

THE VERMILION

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette Student Newspaper February 23, 2022

UL Lafayette seeing stabilized enrollment after years of decline

Lena Foster
NEWS EDITOR

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette, along with schools nationwide, have experienced a decline in student enrollment for the past few years.

According to the New York Times article titled “U.S. College Enrollment Dropped Again in the Fall of 2021, Despite the Arrival of Vaccine,” even after vaccines were accessible to students, there was still a decrease in universities’ student body numbers.

“Total undergraduate enrollment dropped 3.1 percent from the fall of 2020 to the fall of 2021, bringing the total decline since the fall of 2019 to 6.6 percent — or 1,205,600 students,” the

article reads.

Vice President of Enrollment Management DeWayne Bowie said how UL Lafayette’s adaptation to the current COVID-19 environment has added to the declining number of enrollments.

Entering the Spring 2022 semester, the university instructed some professors to deliver their classes remotely until told otherwise. On Feb. 4, the university announced the return of classes to their original instructional method.

According to Bowie, many students were having a hard time adjusting to online learning; therefore, they decided not to attend college for the time being.

“So many have chosen to delay that college entrance, or even delay attending college until things went back to what we

call “normal” which is a more face-to-face interaction for them,” Bowie said.

Other factors such as affordability, job opportunities and family issues contributed to the overall decrease, according to Bowie.

However, UL Lafayette’s enrollment recently underwent a change of pace with the recent freshman class. According to Bowie, there have been signs of stabilization for the enrollment rate that provided hope for the institution.

“We had a really robust freshman class this past fall. We had about a 16% increase in our freshman class,” Bowie said. “So that tends to lead to higher enrollment down the road when those students are returning.”

To expand recruitment efforts, the university has designated recruiters for Texas cities like Houston and Dallas due to their high school graduation rate. Bowie shared how Louisiana’s high school graduation rate was either flat or declining, so many Louisiana colleges are competing to bring in students.

“So pretty much a lot of colleges are in Texas now because of the number of high school graduates that they’re producing. And we’re in there as well making sure that we let students know what’s great about our university,” Bowie said.

Along with new enrollments, the university is taking action towards ensuring students who either dropped out or took time off get informed on ways to come back.

According to Bowie, the university recently established an administrative position that is responsible for speaking with students who left the university or are attending another university and thinking of coming to UL Lafayette.

“They recruit transfer students, and they also recruit students who stopped

out at the university and did not earn a degree. So they’re communicating with them pretty regularly,” Bowie said.

The university also has methods already in place to try to keep the enrollment and retention rates up.

To ensure they get the opportunity to hear why some students might have doubts or issues with attending UL Lafayette, administration relies heavily on faculty-student communication.

UL Lafayette faculty members have a closer interaction with students as it pertains to classroom performance and social life on campus, and many are advisors as well. Bowie shared how advisors get a chance to hear what students have to say before they make that final decision to leave to see if they could help motivate them to stay.

“And so that’s what we have in place to try to catch students that apparently enrolled that may be having some difficulties,” Bowie said.

A new system of communication is also in the works, according to Bowie. The university will be sending text messages to students to inform them on events and to guide students to the resources needed to ensure they stay in school.

According to Bowie, they anticipate the texting system to be in effect within the next six months to a year.

“So as an institution, we’re going to make sure that we’re not inundating them with texts that are unnecessary. But they’re going to be at critical points to let students know if there’s something new or if there’s a new update or let them know that people are here to help you if you need them,” Bowie said.

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Graphic by Cole Broussard

Urban prairie bioswale to be replanted, per university sustainability efforts

Adhamm Safford
ALLONS EDITOR

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette is currently in the process of replanting the urban prairie between Madison and Oliver Hall.

Native wildflowers, grasses and shrubs are to be planted in the urban prairie. This was first started by UL Lafayette in 2018 and is the university’s second bioswale. It was also one of the university’s first Living Lab projects, which brought in people from different fields and disciplines to work towards solutions to sustainability challenges.

The urban prairie features an inland storm drain that catches storm water runoff after it’s filtered through the native plants.

Gretchen Vanicor, director of sustainability, spoke on the urban prairie’s positive effects.

“We’re reducing our impact on local flash flooding,” Vanicor said. “Because of the native plants that we’re utilizing, any sort of contaminants that are coming off of rooftops, or parking lots, or sidewalks, these bioswales that are planted with native landscape, they also filtrate that water and provide habitats for pollinators.”

She also spoke on its important benefit to the Chicot aquifer.

“These native plants help draw down more water into our Chicot aquifer, which is where we get our drinking water supply,” Vanicor said. “Right now, because of regional agriculture and urban development, we are overdrawing our Chicot aquifer, so these types of projects are really, really important to try and balance some of those impacts that we’re having on our local ecology.”

She added that this overdrawing of the aquifer is already having adverse effects on local industry.

“We’re starting to see some impacts,

like saltwater intrusion into our aquifer from the Vermilion Bay area, and if that continues to become a really big problem, our farming industry locally could see some bad economic impacts from it,” she said.

As a Living Lab project, those involved learned along the way and have had to adapt to problems as they arose. Previously, the plants had been impeding pedestrian traffic due to being planted too close to the edge of the sidewalk. To address this, a rock bed was put in around the perimeter of the urban prairie, but this introduced another problem.

“It created a levee all the way around the perimeter. So runoff from Oliver Hall and all of the surrounding sidewalks was no longer going into the bioswale and being filtered by all of those native plants and slowly making its way to the inland storm drain,” Vanicor said.

The water was instead going back onto the sidewalks and into a different storm drain without being filtered by the plants. Those involved in the project are currently addressing the problem.

“We’re working with facilities management and the UL Ecology Center to regrade the area to ensure all of the runoff that’s coming from Oliver as well as the concrete areas at Zeus do eventually make their way through the native plant areas and are filtered before they go into the storm drain,” Vanicor said.

The regrading process is about to be completed, and what remains is the replanting of the area.

“We are working with the Ecology Center and some of our other native plant enthusiasts on campus as well as in the community to get some of the native plants back in there this spring. We may not be able to plant the entire space

before the end of the semester, simply because a lot of these plants are really hard to find,” Vanicor said.

There are also plans to implement gravel paths in the area, allowing students and faculty to get farther into the urban prairie.

This urban prairie also serves to preserve many of these native plant species that may have been endangered by urbanization and industrialization.

“The historic Cajun Prairie encompassed over 2.5 million acres in Louisiana and Texas, and supported a highly diverse community of plants, wildlife, and pollinating insects,” the plaque posted outside the urban prairie reads. “Decades of agricultural and industrial practices, urbanization, and land development have nearly eliminated the ecosystem, with less than 0.01 percent remaining.”



Photo by Cole Broussard / The Vermilion

The construction zone for the urban prairie sits between Madison and Oliver Hall on Feb. 15 at 5 p.m.

News

CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION

UL Lafayette has been awarded the national Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education’s R1 designation.

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CAJUNS’ SOFTBALL VICTORY

The Louisiana Ragin’ Cajuns Softball season started last week and quickly made a name for themselves by earning their national ranking.

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Sports

BETTING ON YOURSELF

Point guard Kentrell Garnett continues to shine with an expanded role for the Ragin’ Cajuns, earning a scholarship.

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BASEBALL BARRAGE

In this satire piece, Design Manager Cole Broussard talks about the recent assault on The Vermilion.

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University achieves R1 Classification, UL Lafayette celebrates

Brittany LeJeune
NEWS WRITER

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette has achieved the national Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education's R1 designation for the extensive research conducted at the college.

The university is at the highest national level of classification alongside 146 other colleges. Private institutions such as Tufts University in Massachusetts, Case Western Reserve University in Ohio and Vanderbilt in Tennessee as well as public institutions like Louisiana State University and Clemson University in South Carolina are classified as R1 colleges.

According to the official UL Lafayette blog: *Dr. Joseph Savoie's blog*, "An R1 University prioritizes learning by enabling students to work alongside visionary faculty who are leading their respective disciplines into new, and often unimagined, frontiers."

Qualification for this classification includes funding generated and spent conducting research, the number of graduates that the university has every year, and the number of post-doctorate members of research at the university. These specific variables have been areas in which the university has improved and directly contributed to the designation.

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education website states that doctoral universities that have obtained this classification have to meet certain criteria.

"(Doctoral Universities) include only institutions that awarded at least 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees and had at least \$5 million in total research expenditures," the website reads.

According to Ramesh Kolluru, vice president for Research, Innovation, and Economic Development, "We have created over the years multiple research centers and institutes to focus specifically on a set of topics we think we have the ability to move the needle."

For example, the university tested the Pfizer vaccine to combat COVID-19 at their facility.

UL Lafayette was the first university in 1961 that offered a master's degree in computer science. In the context of human capital development, they focus on the culture of Louisiana and its effect on economics. UL Lafayette is

researching to investigate the flooding problem in Lafayette concerning the watershed.

Undergraduate students have a new program known as Advance Student Research Experience (Advance) that will allow them to get involved in research. The university is making an effort to allow all undergraduate students to find a mentor and work in research studies.

"It creates a passion for research that carries you throughout your life. It allows you to investigate, allows you to discover, allows you to explore new information, new knowledge, which is what we do at research universities," Kolluru said.

When conducting research, a faculty member with a doctoral degree works with graduate and undergraduate students.

According to the university website, "At UL Lafayette, we believe that hands-on experience and partnering with experts provides invaluable opportunities for our students."

This is a valuable achievement that marks the beginning of the future at the university, according to Kolluru.

"We are positioning ourselves strongly to grow the next generation of smart young men and women as students that go on to become researchers themselves," Kolluru said.

According to the Research for a Reason article on the university website, "Our specialty is applied research that solves real-world problems. Sustainability, healthcare, new economies, new technologies, new processes, new products, new ideas — those are today's challenges."

However, some faculty members at UL Lafayette have raised concerns on social media.

On Twitter, Associate Professor Loïc Bordeau, @Loic_French, wrote, "Now let's hope we get the resources of an R1, too."

According to an email sent by the university, a celebratory event will be held in the Student Union Courtyard on Feb. 23.

The UL Lafayette marching band, Pride of Acadiana and cheerleaders will perform. There will be speakers such as President E. Joseph Savoie. Other speakers will include faculty and graduate students.

The event will begin at 11:30 a.m. The Student Union will display a research showcase for students to view.



Photo by Doug Dugas

University researchers conducting an experiment on April 20, 2016.

COVID-19 dashboard reports 16 new cases last week, university total at 1,981

Adhamm Safford
ALLONS EDITOR

There were 16 new COVID-19 cases among students, faculty and staff at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette during the week of Feb. 13, according to the university's COVID-19 dashboard on

Feb. 20.

According to the dashboard as of Monday at 4:41 p.m., the university reported that 287 students and 500 faculty and staff members contracted the virus, and 1,194 students have told the university they've tested positive. This means there have been a total of 1,981

cases among students, faculty and staff at UL Lafayette.

Confirmed positive tests include tests taken by Student Health Services and UL Lafayette Athletics, as well as tests submitted to the university's human resources department by faculty, staff and student workers. Self-reported tests

were taken by off-campus health care providers. Students in this category sent their results to the dean of students themselves, according to the dashboard.

As of Sunday, the dashboard displays total positive tests since Jan. 4, 2020.

This is an ongoing story. Stay with The Vermilion for more updates.



THE VERMILION

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EDITORIAL STAFF

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Amelia Jennings
MANAGING EDITOR Cole Broussard
NEWS EDITOR Lena Foster
DESIGN MANAGER Cole Broussard

EMAIL vermilion.ul@gmail.com **BUSINESS** 482-6110 **MAIL** P.O. Box 43721
Lafayette, LA 70504-4813 **LOCATION** 101 BOUCHER DRIVE LAFAYETTE, LA

SPORTS EDITOR Zachary Nagy
ALLONS EDITOR Adhamm Safford
PHOTO COORDINATOR Malik Jones
BUSINESS MANAGER Boyd Daniels

SUBMISSIONS

All letters to the editor and guest editorials must include the author's full name and phone number and be no longer than 400 words in length. Submissions are edited for libel and vulgarity only. Editorial and columns reflect the author's opinion and not those of The Vermilion staff. All advertisements must be submitted by the Friday before publication at vermadvertising@gmail.com. © 2021 Communications Committee of UL Lafayette. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Police Reports

Compiled by Lena Foster

Feb. 18

- At 7:55 a.m., someone reported vehicle damage made to a white 2002 Dodge Ram after driving over an object at 1716 Johnson St.

Feb. 17

- At 7:41 p.m., someone reported a stolen bike from Heritage Apartments. No arrests were made.

Feb. 16

- At 1:03 p.m., officers were informed of an unauthorized subject going into the Indoor Practice Facility. No arrests were made.
- At 9:15 p.m., someone reported shots fired at the 400 Block of East St. Mary Boulevard. No injuries or property damage were reported.
- At 9:54 p.m., someone reported shots fired in the area of Girard Park. Police showed up to Legacy Apartments in response. No injuries or property damage were reported.

Feb. 14

- At 7:45 a.m., a simple burglary incident occurred. The items determined missing were a Scentsy mini fan diffuser, a 19" Dell monitor, and a Samsung phone charger and cable.
- At 9:22 a.m., someone reported criminal damage made to the exterior of a door in Bonin Hall. Two students were arrested then released until called for summoning.
- At 10:15 a.m., a housing employee reported a broken ping pong table in Bonin Hall. No arrests were made.
- At 4:48 p.m., someone reported a possible hazing incident. The dean on call, Dean of Greek Life and ULPD were informed. According to ULPD, the incident will be investigated further.

STORY CORRECTION

Last week, The Vermilion article "Ticketmaster fees for Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Baseball charge more than actual tickets" wrongly attributed a tweet by Coach Chris Ransonet, manager of Pilots Baseball. The error has been corrected on TheVermilion.net.

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Sports

Cajuns softball undefeated on opening week, gets five shutouts and a no-hitter

Isaac Henry
SPORTS WRITER

The Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Softball program put itself in the conversation for best team in the Sun Belt Conference early this season with an incredible first week and has more than earned its place on the national rankings.

Despite having the second fewest games and at-bats played, the Cajuns are leading the SBC in batting average with a .453, slugging percentage at .807 and on-base percentage at .506. The Cajuns' opponents' pitching has totaled an 11.56 ERA so far.

The Cajuns bullpen has been held to an even higher standard than the bats, throwing five shutouts to help generate a .4 ERA, leading the SBC, and serving up 56 strikeouts in 35 innings pitched for a 54% strikeout rate.

Combined excellence on offense and defense has created a beautiful +54 run differential for the Cajuns. On top of this, they're putting up some of the purest numbers possible.

The Cajuns started their campaign at home on Feb. 11 with a double-header against the University of Alabama at Birmingham Blazers. They both ended in shutouts. The first game went off without a hitch as All-Louisiana pitcher Kandra Lamb cruised to a totaled eight strikeouts. This led to a 2-0 victory after freshman outfielder Kramer Eschete's scoring double in the first inning.

The second game saw an embarrassing wealth of offense, with eight different Cajuns players generating a total 21 RBIs. An incredible 12 of them came off of five different home runs from: sophomore catcher and infielder Sophie Piskos, freshman first baseman and

outfielder Taylor Roman, junior pitcher and outfielder Karly Heath and freshman infielder Alexa Langiers.

This game ended with a monstrous-looking final score, 23-0, which is projected to be the most runs scored this season in any one game by a Sun Belt Conference team. Freshman pitcher Sam Landry started and is credited with the second win. Junior pitcher Meghan Schorman cleaned up both games with no batted balls through four innings and recorded a save in the second matchup.

The Cajuns handed out another pair of shutouts to the University of North Texas Mean Green and Texas Southern University Tigers with Landry and

Schorman recording wins. Again, nearly every bat made noise, with RBI's from 9 different players and four homers across both games.

Sunday at noon, the Cajuns faced the Tulsa Hurricane. Lamb stole the show this time with a beautiful ten strikeout no-hitter performance, ending the game in five innings. A whole article could be written about this game, as Lamb only threw 65 pitches to handily end 15 at-bats.

Their final game of the week came against the Nicholls State Colonels on Tuesday, Feb. 15. In the very first inning, the Cajuns allowed the first run of the season. The Cajuns began pouring on runs as usual, including a homer off of a

full count pitch by Langiers in the third inning. This put the game firmly out of reach, as the final score would reach 10-2. Landry took the mound again to record her second win.

Credit has to be given to the fielding in all of these games. Only one error throughout this much play shows that the discipline and energy of the team is at an all-time high.

This is a team capable of putting up SBC-leading offensive stats while walking straight through opponents on defense. Look for these Cajuns to upset a highly-ranked Alabama team come Thursday, Feb. 24.



Photo by Andre Broussard / The Vermilion

Junior pitcher Vanessa Foreman releases a pitch in the Ragin' Cajuns victory over Nicholls State Tuesday, Feb. 15.

Cajuns football prepared to kick off spring practice with new staff

Zachary Nagy
SPORTS EDITOR

As spring football inches closer for the Ragin' Cajuns, the season will be a lot different than previous years because of a myriad of position battles occurring and new staff to get everything together. With much of Louisiana's talent hitting the transfer portal or graduating, it's a new era for the Cajuns.

For the coaches, both coordinator positions will have their work cut out for them with Tim Leger taking over full offensive coordinator duties. Leger provides a mind that has been through the ups and downs of Louisiana football. This makes him a key piece to the success this team has had on that side of the football the last few seasons.

His recruiting genius and ability to make his players reach their maximum potential will be on full display this spring as he takes over for his first season as offensive coordinator.

On the defensive side of the ball, LaMar Morgan will be replacing Patrick Toney as the Cajuns' defensive coordinator. Morgan was a standout safety for the Cajuns from 2003-07 and has developed rich ties to Lafayette. Bringing Morgan on staff gives the Cajuns a talented coordinator with Southeastern Conference experience, being the Vanderbilt cornerbacks coach in 2021.

Morgan is set to have challenges this spring because they are losing key pieces in Mekhi Garner and Lorenzo McCaskill and much of his production has hit the road.

When it comes to position battles, one that many will have questions about is going to be the quarterback position. After having so much stability with that position for the last three years with Lafayette legend Levi Lewis, the page has been turned for a new starter.

Will it be Chandler Fields? A new signee from last season? Will Lance LeGendre, a Maryland transfer and former four-star recruit, get his shot? There will be much to evaluate during this spring.

For Fields, he played the role of QB2 for the Cajuns last season, getting a few snaps under his belt in blowout games, but no starts yet, as the stability of Lewis was ideal for Louisiana. Fields has shown tremendous poise when on the field and is certainly a locker room favorite, looking to elevate his status to QB1 during March.

Another position to watch will be the cornerback. With the return of Bralen Trahan, the Cajuns have their star corner, but there are still a few spots that need to be filled. This will be Morgan's first true challenge as he looks to keep the efficient defense Toney instilled over the last few seasons.

All in all, this spring is set to be a significant culture change. With new



Photo by Andre Broussard / The Vermilion

Louisiana Head Coach Michael Desormeaux meets with the media following his introductory press conference Dec. 7.

coaches and new starters, the Cajuns will keep the same game plan, but will have a myriad of new faces to lead the charge. It's a new era for Louisiana football and

with head coach Michael Desormeaux getting his shot to lead this team, our program is in good hands to stay at the top of the Sun Belt Conference.

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From walk-on to scholarship, how Kentrell Garnett bet on himself

Zachary Nagy
SPORTS EDITOR

The Ragin' Cajuns Men's Basketball squad hasn't quite had the year they expected to have at this point in the season. Bringing in numerous top tier transfers and returning much of their production, it's been a struggle. However, one bright spot for the Cajuns has been former walk-on point guard Kentrell Garnett.

Garnett, a Baton Rouge native, gave tremendous minutes as a freshman, with Head Coach Bobby Marlin elevating his status to starter this season. Being a walk-on player even when named a starter, Marlin and this program felt a change needed to occur, so they did just that.

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette put Garnett on scholarship, proving how valuable he is to the entire team. It's always a dream come true when a walk-on finally gets their shot, and Garnett is a textbook example of that.

Out of high school, Garnett flew under the radar, reeling in numerous offers from junior colleges and just one Division II offer from Dallas Baptist, but his goal was always to play Division I basketball.

Marlin had the chance to walk-on at a few different schools before ultimately choosing to take his talent to Lafayette. Though even Garnett may not have thought his success in the Cajundome would have come this quickly.

"I'm not sure if I expected it to happen as soon as it did," Garnett said in an interview with *The Daily Advertiser*, "but I always bet on myself. I knew what type of player I would be, and so I decided to take a chance and come



Photo by Malik Jones / The Vermilion

Guard Kentrell Garnett shakes defender with behind the back move in Saturday, Feb. 19 victory over Louisiana-Monroe.

here as a walk-on, just work hard and eventually play."

The Cajuns had a myriad of guards at their disposal, and Garnett was set to fight for his spot.

"It was a hard decision, and well-thought-out," he said to *The Daily Advertiser*. "I liked the coaching staff and I always wanted to come here out of high school. So, when they offered me the opportunity, and they said all I had to do was work hard to get the opportunity to play, that was the decision I made."

Now, Garnett is one of the most lethal shooters in the entire Sun Belt

Conference. With a quick release and the ability to shoot off the dribble, Garnett's mix of talent and basketball IQ has slowly formed the sophomore into quite the player for Coach Marlin.

This year, Garnett is averaging 7.4 points per game, fourth among UL scorers, and 24.6 minutes, which sits him at third-most for this unit.

Proving to be a key piece to this Louisiana team and making the most of his chances, Garnett is the epitome of a true walk-on story. Succeeding on both the court and in the classroom is why Coach Marlin made the decision to put him on scholarship.

"Coach Marlin said it had nothing to do with me making shots, or anything on the court," Garnett said to *The Daily Advertiser*. "But off the court, in the classroom, and being a good teammate. It was a big deal for me."

With a few games left, Garnett looks to take this team to a conference championship in order to punch their ticket to the NCAA Tournament. It's been a season to remember for Garnett, but the job isn't done yet for his Ragin' Cajuns squad.

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Cajuns baseball splits first two games with UC Irvine on opening weekend

Isaac Henry
SPORTS WRITER

The Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Baseball team began their season Friday, Feb. 18 with their first-ever game against the University of California Irvine Anteaters, who entered the weekend in the nation's top 20 on D1Baseball.com's poll.



Photo by Andre Broussard / The Vermilion

Pitcher Jacob Schultz (15) throws a pitch as Louisiana takes on UC Irvine Saturday, Feb. 19, 2022.

Expectations were high, and over 4,300 fans were in attendance to see the hopeful upset.

Both teams opened scoring in the second inning. An Anteaters home run from graduate infielder Taishi Nakawake put up two runs, and the Cajuns answered right back with a homer of their own from senior infielder

Jon Brandon to tie the game at 2-2. Senior outfielder Connor Kimple and sophomore outfielder Carson Roccaforte took the lead for the Cajuns in the third inning with a pair of solo home runs.

Cajuns' senior pitcher Brandon Talley got stuck in a bind in the fifth inning, with the field giving up an error on a three-RBI double. The Anteaters added an RBI single to take the lead for good, as the game would end with no more Cajuns runs, and a final score of 4-7.

The Cajuns came out swinging for the next game, scoring off Kimple's two-RBI single and a sac fly from Roccaforte in the first inning to run out to a 3-1 lead. The Anteaters would fight back in the fifth again, taking a one-run lead back by scoring off redshirt sophomore outfielder Nathan Church's infield single and a two-RBI shot to midfield from graduate infielder Jacob Castro.

The Cajuns offense answered right back, with an infield single RBI from junior fielder Tyler Robertson and another homer from Kimple. Junior outfielder Max Marusak's quick baserunning in the seventh helped to score during a double play. The game ended two innings later with no more runs, and a final score of 7-4.

Senior pitcher Jacob Schultz gets the win for this one, but the whole pitching crew had a great hard-fought game.

Peyton Harvard put in four innings of one-run work midway through, and Dylan Theut recorded a tough save with four strikeouts and 56 pitches thrown in 2.1 innings.

For the tie-breaker game on Sunday, the Cajuns opened scoring in the second with yet another Kimple home run. Senior infielder Jonathan Brandon also recorded an RBI single off a two-strike count. The Anteaters rallied to take the lead in the next inning with a Church RBI single and a two-RBI shot off a full count from sophomore catcher Thomas McCaffrey. Then, with the game waning in the eighth, Roccaforte took the lead back with a two-RBI shot to right field, and junior infielder CJ Willis provided the insurance run with a drive to center field. The pitching was great again, with sophomore Bo Bonds' no hits and five strikeouts in nine at-bats more than earning the win.

This start to the season served as an interesting parallel to last season's start in 2021. The Cajuns opened with a road series against Tulane, losing the first game and winning the second and third. Hopefully, the parallels with last season will end there and the Cajuns will climb their schedule to the top of the Sun Belt Conference.

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Difficulty with student-professor communication in the pandemic

Amelia Jennings
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Over the last few semesters, getting professors to respond to emails, or even teaching their class, is nigh impossible sometimes.

Students should not have to pay

thousands of dollars to read a PowerPoint, particularly if the PowerPoint is a copy-and-pasted version of the textbook.

This has happened to me more than once since COVID-19 started and can be frustrating.

The other large problem that students face is a lack of communication either through poorly written emails or no

emails at all.

One unedited email response from my communication professor with regards to how the PowerPoint presentation should be formatted looks like this:

"First and foremost I hope you get better soon. Your toic is not too trivial at all. You can be an expert but alao use references. PPT should be an outline but word for word your speech -- a summary. Include some images too."

I cannot stress enough that I did not make any changes for this piece.

Another student, René Champagne, a senior French major, has been dealing with this issue as well.

He said that for his upper level French class, he struggled with getting responses from the professor, and they were unclear with regards to the final project.

Champagne said that the instructions could only be found at the bottom of the syllabus and were not explained until the end of the semester.

This was also a problem because the project was due at the end of the semester.

"It was during finals week so you have all these other tests and all these other projects that you are trying to finish," Champagne said.

He also filed a complaint with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette last semester, but as of Feb. 20, he does not know if it had any effect, as the professor is still teaching.

If any student would like to submit a complaint to the university, students may call the Dean of Students.

According to the UL Lafayette student handbook, "Any student who wants to report a problem of any nature and/or file a complaint may bring the matter to the attention of the Dean of Students Office in Student Union, Room 169, or call our office at 482-6276."

This is not to say that all professors during this pandemic have been terrible. Two that come to mind are Josh Capps, an English professor who recorded all of his lectures on YouTube and responded to any questions promptly.

Fabrice Leroy, Ph.D. and a professor of French, was also quick to respond to emails, and met with us through Zoom at the scheduled class time.

It is unfortunate that a few bad eggs make students' experiences even more difficult, when the excellence of other professors should be the focus.



Graphic by Cole Broussard

SATIRE

Baseball breaks window of Vermilion office following headline controversy

Cole Broussard
DESIGN MANAGER

SATIRE — Staff writers and editors alike were shaken after a baseball was shot through the window of Guillory Hall on Sunday.

Witnesses were unable to identify the attacker beyond the fact that they were wearing a baseball uniform. When asked by campus police whether or not the attacker was a Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns baseball player, one witness said "That honestly sounds like a mouthful, so I'm not quite sure."

Regardless of team, The Vermilion is determined to track down whoever committed this heinous act. Currently, our only lead lies in the murder weapon left at the scene of the crime. The baseball is a standard regulation Louisiana-branded baseball. A UL baseball, if you will.

The Louisiana baseball is the classic white with red stitching, and appears to be brand-new aside from the word "RATIO," written in all caps with a permanent marker.

The Louisiana baseball broke the front window of Guillory Hall at approximately 5 p.m. on Sunday. It carved a clean hole through the glass, indicating that the

baddie at bat had one hell of a swing. Some witnesses corroborate this theory, saying they heard a loud crack in the Union Plaza just before the glass shattered.

While it's unclear as to who might have committed this crime, the motive is easy to guess. Last week, Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Baseball fans took to social media to inform The Vermilion that the headline "Ticketmaster fees for UL Lafayette Baseball charge more than actual tickets" included incorrect branding. The headline has since been corrected.

One tweet from user

@X_XxKrazyKajunFamsquadX_X asked, "PLEASE brand the brand's branding correctly !!! i know i'm not even paid by this organization and i'm literally subscribing to a us v. them mentality by choice, but i NEED the validation of the school that i went into debt for!!!"

This controversy could explain why someone would want to shoot a UL baseball through The Vermilion's window. A Louisiana baseball sends the perfect message, that lovers of Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Baseball will no longer tolerate years of incorrect branding from a lowly

student newspaper.

And we are listening. As a beacon of journalism throughout the south, The Vermilion is always in pursuit of truth and accuracy in its reporting. That's why this baseball, the UL Baseball, is being taken so seriously. We absolutely deserve to be ridiculed on social media, and this writer is looking forward to reading more of your tweets in the future.

Maybe, if we could all put down the bats and put down the keyboards, we'd be able to form a relationship built on our shared love of baseball and sports in general.

Isaac Henry, the sports writer who wrote the Ticketmaster story, is a literal angel. You'll never find a more personable, dedicated staff writer and sports fan. Does he deserve to have baseballs shot at his head? Do any of us?

Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Athletics have had their ups and downs over the years, just like The Vermilion. And while we're no closer to solving the mysterious case of the UL Baseball, one thing is certain: The Vermilion will continue to report on the sports you love and the teams you're passionate about, incorrect headlines or not.



Graphic by Cole Broussard

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Not all is what it appears in indie rock band Joywave's "Cleanse"

Marie Ducote
ALLONS WRITER

In my last album review, I wrote about my dissatisfaction with the most recent Wombats album, "Fix Yourself, Not the World." Well, I am back again with another review. This time, with something I enjoyed.

Joywave, in recent years, has become one of my favorite alternative bands releasing music. All of their albums have been solid pieces of work. Nothing has changed with this new album, "Cleanse."

A feeling of high energy is constant throughout the album. Each song on the album seems to include something refreshingly unique. The overarching themes in "Cleanse" seem to be about our relationship to fame, people and technology.

The appropriately titled "Pray For The Reboot" opens the album. The vocals are soft and croon over lyrics pondering if, after everything the world has been through, can we start over? Or are we too late for a "reboot?" Towards the song's end, everything gets loud, and the softness is interrupted by a guitar solo. This is our first hint of introspection and wondering if everything will be okay in the long run.

Some of my top Joywave songs have

been the ones where they highlight their dry sense of humor. This is in no short supply in "Buy American." The playful sound of the song is juxtaposed with the largely satirical lyrics. I had to listen to it a few times to get the full scope of what was being said. "Buy American" heavily focuses on American consumerism and our need to strive for perfection. The lyrics poke fun at the popular phrase, "Live, Laugh, Love," by saying "Don't care, buy American/Think less if, it hurts more baby/Live, laugh, like I always say/When it breaks, we'll get the whole thing replaced." Those words show that only embracing the good, easy parts of life and pushing out the bad parts does not mean your life will be happy. You need to embrace the good and the bad parts of everything. Also, material objects will not fix our problems.

The album's message is evident throughout, and the sound is crisp. Mixing an electronic sound with guitar and drums makes it something exciting to listen to.

"After Coffee" highlights the mundane aspects of life. The track begins with the narrator telling us about his morning, "This morning was lovely, I woke up in my bed again/I poured the granola, I got butter and bread." This is one of the most somber songs, and you can feel the

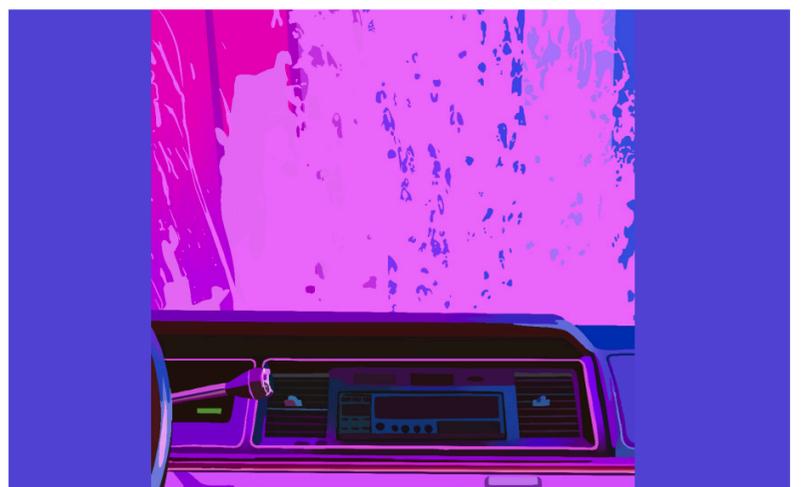
narrator's anxiety as he goes through his day. He's questioning if he should leave everything behind and start a new life. "After coffee, sitting alone in thought/Wondering if I should give it up/Move away and find a little spot on the coast/No reception and my secret goes unknown."

Many of us share a feeling of existential dread about the future. Joywave effectively expresses these feelings. The lush sound contrasted with the sardonic lyrics.

"The Inversion" is a totally unexpected

song, a complete flip from the softness of what came before in "Goodbye Tommy." Everything is turned up to maximum volume here; it's angry and brash. The words are dripping with venom, and it's an emotional gut-punch from start to finish. The instruments clash with each other making it one of my favorite songs.

"Cleanse" takes the listener on an emotional trip and it's something I can't wait to relisten to. I highly recommend listening to it from start to finish.



Graphic by Meg Norwood

SOUNDING OFF

“How do you feel about the recent shooting on campus?”



Rose Attyso
SOCIOLOGY JUNIOR

“I knew that they happened and I was in the library when the shooting on Hebrard occurred, I was a bit nervous and frightened.”



Nicholas Hannan
ACCOUNTING FRESHMAN

“I feel like it’s something that shouldn’t be happening.”



Nathan Myers
COMPUTER SCIENCE FRESHMAN

“I wasn’t aware of the shootings on campus.”



Jai’rus Martian
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SENIOR

“I was at the park during the shooting at Girard. I feel as though they should increase campus awareness of things that occur on campus.”



Hunter Williams
KINESIOLOGY FRESHMAN

“I still feel pretty safe on campus, nothing major to me.”



Haytham Alrashidi
COMPUTER SCIENCE FRESHMAN

“I was so surprised and nervous when that occurred. UL is pretty quiet so I was shocked. I pretty much stayed in my dorm in Baker after I heard the shooting.”

Sounding Off is a section devoted to the voice of students. Views expressed in Sounding Off do not reflect those of UL Lafayette administrators, faculty, staff or other students.

Photos and interviews by Malik Jones.

A quest for meaning in the miserable, circular world of Dark Souls

Adhamm Safford
ALLONS EDITOR

With Elden Ring on the horizon, it might be time to revisit the series that put developer From Software on the map, and one of the most intriguing video game worlds ever created.

The Dark Souls trilogy is infamous for its difficulty and for the amount of people who compare games that are only vaguely similar to it. But beneath the surface level, beyond all the knights and monsters that kill you in two hits, is a story that only works in a game that demands you try over and over again.

The story of Dark Souls is as inaccessible as the game itself. Very little of the story is given to you upfront, most of it is hidden in item descriptions, the environment and pieces of missable character dialogue.

The games take place in a dark fantasy world that is constantly going through cycles. Humanity is afflicted with the “Curse of Undeath,” which forces them to come back to life every time they die, but they lose their mind more with each death. The world itself is threatened by an encroaching darkness, held back only by the First Flame, lit by the god Gwyn, the Lord of Light.

The plot of each of these games revolves around this conundrum: the First Flame needs to stay lit to prolong the Age of Fire. This is where things are still pretty bad, but at least there’s light, but whenever it inevitably dies out, the Age of Dark begins until the Flame is lit again. That is, in essence, the state of the world. Humanity is cursed, and doomed to endlessly repeat the cycle of fire and dark. Each game in the series involves you fighting through an unforgiving world to reach a point where you can sacrifice yourself to prolong the Flame, or let it die out.

The correlation of good and evil to light and dark seems obvious, but this too is twisted. The story and meaning behind everything is left up to interpretation, but one character in the series has perhaps one of the most compelling takes.

Aldia is a man turned into some horrific monstrosity, who is obsessed with “the first sin.” It’s in the second game that he appears sporadically to speak to you, and he eventually shares what he thinks this sin is in one of my favorite lines of dialogue: “Once, the Lord of Light banished Dark, and all that stemmed from



Graphic by Julia McDow

humanity, and men assumed a fleeting form. These are the roots of our world. Men are props on the stage of life, and no matter how tender, how exquisite, a lie will remain a lie.”

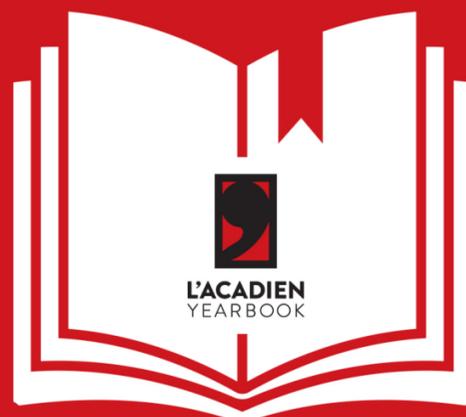
Most characters in the series are indifferent or just downright depressed by the state of the world, with little energy in their voice. But this piece of dialogue breaks that. Aldia is furious about Gwyn’s lighting of the First Flame, the first sin. Gwyn cursed humanity and began the endless cycle that the world has become a prisoner to, all the while preaching that the Flame must be preserved.

The suffering of being trapped in a cycle is told through gameplay: you’re made to die over and over, having to repeat the same section multiple times just to get through it. The question I think the Dark Souls trilogy asks is this: is it all worth it? There’s nothing you can do in any of the games to truly end the cycle. Even in the final game, you can choose to watch the First Flame fade from the world, but a character remarks that the embers will still one day return.

The world has been put in a sorry state by powers completely out of your control. Anything you do is ultimately meaningless, but is that really so bad? There’s still a deep sense of satisfaction that comes from overcoming the series’ obstacles. As long as you’re enjoying yourself, and as long as you’re doing something that makes you happy, who cares if it’s meaningless?

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STUDENT ORGS AND GREEKS



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