at the ballot box.

Prior to 2018, for instance, Florida universities weren't allowed to host early voting locations. That only became possible after a group of students sued the state government, and as a result, students have the chance to vote early at USF TECO Hall March 2-15.

Today, however, voting still remains a complicated process that even informed voters struggle to explain in a sentence.

One of the biggest sources of confusion is voter registration. The address you use when registering to vote is extremely important. Where you live determines all of the different districts you're eligible to vote in, from the school board to Congress, so your address always needs to be up to date.

This fact can get tricky for college students because of how mobile they are — many move out of their homes when heading to college, and they might jump from on-campus housing to an off-campus apartment depending on cost and convenience.

As a result, students can easily



There's no good reason to put barriers between voters and the ballot box. **SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE**

forget to update their voting address after they move, which can make it confusing to find their polling location on election day. A USF student might wake up in Tampa ready to vote, only to realize their polling place is back home in Miami.

Worse, many states impose a cutoff for when people can register — if you haven't registered by the deadline, you can't vote in that election cycle. To vote in the ongoing presidential primary in Florida, for example, you needed to have already registered by Feb. 18.

By and large, these deadlines aren't necessary. Twenty-one states, including California and North Carolina, have same-day voter registration, allowing voters to register all the way up through election day.

As long as you're an eligible voter in one of those states, you can walk into your polling place, register to vote and cast your ballot all at the same time.

Policies like these are especially helpful for college students. They eliminate the hassle of figuring out their voting

address and updating their info before the deadline.

These conveniences lead to higher voter turnout. A 2017 analysis by the U.S. Elections Project found that states saw their voter turnout increase by 5 to 7 percentage points after they implemented same-day registration.

Some might argue that remembering to register and stay up to date should be part of a voter's due diligence. There's little good reason, however, to make the process intentionally difficult. The purpose of the vote is to give citizens meaningful control over their government, and making people jump through hoops directly contradicts that goal.

With policies like same-day registration, Florida has the opportunity to make voting easier for thousands of people, including college students. It's time to cut through the red tape and strengthen democracy in our state.

Nathaniel Sweet is a senior studying political science.

USF should find new ways to reduce plastic waste



Jared Sellick

COLUMNIST

Student Government is currently considering a "plastic-free" resolution which would ask USF to move toward more sustainable options and would do away with single-use plastics such as straws, cups and cutlery.

Specifically, the resolution calls for the campus to "establish a purchasing policy which eliminates campus and food vendor procurement of all non-essential, non-compostable, single-use disposable plastics — while keeping accessibility and affordability at the forefront of decision-making to ensure that accommodations are made for all users of the system."

Groups like the Break Free From Plastic Movement (BFFPM) have been pushing for this change and gathering signatures from USF students.

Passing this resolution and implementing it systemwide is a big ask, but the move would do a lot for the environmental movement that seeks to stop the onslaught of single-use plastics stifling the environment and filling up our waterways and oceans.

Nearly 18 billion pounds of single-use plastics finds its way into the ocean from coastal regions, according to a study by

the University of Georgia from 2015. It is clear how massive the problem is, which makes the initiatives from institutions like USF paramount to creating a better future.

We already make substantial efforts to make recycling accessible and have paper straws in the Marshall Student Center (MSC) food court, but that doesn't mean there isn't more to do.

In an interview with The Oracle, BFFPM campaign coordinator Heather McClurg suggested alternatives to plastic.

"Simple changes can be made like giving real silverware out in all dining areas that can be washed and reused," she said. "Providing reusable cups and straws to all USF students so they have the tools to make these transitions.

The plastic bags used at shops like the USF Bookstore and food court could also be replaced by a paper alternative. Working with the different brands in the MSC to find alternative takeout containers will be more complicated, but still worth exploring.

Other universities are taking similar steps. Eckerd College just recently committed to establishing purchasing practices designed to be ecologically stable.

If we decide to make the bold step of moving away from single-use plastics, that gives us the opportunity to develop innovative solutions that can protect our oceans from further pollution.

Jared Sellick is a senior studying political science.

BEWA

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However, it was only when she started medical school that the nonprofit was in full operation.

With the mission to develop young people's capacities to address key issues — including reproductive health, gender equality, leadership and entrepreneurship — Bewa has been actively growing YBLA for the past 10 years across the world.

"With leadership and entrepreneurship, we don't think someone can be healthy if he or she does not have access to economic opportunities or opportunities that keep [them] focused on developing [themselves]."

Her passion for reproductive health led Bewa to spread awareness of sexually transmitted diseases like HIV through communitywide initiatives.

In 2010, the year she founded

continue to address issues related to HIV in Benin.

Through the Red Ribbon Campaign, Bewa has trained 10,000 young people on HIV/AIDS prevention.

Years later after launching the nonprofit, Bewa collected more than 2,000 signatures to lead the Benin government to adopt the anti-gender-based-violence law. In 2012, she received the former first lady of the U.S. Michelle Obama's Young African Women Leaders Grant.

With the nonprofit's 10-year anniversary rapidly approaching, Bewa said that she never expected they would reach this point.

"From 2006 to 2010, I started preparing myself by getting involved in other people's nonprofits, international leadership roles and volunteering from bottom to top," Bewa said. "So I knew what could help such a movement be built and



Bewa started the Young Beninese Leaders Association (YBLA) while she was in high school to advocates for sexual and reproductive health. **SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE**

“ I can do anything I want. If my ancestors did it, then I can too.”

Marlene Joannie Bewa, Ph.D. student

the nonprofit, Bewa and her team organized the Red Ribbon Campaign, which included an event that discussed young people's opinions on HIV protection and sought to combat stigma surrounding the disease.

"Young people are the most affected everywhere in the world while women are two times more likely to be affected by HIV everywhere in the world," Bewa said. "And so because of that, we brought them together."

With each participant sporting handmade red ribbons, more than 300 people marched together in the streets of Benin for about an hour.

After the march, eight committees were put together to

successful.

"I didn't expect that level of interest from the national to global level. You know, having the Bill Gates Foundation invite us to share our experience in 2018 and Melinda Gates introducing our nonprofit as if she was part of it and highlighting it in front of 500 people. We didn't expect that in 2010."

Bewa attributes her success in part to the culture of her home country.

"Being from Benin is a blessing," Bewa said. "Benin is the type of country where we are, I will say, progressive on several things. It's okay for a 20-year-old, young girl to set up a nonprofit, talk to ministers, claim space

and organize things, but also is a blessing because it's one of the most peaceful countries on earth."

While Bewa's love for her country can be reflected in her work and advocacy for reproductive health, family also played a role in her growth and success.

Bewa said that her mother's resilience and her father's support in the feminist movement from settling the first women's soccer team in West Africa helped build her strength and values.

Bewa comes from a generation of strong women which she said directly shaped her life and work. The Republic of Benin was previously the kingdom of Dahomey, which created an all-female African military corps known for their fearlessness.

"They were fierce and they would fight when they go to war to protect the territory," Bewa said. "I think for me, this shaped the person I am in that I can do

anything I want. If my ancestors did it, then I can too."

Despite living in Benin for most of her life, Bewa said that she always saw herself doing things beyond her continent.

"I've always been an avid traveler, willing to discover things and work around," Bewa said.

Bewa's American journey began in 2012 when attending an international program. During the three-week program, she had the opportunity to discover more about youth engagement and civic participation as well as bring her research to America.

Once she returned to Benin, she was elected by her peers to become the president of the first youth council to help shape the U.S. embassy, U.S. government policies and partnerships in Benin.

After traveling back and forth between the U.S. and Benin, she received a Fulbright scholarship in 2015 from USF that made her stay in the U.S.

"USF chose me, that's what I always say," Bewa said.

In 2018, she graduated with her master's in public health at USF and is currently pursuing a doctorate in public health at the university.

Besides conducting research, Bewa said that she also focuses on outreach with student organizations as well as community-led organizations to develop programs and training in the field.

While being away from her home country, Bewa carries within herself the culture and values that shaped the person she is today.

"Being from Africa, I will also say it's a blessing because there are some core values, you know, that I don't think any other continent will have been able to talk or teach," Bewa said. "The values of a common and shared sense of what a family is, of what solidarity is, of what working for social good is."

Women's Basketball

Never saying quit

Silvia Serrat's collegiate career was hampered by injuries, ultimately forcing her to medically retire after missing three straight seasons. But she never let all the setbacks keep her spirits down.



Brian Hattab

SPORTS EDITOR

Part of the human experience — arguably most of it, even — is finding your passion and chasing the associated dream.

For Silvia Serrat, that passion was playing basketball — and it started at a young age, with the Banyoles, Spain, native first playing at the age of 4 with a soccer ball.

She eventually used the soccer ball for its intended purpose, but switched back to basketball after one year, and from there, the future looked bright.

"I left home when I was 14 because I wanted to play pro, and I was playing Division II in Spain," Serrat said. "I wanted to come, study for four years and

play [at a U.S. university], then when I graduated, go back to Spain to play Division I."

Serrat caught the attention of USF coach Jose Fernandez, amongst others. She was a five-star recruit, after all.

"She was a kid that — her length, her athleticism," Fernandez said. "She could rebound, play without the ball — she was just so active."

Unfortunately, sometimes part of the human experience is having those dreams crushed in the worst ways possible.

Serrat sprained her left ankle prior to what would have been her freshman season of 2017-18. She had surgery, but could have theoretically played by February, though she and Fernandez decided not to use a year of eligibility at that point.

That summer, Serrat's national team called, and she obliged. But in the third practice, she went down with an ACL injury on her

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Silvia Serrat celebrates during a game against ECU on Feb. 25. Serrat's entire USF career was plagued with injuries. ORACLE PHOTO/BRIAN HATTAB

Men's Soccer

Taking college soccer into the 21st century



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With the advancement of men's professional soccer in the U.S. in

the past decade, such as MLS going from relative obscurity to a league where expansion fees are now north of \$200 million, where has that left the college game?

Mostly unchanged and falling behind.

The current season is top-heavy, with the entire season being played in the span of one semester. Just five exhibitions in

the spring attempt to balance out 20 regular-season games in the fall.

A new model, dubbed the "21st Century Model" for its objective of catching up with the rapidly growing landscape of modern professional soccer, proposes something that has been in the works since at least 2017 — a split season across two semesters,

which is more in line with the structure of top professional seasons.

The conversation was brought to light by the late Sigi Schmid, who was coach of the LA Galaxy at the time and a former head coach of UCLA from 1980-1999. Schmid proposed his ideal changes for men's college soccer in an article posted to MLS's

website in January 2017.

"This would allow for more training time with the players and it allows for proper recovery between games," Schmid wrote. "Training plus recovery will lead to better performances by players, thus increasing the overall level of play. Not to mention that it would certainly help the players'

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