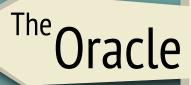
NEW STUDENT

ORIENTATION





LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT, PAGE 4 IN-PERSON AND ONLINE CLASSES, PAGE 6 MESSAGE FROM SENIORS, PAGE 10 Q&A WITH NITHIN PALYAM AND AMY PHAM, PAGE 14 OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS, PAGE 19

EDITOR IN CHIEF ALEXANDRA URBAN

ADVERTISING SALES CHRISTINA LOIZOU TEODORA TAVARES

COVER ART TEODORA TAVARES

WRITERS

CLINTON ENGELBERGER BRIELLE LOPEZ MICHAEL MARDONES KATHERINE MAILLY

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Letter from the president



Rhea Law began presiding over USF in August as interim. She was then selected in March by the USF Board of Trustees to hold the permanent position. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE

I'm so pleased that your path has led you to become a part of the University of South Florida family. We offer enormous opportunities for educational enrichment, personal growth, career guidance and just plain fun as you form friendships and find new interests in a stimulating environment.

This is a particularly exciting moment in time at USF — a vibrant period of growth, cutting-edge programs, stateof-the-art new facilities, further recognition for our world-class research and innovation and our position as the fastest-rising university in America, according to U.S. News & World Report.

I'm also delighted that we are sharing this fulfilling journey together in my new presidential administration. As a former student at USF, I was once in your shoes and can relate to what you're experiencing right now!

In our world of One USF, you can select from more than 200 majors and concentrations regardless of whether you are on our campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg or Sarasota-Manatee. Whether it's the arts, cell and molecular biology, mechanical engineering or any other discipline, I urge you to find the field of study that suits your interests and puts you on a course toward a rewarding career.

The fact is, opportunities for learning abound at USF, and you can pursue your academic interests at a university committed to excellence and continually recognized for achieving it. We are a preeminent university in the state of Florida, have earned a highly prestigious Phi Beta Kappa chapter and rank as a Top 50 public university in the U.S., with our sights set on reaching the Top 25 — and we will get there!

You can be proud that the degree you eventually obtain from USF will carry weight and respect, earned at a dynamic university making an impact on the state, nation and world.

At USF, our metropolitan location gives us a terrific advantage to partner with leading local organizations from Raymond James to Tech Data to Nielsen — that provide invaluable hands-on experiences for our students and prepare you for future occupational success. We are proud to be among the top performing universities in our state for the number of graduates employed and highest average salaries within one year of graduating.

In addition to cultivating your knowledge, you'll find vast opportunities for personal fulfillment outside the classroom. I strongly recommend getting involved in whatever activities interest you and help you feel an even deeper sense of community.

offers USF more than 700 student organizations on our three campuses, and I promise you will find one or more that suit you. You will form lasting friendships and further hone your interests in a Tampa Bay region filled with culture, recreational and social opportunities, and a bevy of collegiate and professional sports. USF Athletics sponsors 19 varsity men's and women's teams, providing a wide variety of opportunities to cheer on our Bulls throughout the year.

At USF, we are fully committed to diversity, equity and inclusion. We embrace student and faculty success, and endeavor to continue making a global impact. These are pillars of our new, fiveyear strategic plan, "In Pursuit of Excellence." And I encourage all of you to acquaint yourself with the plan — it is the responsibility of every one of us at USF to put it into action in everything we do.

As you begin your time on campus, I wish you all the best in achieving success. Please don't hesitate to ask for help as you explore your options — we are here to support you. I couldn't be happier that you have chosen USF to shape your future and make your mark on the world.

And, as you will no doubt find yourself saying often from now on, Go Bulls!

Sincerely,

Rhea Law USF President





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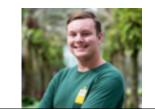


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THE ORACLE

Managing virtual courses in an in-person environment



Clinton Engelberger

MANAGING EDITOR

In an environment where universities have eased COVID-19 restrictions, the college experience people talk about is slowly returning to its original form.

However, staying up late and skipping class may not sound so risky when some of your classes are being offered virtually and asynchronously. Although in-person classes are the most utilized modality, the effects of the pandemic have allowed numerous classes to remain completely online. This could cause some students' schedules to feature a divide in the types of classes offered.

Some students may take online courses to be mindful of the pandemic, while others have no choice but to do so because it's the only modality the class is offered in. Regardless, attending an in-person class while simultaneously worrying about a couple of virtual courses can initially seem intimidating, especially when entering your freshman year.

In order to successfully manage a stress-free school year, here's how to deal with completing online courses in a college environment that heavily



Although in-person classes are the most popular modality, some students may find their schedules to include both face-to-face and virtual courses. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/UNSPLASH

favors in-person courses.

Treat asynchronous courses as if they are in person

Although it may be tempting to procrastinate the work of an asynchronous course, treating it as a synchronous, in-person course can do wonders for you with time management.

Allot a specific time during the week you can dedicate to the given course. During this time, only work on assignments and readings for this course like you would by attending a regular class. Since you'll have an extra hole in your schedule in terms of class meeting times, you have the opportunity to choose what time would work best to schedule it.

To help with this, scheduling your in-person courses on similar days can give you more off-days, which you can use to schedule your asynchronous work time. Alternating days of work can help to avoid burnout by working too much on one day.

Never settle for a mediocre learning environment

If you have online courses among your other in-person classes, it may be easy to fall into the trap of treating those courses as inessential. Due to the physical nature of in-person classes, you are more likely to spend more time and effort doing work for those courses. Turning in your virtual assignments may be put on the backburner, or you may forget about them altogether.

Your time and effort should equal that of an in-person course in an online class. Virtual courses affect your GPA the same way a face-to-face one does, so letting your grades slip just because you're not meeting with a teacher in person will offer equivalent consequences.

Communicate frequently with your instructor

Beyond ensuring you do your part to keep up with a virtual course, make sure your instructor is doing theirs as well. If you are having any issues with the course, it is important to be vocal about them with your instructor.

Just because the class is online doesn't mean you should be afraid of sending too many emails to your instructor. The professor is there to help you, so you should utilize emails or video calls as often as you would raise your hand in the classroom

Approaching it from this angle will not only help you ensure you don't fall behind in the course, but it will also aid in your own understanding of the material presented in it.

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Dear freshmen

Opinion Co-Editor Brielle Lopez asked seniors what message they would like to leave with the incoming freshman or what they

would tell their freshman selves based on what they have experienced while in college.



"The main piece of advice I would give to freshmen is to be comfortable with the uncomfortable. Don't be afraid to take on new experiences, to expand your network, meet new people and jump at every opportunity. Don't strive to sustain a level of comfort, but instead constantly seek different ways to grow. Remember that you are not just in college to learn, but to learn how to think. But don't forget to stay kind, and make memories."

Yovela Debesay, economics and international studies major



"I think I would tell them to be kinder to themselves. You're working toward such an amazing achievement, give yourself more credit!! You do not need to have everything figured out to feel accomplished, every step you take toward enriching yourself, no matter how mundane, is something you deserve to be proud of."

Brandalynn Nuñez Cepeda, mass communications with a concentration in magazine journalism major



"Knowing everything I know now, one piece of advice I would give my freshman self would be to focus on what makes me happy and not so much on what other people think of my choices. The only opinion that matters is your own and your first priority should be your happiness and well-being and making sure you are working toward a life that you love."

Rachel Lane, communications major



"I would tell my freshman self that the USF campus is like a small city built around helping you succeed. Take advantage of everything that college has to offer. This will be an incredible period of growth in your life, as long as you engage with your professors, spend time getting involved on campus, and meet peers from all around the country and world."

Zach Blair-Andrews, political science major



"I would tell myself, focus on the present and cherish all the small moments each day holds because the four years does go by so fast. Also, that it's okay to not know what you want or keep changing your mind, you will discover your true passion."

Mia Borja, communications major



"There will be many moments you want to do nothing. In those moments, slow motion is better than no motion."

Donia Alizadeh, biomedical sciences major

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Student body leaders' tips on navigating college

News Editor Michael Mardones interviewed Student Body President Nithin Palyam and Student Body Vice President Amy Pham about their experiences at USF, their advice to returning students and incoming freshmen and what they hope to provide the student body in their upcoming term.

What has been your favorite experience at USF thus far?

Nithin: The whole experience at USF has been the best experience of my life. To be specific, the first time I went to the Capitol in Tallahassee to meet with the legislators last January has been the most memorable trip that I've ever been to with my colleagues in Student Government.

Amy: The day before campaigning started, my friend Maria and I ran around the village and just chalked everywhere. We wrote Nithin's name so big everywhere on a bunch of different sidewalks right before voting started.

What's a hard lesson you learned in school you wish you knew beforehand?

Nithin: When I first shared that I wanted to go to a different country to pursue my bachelor's degree, my parents were kind of skeptical about it because this was never done before by any of my family members. So, I got good grades and I had to prove to my parents and convince them that I was able to, that I'm capable of, creating my own life in a different country.

One valuable lesson I've

lot. I wasn't used to not having a set schedule and being around my friends, where I kind of have to learn to be on my own and be comfortable being by myself. That was, I think that was the most valuable lesson for me.

USF, but were inspired to run after falling in love with the community. ORACLE PHOTO/ULIANA LEARNED

Now honestly, sometimes you'd rather be by yourself and do your own thing, but I think it's important to learn that because once college starts, everyone's doing their own thing. You're never really gonna have a time where you and all of your friends and all the people you know are on the same schedule and doing

the same thing. So, learning that pretty early on was really useful for me.

What advice would you give students looking to get involved around campus?

Nithin: College is kind of scary. Now, I'm not going to lie, when I was a freshman I wanted to get involved. I did not know where to look and especially as an international student who comes from a different culture. The culture shock is really, really big and it can make things,

all things difficult. From just communicating with peers and building the courage to going out and introducing themselves.

It can be really challenging for a bit in the beginning, but once you put yourself out there enough times, it'll become natural to you. You will be able to go ahead and introduce yourself to a group of people at an event that you are interested in attending. You'll be able to make connections and once you put yourself out there, as Amy mentioned, you're open to actually accepting and going

See Q&A on PAGE 16



Neither Nithin Palyam nor Amy Pham ever imagined they would become the student body president and vice president when they arrived at

will have a great experience. There are people from Brazil, Europe and all the other countries and they all bring their experiences to one place like USF, and they all share those experiences. It's really interesting to learn about all of these cultures at a rich and diverse university like USF. Amy: I think the hardest lesson was learning to be comfortable

open to learning new things, you

being by yourself. So, my first

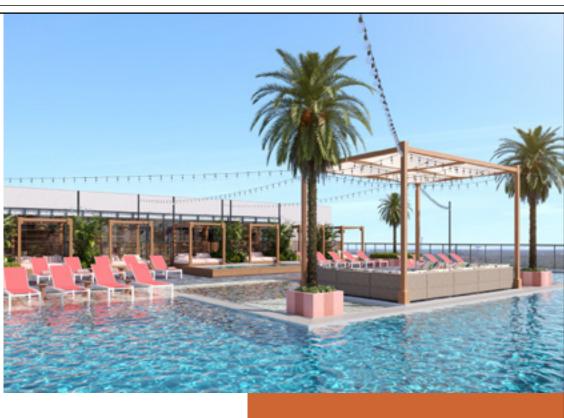
year at USF was all online. So

it was like COVID year. And I

realized that I was by myself a

learned is that anywhere that you go, if you go in with your arms

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Palyam said putting oneself out there and getting out of your comfort zone is a good way to meet new people and get more comfortable on campus. ORACLE PHOTO/ULIANA LEARNED

Q&A

Continued from PAGE 14

to things that you thought you wouldn't enjoy. At first, you'll be able to explore a little bit further beyond the borders of your comfort zone, which you might find something that you may be doing for the rest of your college years.

I never thought I would be in Student Government my freshman year and now I'm the student body president. I don't even know how that happened, but it's just a crazy turn of events. You just gotta be daring and go out there to discover your thing.

Amy: I would say try to be open to things that you might not think you enjoy at first. For example, I had no intentions of being part of the Student Government. I was never part of it in my high school, I didn't like the idea of campaigning and I wasn't very extroverted. So, when a senior at the time asked me if I was thinking about doing it, I really was not planning on doing it.

I applied to run for the midterm elections very last minute, but I'm really glad I ended up doing it. So, I would say the biggest piece of advice is to be open to things you might not think you will enjoy at first.

How do you keep yourself grounded when school gets really busy and stressful?

Nithin: I'm an engineering major and now I'm going to be a senior and I will have a considerable amount of coursework to complete by the time I graduate in spring. So, what I usually do to destress is go out with friends to a beach day or just go to a restaurant I really enjoy. That's one of my favorite things to do around when I'm stressed, but also I like just talking to people. Taking some rest, taking some time off by watching my favorite movie or listening to some music also helps.

Amy: I am a major foodie. I like to try new places and so whenever I have a stressful day or I'm nervous about something or even just to celebrate, like even the smallest thing, I normally end up going to a noodle house nearby. I normally end up going to a restaurant that I really like and that just helps me kind of be focusing on destressing.

It's actually really funny because I think during the

month of campaigning, and then we were going through like the trials and appeals process, I was so stressed so often that Nithin would always ask me like "Have you gone to go eat? Maybe you should go get some food?" So, that's kind of what I normally do.

What are some ways you manage your well-being both physically and mentally?

Nithin: Not gonna lie, I haven't been to gym in like five months because the entire last semester has been a rollercoaster ride for me. However, I try to have a healthy diet by cooking for myself most of the time. That's how I restrict some of the food that I intake and keep a healthy diet for my physical health. I walk everywhere that I go, which makes up for exercise. I walk around an average of 10,000 steps a day on campus usually, so I consider that my workout so I don't have to go to the gym.

For my mental health, when I'm stressed, people can really figure it out because you can see it on my face. People come up to me and I tell them that like this, there are two different things going on or something that is bothering me or something like that. I always go to my advisers that are really caring toward the people who work at Student Government and they always have good advice to share with everyone. I kind of take their advice all the time, when I'm stressed. I am also a sunset person, so whenever there's a sunset, I go to the top of a parking garage and watch it.

Amy: I was able to kind of start figuring it out. I just block off time on my calendar. Having a visual time block is really helpful, and so I would go to the gym or I really like to take walks. I especially like to go on walks when sunsets are gonna happen. I used to live on campus and just walk all the way around campus, whether it was to the Recreation Center, MUMA or any kind of trail. I also listen to music or sometimes hang out with friends. Plus, it's good to kind of have this set time where you say I'm not doing anymore. That's also something I kind of learned at the end of this past semester and I hope I can maintain in fall, but we'll see.

What are you looking forward to most during your term?

Nithin: What I'm most looking forward to is, honestly, to collaborating with the other campuses and creating a transportation service. With the campus, that's one of our initiatives that I'm really looking forward to accomplishing by the end of this term. It's just that working with all of the Student Government members that I worked with previously, it's just they create this environment within the office that makes you want to go again and again into the office. Also, I really love meeting new people and this job really gives me the opportunity to meet people and students, not only from this university, but also all the public universities in Florida.

Amy: I'm really excited to meet everyone at USF. That's been a great thing so far, we meet so many new people, even people not in Student Government, so I'm really excited to meet new people and learn more about what they want to see on campus and what they think should be addressed. Also, I'm looking forward to working with them and our cabinet to solve those problems and make those changes. I'm just really excited to see that happen throughout our time.



"Being involved in student organizations like The Student Investment Club is so crucial to set up yourself to have the best possible job with a competitive salary."

Dean Moez Limayem



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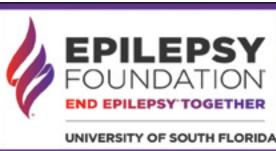
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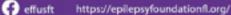




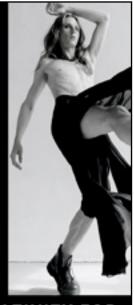
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How to enjoy college as an out-of-state student



Many students at USF are from Florida, but there is still a large community of out-of-state or international students. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/UNSPLASH



Katherine Mailly

STAFF WRITER

The first year of college is an intimidating experience for everyone, filled with new settings and expectations. Out-of-state students, including international students, have the added pressure of being far from home, but resources exist to help them enjoy their time in college.

Florida itself offers some of its own peculiarities for anyone outside of the state. Publix, for example, and its associated Pub Sub. Spread across the southeast and headquartered in Lakeland, the supermarket chain is a fundamental part of Florida culture, if in part only for the Pub Sub. With a Publix located on campus, students will also be able to try the well-known deli sandwich.

More importantly, most new students will inevitably struggle with finding a group of people to navigate the new environment with, which may seem even more daunting when so far from home.

Recognize that many others will be out of their element as well, and adopt an experimental mindset to see where the beginning of the semester takes you. The people you meet and the experiences you have won't define the rest of your time in

college.

Clubs are an effective way to meet people with similar interests or backgrounds, and offer an aspect of familiarity among so many changes. Student-led groups range from Animation Club to the Foam Fighting Club, giving students a wide variety of activities to unite around.

Identity-based groups, such as the African Students Association or the P.R.I.D.E Alliance, also abound on campus through the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Social media creates another space for students to convene, and may be more comfortable for those who struggle with social anxiety. On BullsConnect, students may post their Instagram and Snapchat handles to connect with their peers. Discord is a network that allows students to log into "student hubs" with their university email to find a collection of servers. Created by students in the university's name, the 127 servers range from homework help to general student discussion to student clubs.

On the student hub, students can plan meet-ups and explore student organizations all from the comfort of their dorm.

With a history as a commuterbased school, no guaranteed housing and many local students returning home to see family, the weekend can get pretty quiet. With few students on campus, staying in the residence halls may seem like the only option.

Especially for international or out-of-state students who may not

have a car of their own, university provided transportation can help stranded students escape campus. By showing their student ID card, students can be ferried on the Bull Runner, free of charge. Off-campus stops include Busch Gardens and University Mall.

Through the SAFE Team website, some students can also receive \$30 Uber vouchers to be used by the end of the month, on campus, out of state or internationally. Available vouchers are limited, however, and run out quickly.

By connecting with students and taking advantage of USFspecific resources, students can find the support they need to fully experience college.





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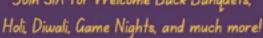
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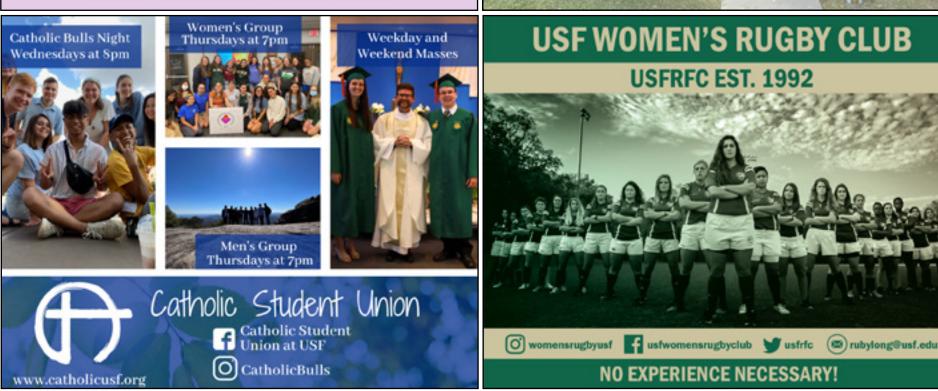


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The Trans+ Student Union is a social organization for all TGI+ (trans, nonbinary, queer, intersex, gender non-conforming) people.

We host weekly meetings: educational presentations and discussions, monthly support groups, and fun social events!

Our goal is to provide safety and community for trans+ people at USF and in the surrounding areas. To this end, we also help folks navigate legal name changes, social and medical transition (HRT/GCS), and resources at USF.

We meet every Tuesday at 7:30 PM in MSC 3711!

Masks required; almost every meeting is streamed concurrently. Allies are welcome.

BullsConnect

Trans+ Student Union





https://discord.gg/kDaMFvhRpu

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THE GROUP IS INTERSECTIONAL ACROSS GENDER, RACE, AND SEXUALITY, AND FOCUSES ON CAMPAIGNS RECARDING ISSUES LIKE-

- REGARDING ISSUES LIKI
- SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUS,
- POLICE VIOLENCE.
- AND DIVESTMENT.

WE WANT TO PUSH FOR POSITIVE MATERIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN TAMPA AND AT OUR UNIVERSITY.

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