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Employees call for accountability

Andrew Courville, Joann Seow
NEWS WRITER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Interviews with faculty and staff reflect the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's efforts to communicate its budget deficit recovery. The opinions of interviewees do not reflect those of the University or other employees.

Business administration and management professor Keith Credo is the vice president of the University's chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). He says it strives for "greater institutional transparency, more meaningful shared governance, academic freedom and campus expression protections."

Since Dr. Ramesh Kolluru was appointed University president on Feb. 26, new tensions with employees have surfaced. AAUP Chapter President Beth Stauffer, a biology professor, provided a timeline.

This year's State of the University address on Aug. 19 was "the first year where there was no opportunity to ask questions," according to Stauffer. The president outlined reaching the institution's long-term strategy, "Louisiana Vision 2035," which "sets ambitious goals for enrollment, research, doctoral education and philanthropy."

The AAUP sent an email to the Office of the President on Aug. 26 with 11 unanswered questions, including, "What is our current financial situation?... How will we protect our R1 status?... How long will faculty have to do more with less?"

The Office of the President responded with an email to all faculty and staff on Sept. 10 to address concerns. The AAUP found that only two questions were directly answered. On Oct. 9, they posted a response on the chapter's Facebook page detailing, "information that conflicts with the president's message."

The University President hosted a town hall on Oct. 16 with more specific details for achieving "Louisiana Vision 2035." In the 2025-26 fiscal year (FY), the cumulative unrestricted deficit was reduced from $37.7 million to $19.9 million. Although Kolluru could eliminate the deficit quickly with budget cuts, "that would be painful… there's not much more to be cut," Kolluru said. The current plan aims to resolve the remaining deficit by the end of the 2028-29 FY.

There is no available, simplified interpretation of the 91-page 2026-27 FY budget report. Accounting professor Cheryl Metrejean said, "These budget reports are not really the easiest thing for a lot of people to read." The University, being state-funded, is restricted in how funding and revenue are reallocated. For example, she continued, "If a donor gives money for a certain thing, the University cannot spend it on anything else."

Employee demands for accountability are, seemingly, succeeding. The administration cancelled the transition from a monthly to biweekly pay schedule for employees. Kolluru admitted at the town hall, "For all the pain and angst that this has caused, I stand in front of you with an apology." The Louisiana Legislative Auditor found in its June 10 report that the institution fixed some problems, although others remain. A March 16 internal audit on the LaCarte Card Program recognized a lack of controls, falsified documentation of expenses and non-approved tax-exempt purchases.

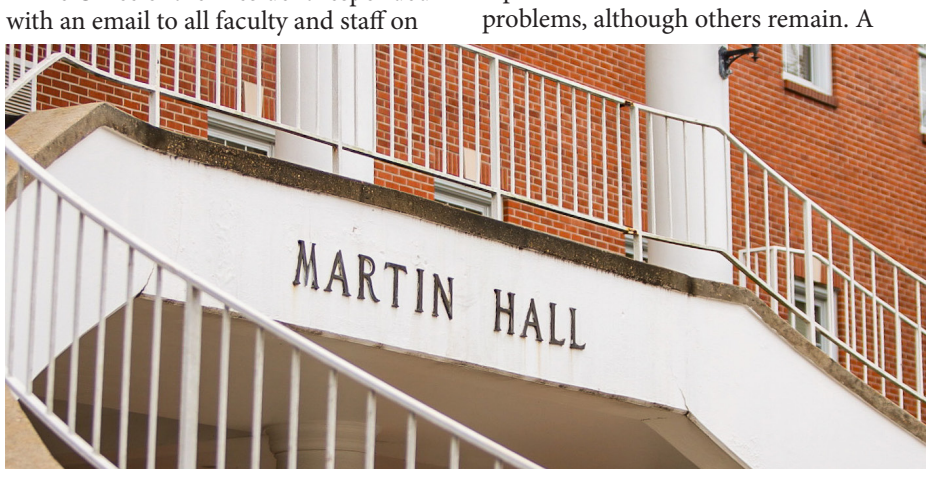


Photo by Alyus Dick

Issues and anxiety persist about faculty pay, travel and research funding, access to course fees and supporting graduate students, all of which are expected of a Carnegie Research 1 (R1) institution.

These concerns were voiced by Stauffer and Credo, along with Interim Director of the School of Dance and Theatre Sara Birk, architecture professor Kiwana McClung, Honors Program Director Emily Sandoz and Architecture and Design Graduate Coordinator Robert McKinney.

Kevin Guillory is the president-elect of the newly founded Staff Council, representing staff interests. In response to recent changes, Guillory said it's "important that staff continue to feel supported, valued and connected to the institution." Guillory is also the Operations and Community Engagement Coordinator for the Louisiana Entrepreneurship & Economic Development Center.

Leah Orr, Faculty Senate president and English department head. She remarked on concerns about whether "student course fees would be made available for the purposes that they had been allocated… some people wanted to know if that included distance learning funds, and we don't yet have access to those funds." A faculty salary study conducted earlier this year compares the University to other institutions in the South. The resulting $500,000 cost-of-living salary increase for classified employees is a starting point.

Credo and Stauffer clarified that this "heartening" investment only applies to civil servants. Credo said, "The vast majority of faculty are making less after adjusting for inflation since hiring."

AAUP Treasurer and English professor Maria Seger said, "It's not possible to be taken seriously as a research institution if you cannot have robust library research resources, funding for research travel, competitive research fellowships, releases from summer teaching."

Seger continued, "The University is funding faculty research travel at $50,000 for the entire university… we're looking at about $4,000 of conference spending a year per faculty member. We have, I think, 52 faculty members in my department. We're already well above that $50,000 cap."

University Librarian Brian Doherty said, "We've been sending out lists of journals that we need to cut," because the Library division had to cut $600,000 from the materials budget. Doherty also identified a fundamental lack of interdepartmental collaboration because "You can't afford to lose anything that you already have, and so if you're going to have a project that you're doing with another department, that brings up 'Well, what do I have to share, and what am I going to get back, and can I even do this?'" Doherty directly called for a shift in the University's culture.

Director of Choral Activities William Plummer clarified that the majority of funding comes from external donors. To recruit new students, the School of Music must "rely on scholarships, and those scholarships were directly frozen. Student fee accounts were frozen," which hinders the ability to pay for performance uniforms, instruments, licensing fees and hire collaborators.

The Ernest J. Gaines Center is focused on spreading the work of Ernest J. Gaines, a world-renowned writer and UL Lafayette alumnus.

According to Cheylon Woods, "Gaines' work was translated into 14 different languages… part of my job here is working with scholars all over the world who are interested in the thematic connections they see in his work in their day-to-day lives."

Yet, as the center's only employee since the assistant director was laid off during last year's staff consolidations, she now struggles to meet the demands of the center's international mission.

Woods expressed that, going forward, "I wish things were not as siloed here because it makes it very difficult to have collective governance, and it's affecting morale… We're here because we love the students, we love our colleagues, and we genuinely love our work." The University is clearly in a difficult position. It's important to balance patience with pressure.

University enters deal with SpaceX

Joann Seow
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

At their Oct. 22 board meeting, the University of Louisiana System approved the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's request to enter a lease with Ragin' Cajun Facilities, Inc. (RCFI), for the Peter M. John and David M. John Wildlife and Coastal Preservation Center on Pecan Island. This also approved a subsequent sublease between RCFI and Space Exploration Technologies Corp, also known as SpaceX.

What used to be the old Pecan Island School was turned into the Pecan Island School Lodge by brothers Peter M. John and David M. John, following Hurricane Rita in September 2005, which forced the school to close its doors. The brothers renovated the school while preserving most of its history, and the building has become a community space since its reopening in 2016.

In September 2025, the brothers donated the $1.4 million, 39,000-square-foot facility to UL Lafayette with the hopes to return it to a place of learning, according to University news. The renaming to Peter M. John and David M. John Wildlife and Coastal Preservation Center was approved by the UL System to honor the donation.

Fast forward a year later, the facility on Pecan Island has been sitting untouched, according to Scott Hebert, director of facility management and authorized official RCFI representative.

That will no longer be the case, with SpaceX making a move to utilize the facility for their spaceport project on the island.



Photo provided by Brooke Broussard
The old Pecan Island School

Hebert said, "The University is in a financial crunch, so it only makes sense to take an asset that, quite honestly, we're not utilizing at the moment, and we're having to spend, you know, money to keep the utilities on and upkeep the place."

"It only makes sense to offload that property and to sell it to an entity like SpaceX," he continued.

According to Hebert, the University is looking to eventually sell the property to SpaceX. Meanwhile, they entered into a lease for the property with RCFI, with a rent of a dollar per year, who is then subleasing it to SpaceX.

Explaining the function of RCFI, Hebert said that it is a private nonprofit entity affiliated with UL Lafayette, structured to work hand-in-hand with the University via leases and leasebacks to construct and manage facility improvements. Projects on campus that were done under RCFI include The Heritage Apartments, Legacy Park Apartments, Student Union, the dormitories and parking towers.

Hebert said, "In essence, RCFI can act as a bonding agency for the University on projects where they can go and secure bonds and fundraise for those type of projects, whereas the University has to rely on capital outlay funding to move those projects around."

Going through an entity like RCFI allows the deal with SpaceX to be expedited, compared to going through standard university procedures. Hebert said, "It's more or less… a mechanism or a tool that the University has to be able to enact a lease structure much quicker than going through normal state processes."

Hebert clarified components of the lease agreement between UL Lafayette and RCFI brought up among community concerns, starting off with "Exhibit A," which is stated under "Recitals" to describe improvements to the property, yet it is blank. Hebert said that this is because "Exhibit A" does not apply to RCFI and there were no listed improvements to be made.

Next, the dollar lease. Under "Rent and Consideration," the lease agreement stated, "RCFI shall pay an annual rent of One Dollar ($1.00), due on the Effective Date and each anniversary thereafter, and other valuable consideration."

Hebert said, "The University as a state entity cannot lease any property without getting some monetary gain." As RCFI is a nonprofit, affiliated state entity, paying a rent of a dollar a year is simply to meet this legal requirement. This then allows RCFI to manage the property on the University's behalf, in this case, to sublease it to SpaceX.

So, how exactly would the University financially gain from these lease and sublease agreements? According to Hebert, the University benefits from the improvements that SpaceX intends to make to the property. While SpaceX makes those improvements at no cost from the University or the state, the value of the property, still owned by UL Lafayette, thereby increases. This value of the property eventually plays a big factor in the negotiations of a final sale.

Now that SpaceX has the ability to enter the property, they will be conducting site assessments and proceeding with their necessary repairs, with RCFI's oversight. In the meantime, negotiations will be made between SpaceX and respective state leaders working with leaders of the UL System Board of Supervisors and the Board of Regents, on behalf of the University.

At the time of this story, what SpaceX intends to do with the property remains uncertain.

News

The new modern languages major

Gabrielle Mouton
NEWS WRITER

The Department of Modern Languages has begun courses for their new world intercultural studies major this semester. After previously only having two specifications of French and Spanish, this new major opens up many new opportunities for students to study a variety of disciplines with an international approach.

Informally referred to as WICS, the program is being offered as a way to give students a chance to learn intercultural relations and gives them a multi-faceted experience of working with not just the modern languages department, but across any department they see fit.

Dr. Nathan Rabalais, head of the department and one of the coordinators, shared that conversations about beginning this program started in 2023, and has finally been structured into reality. "I think it's been needed for a while," he said. The program is a hybrid and has its core courses while also maintaining flexibility for students to mesh any classes they see fit. With this kind of degree or minor, there's possibilities for career paths including international relations, foreign service and tourism and hospitality. But any career can have ties to intercultural relations.

Rabalais sees the value of this program in how flexible it is comparatively to the other majors offered within modern languages. "It's just how customizable it is," he said. "It prevents some students from defaulting into something they didn't really want to do." He also notes that it is not strongly literature based, as the other two majors offered are, and gives more of a professional and business approach.

Students can take the core courses alongside electives and then in tandem, choose classes they would like to take with it. "It's so interdisciplinary and that's kind of the interesting part of it," Rabalais stated.

Caroline Huey, an associate professor for Germanic studies in the modern languages department, currently teaches the foundational courses for the WICS program. "World Intercultural Studies. Every single major has something to do with that," she said. She was asked to take part in teaching some of the courses due to her background in cultural studies.

She noted the importance of the subjects being taught in these foundational classes, such as world history, geography and arts. She found that these classes are great for international students, who are already somewhat versed in intercultural relations, and students from the United States.

What Rabalais and the department hopes that students take away from this new program is what a significant asset it is; whether you study it as a major or just as an elective class. "Employers are looking for candidates who are capable of communicating across culture, across language, that can adapt to different language barriers or cultural nuances," Rabalais said.

Students who are also interested in this program but do not want to go abroad may find their career path right here in South Louisiana, where Rabalais believes there is a need for more people with intercultural skills in industries like tourism and government. "I see WICS as at least one step in kind of filling that gap," he said.

Huey shared that she wants this to be recognized as necessary. "There are lots of really good majors at UL," she said. "But something that specifically just looks at how the world is interconnected is really something everybody needs right now."

For the future, Rabalais hopes to create more WICS courses and broaden the collaborations with other departments. "It's just more opportunities to learn from each other and to let students explore more, and not be confined," he said.

Food Review

Tea time at Sojourn Tea & Goods

Isabelle Brumley
BEAUCOUP EDITOR

Located at 118 W. Vermilion St., Sojourn Tea & Goods is a tea house and commercial business in Downtown Lafayette that specializes in loose-leaf teas sourced from around the world, along with locally sourced pastries and artwork. The shop offers a different experience from a traditional coffee shop, inviting customers to wind down and enjoy tea while exploring its collection of artisan goods.

This local shop was opened in April 2026 by Julia Bonaventure, a Lafayette native. While traveling the world, she explored different tea cultures; since then, she has wanted to create a place where the community can gather and try new tea flavors. Along with its astounding tea collection, the shop is filled with artwork and goods from local artists and sellers, including paintings, handcrafted ceramics, antique teaware, pastries and snacks.

The atmosphere of this local business was probably one of the most relaxing ones I have been to.

As you walk in, you are met with a beautiful arrangement of artwork on the walls and on easels, along with cabinets full of ceramics. The shop has warm wood tones, along with vintage rugs and comfy furniture. Along the wall, approximately 40 kinds of tea is showcased from regions such as China, Taiwan, Japan, India, Ecuador, Brazil and more.

Photo by Ellie Schmidt
Caption

Photo by Ellie Schmidt
Caption

My colleague and I had the pleasure of visiting this small shop on Wednesday, Oct. 28. When we arrived, an employee greeted us and showed us the menu and the different types of tea.

Their pastry menu features a wide selection of locally baked treats from The Rolling Pin LLC, including scones, macarons and crème brûlée. One scone particularly caught our eye, so we ordered it: the cheddar and chive scone. We also decided to get two macarons and pistachio crème brûlée.

When we looked at the drink menu, we saw one thing we weren't familiar with, so we asked the employee about it. The Gongfu Tray is a traditional Chinese method that is sometimes referred to as a ceremony or a style of brewing or serving tea. Customers prepare a loose-leaf tea of their choosing through repeated infusions with hot water. Both my colleague and I were curious to see the process, so we tried it.

I have to say, with so many teas, I somehow completely forgot which one we chose, but I do know it was some of the best hot tea I have ever had. We took little sips of tea in these cute cups that made me feel so fancy.

Overall, I had a pleasant experience at Sojourn. If you would like to visit, their updated hours are: Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. They are closed on Monday and Tuesday.

Weather

Thursday 11/5	Friday 11/6	Saturday 11/7	Sunday 11/8	Monday 11/9	Tuesday 11/10	Wednesday 11/11
High: 78°F Low: 57°F	High: 79°F Low: 56°F	High: 77°F Low: 53°F	High: 74°F Low: 47°F	High: 71°F Low: 45°F	High: 72°F Low: 48°F	High:73°F Low: 53°F

Isabelle Brumley
BEAUCOUP EDITOR

- The Atlantic hurricane season is entering its final month with no active tropical cyclones in the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea or the Gulf, according to the National Hurricane Center. The season has been relatively quiet compared with historical averages.

Police Reports

Compiled by Caitlyn Comeaux

Oct. 31

- At 10:05 a.m. a caller advised officers of an individual that returned to the Hilliard Art Museum after officers had previously told them to leave. Officers dispatched and the subject left the area without incident. No arrests were made.

Oct. 30

- At 1:04 p.m., officers were dispatched in reference to a home invasion at the Legacy Park Apartments. Property damage was reported and an arrest was made.
- At 8:13 a.m., a caller reported to officers that their vehicle was hit by another vehicle while parked at Bourgeois Hall. It was later determined that it did not occur at Bourgeois Hall, but at the Taft Parking Garage. The hit was between a 2013 white Cadillac Escalade and a 2018 white Ford F-150. No arrests were made.

Oct. 27

- At 5:03 p.m., a caller advised officers of a suspected drug law violation near the Legacy Park Apartments. Officers responded. No arrests were made.
- At 12:00 p.m., an officer spoke with a student about harassment at the Edith Garland Dupré Library. A referral was sent to the Dean of Students office and the Title IX office.
- At 10:57 a.m., an officer dispatched to the Girard Park Circle Parking Tower in reference to a hit-and-run crash between a 2024 grey Toyota RAV4 and a 2010 silver Lexus.

Oct. 26

- At 11:36 a.m., officers received a report that a grey electric scooter was stolen last Tuesday, Oct. 20, at around 2 p.m. from the Edith Garland Dupré Library bike rack.
- At 10:17 a.m., officers received a report that an unsecured Segway E2 electric scooter was stolen from outside of Griffin Hall.

Oct. 22

- At 11:12 a.m., officers were dispatched to the Edith Garland Dupré Library in reference to suspicious activity involving metal cutting shears. No arrests were made.

WHERE'S ALLAN?



I voted on Tuesday at the Union in this very room. The midterms are important and you should vote too! Where am I?

Win a free sandwich from Roly Poly

The first UL student to recognize where The Vermilion's mascot, Allan the Alligator, was photographed on campus, and email the correct location of Allan to **TheVermilion@louisiana.edu** will receive the prize. The Vermilion will continue this contest each week until the end of the semester. Participants cannot win more than once a semester, and must be attentive to their emails.



PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER AFTER READING!

Sports

Following up: How has this fall season been for Cajuns sports?

Alyus Dick
PHOTOGRAPHY COORDINATOR

With the season for the majority of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's fall sports coming to an end, it's about time to play a little game of check up on Ragin' Cajuns athletics.

Starting with football, the Cajuns are one win away from becoming Bowl eligible. With a current record of 5-3, the Cajuns have a chance to finish the regular season with up to nine wins. This comes after a 2025 record of 6-7 where the Cajuns had to claw back after starting 2-6. However, the Cajuns are aiming for more than just a Bowl appearance this season. The ultimate goal is the Sun Belt Conference (SBC) Championship.

As of writing this, a conference championship appearance seems unlikely. The Cajuns are currently 2-2 in conference play and tied for second place in the SBC West. Leading the charge right now in the western division is the Louisiana Tech Bulldogs, who came out victorious against the Cajuns earlier this season.

A conference championship game for the Cajuns would require LA Tech losing the rest of their conference games and the Cajuns winning out.

The key to this year's team has been their strong defense, allowing only 21 points per game on the year so far. They've held four teams to 14 or less points and have only allowed three opponents to score more than 30 points, one of those opponents being the then No. 14 USC Trojans. The Cajuns' standout player far-and-away has been sophomore cornerback Brent Gordon Jr., who's currently a semifinalist for the Paycom Jim Thorpe Award.

As for the soccer team, the Cajuns are having a historic year for the program. The Cajuns currently hold a record of 11-5-3 overall and 5-3-2 in conference play. They've had several strong wins throughout the year, including a 3-2 win over the then No. 15 Texas State Bobcats.

The team is currently led by sophomore midfielder Miku Kurihara and Redshirt-sophomore forward Carson Glenn. Kurihara and Glenn have placed themselves as two of the conference's top goal scorers. They are second and third respectively in the SBC for goals scored this season, with Kurihara's 12 goals and Glenn's 11. Louisiana is currently tied for fourth place in the SBC, looking to make noise in the conference tournament.

Moving on to volleyball, it hasn't entirely been the season the team anticipated. The Cajuns volleyball team is currently 12-13 overall and 7-5 in conference play. They have two more series before moving on to the SBC Championship tournament. One of their key players has been junior opposite hitter Sarah Schnell. Schnell recently posted a career-high 22 kills in a win against the Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles on Oct. 31.

Across the three sports mentioned, the common strength they all share is the ability to protect their home turf. In home games this season, the soccer program has a record of 6-2-1. Volleyball currently holds a 7-5 record at home, while football remains undefeated at home with a 4-0 record.

Men's and women's basketball are officially kicking off their seasons respectively. For the men's basketball program, Head Coach Quannas White plans to build off of his first season coaching with an improved roster. The program had an 11-22 record last season, but started picking things up towards the tail end of the season.

With returning key players like forward Todd Jones Jr. and guard Jamyron Keller, and new additions like freshman forward Tyshawn Duncan, the Cajuns are on a mission to make some noise this season.

For the women's basketball program, the main goal this season should be becoming competitive. The Lady Cajuns only won five games the season prior, and only two in conference play. They won their last exhibition game against the Mississippi Christian Choctaws, but actual performance left a lot to be desired.

The Cajuns held their opponents to only nine points the entire first half, leading 39-9. However, the Cajuns allowed 54 second-half points for the final score to be 75-63. One of the weaknesses last season for the Lady Cajuns was the loss of energy after halftime. If this issue persists throughout the regular season, the team may be looking at a similar record to their 2025-26 outing.

The Cajuns women's team starts their season off against the Xavier University of Louisiana Gold Nuggets on Nov. 3. The Cajuns men's team's first game sees them take on the Akron Zips Nov. 2.





Photos by Alyus Dick

Miku Kurihara (10) canvassing the field during Pink Out Game against the Louisiana Tech Bulldogs Oct. 25 (left). Lindsey Henry (4) & Sarah Schnell (21) blocks a hit attempt from the Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles Oct. 31 (right).

Allons

How One Direction changed the way people now view boybands

Maggie Jordan
ALLONS WRITER

July 23, 2010, marked a momentous day in history for pop music fans. One Direction, often shortened to 1D, was formed, composed of five boys who had auditioned as solos on "The X Factor." The band went on to release five studio albums, travel 35 countries across four world tours and achieved much more throughout the five years they were together. After announcing an indefinite hiatus, the five members went on to have successful solo careers. So, why was One Direction different from other boy bands?

Before One Direction rose to fame, boy bands like NSYNC and the Backstreet Boys had already established the formula for a successful boy band. These groups often featured coordinated outfits, synchronized dancing and distinct roles that allowed fans something to identify each member with. While each member had individual appeal, their music and performances presented them as parts of a larger act.

Early in their career, One Direction did behave like previous boy bands. They often wore coordinated outfits, had synchronized choreography and each band member had their own distinct personality. The music they produced fell under the pop genre and was often about romance. However, what set One Direction apart wasn't necessarily how they started, but how they evolved into the band many still know them as today.

One Direction became one of the defining boy bands of the 2010s. Instead of centering their career around their music, One Direction focused on their personality, humor, authenticity and direct fan engagement. The members were often perceived as funny, relatable, seemingly ordinary guys. Because of that familiarity that fans built, the band's fame benefitted.

While One Direction's individualism allowed them to connect with their fans and build on their fame, social media was also a big part of their career. Instagram launched Oct. 6, 2010, just months after One Direction was formed. They were pretty much the first internet boy band that fans all over the world had direct access to. Directioners could easily promote the band by posting about them. Because of this, One Direction became a persistent online presence.

As fans became more connected to One Direction, their engagement with the band started to expand beyond simply sharing music and updates. Online communities gave Directioners the opportunity to create their own content, stories and conversations, turning a shared interest into much more than a traditional fanbase.

One Direction's intense internet presence was not limited to Instagram or Twitter, as it spanned across Tumblr and the fiction writing website Wattpad. With that expansion, the fanbase was widened. The "After" series on Netflix was originally a Harry Styles fanfiction. After gaining over a billion reads, it was adapted onto screens. This goes to show that One Direction's fame expanded past social media and has become inspiration for new media that people outside of that fandom know and love.

Beyond fanfiction, the band's online presence also changed the relationship between fans, artists and entertainment media. According to Douglas Greenwood of The Independent, update accounts run by fans became a major source of information on One Direction, sometimes reporting news before traditional entertainment and news outlets. Fans no longer had to wait for news sites to report on their favorite band; updates were actively shared, which influenced the band's visibility.

This relationship between artists and their audiences established a new model of online fandom, one in which fans played a very active role in shaping the success and public image of the artist that they supported.

One Direction announced their hiatus in Aug. 2015, with the break commencing at the beginning of the next year. Each of the five members pursued a solo career afterwards, allowing fans to continue to support the individuals that they had come to know. A fandom that was once whole began to split into five communities that supported separate musical identities, keeping the band's legacy alive.

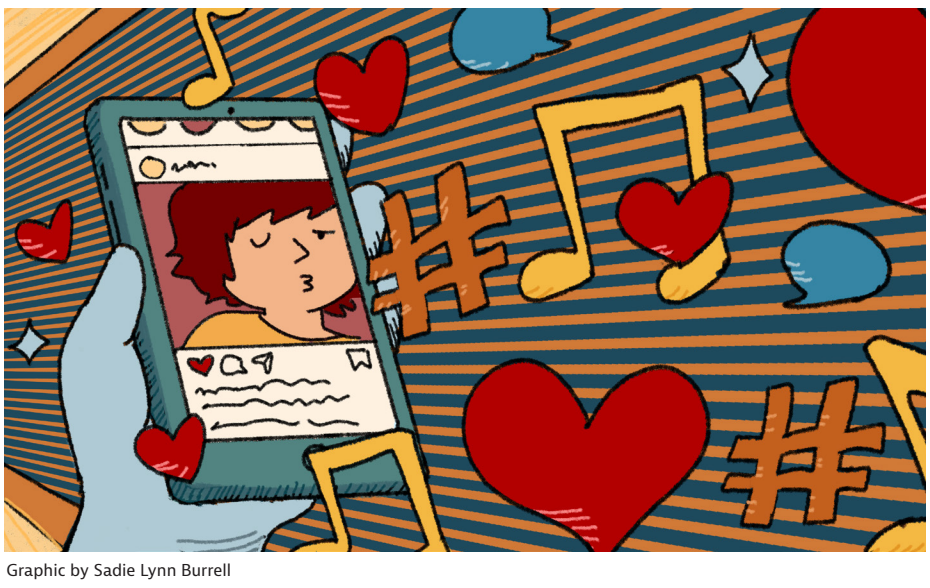
When band member Liam Payne unfortunately passed away in Oct. 2024, Directioners across the world felt more united than in previous years through their grief. Fans rallied around the remaining four band members, proving that the fame One Direction saw did not end when the band did.

One Direction's influence can be seen in fan culture today. Groups like BTS have developed highly involved online communities in which fans promote releases, share content and gather around a common interest in the artist. While One Direction did not invent online fandom, its rise made it clear how powerful social media can become when fans are given the tools to organize themselves.

It is hard to separate the impact One Direction had on boy bands and on fan culture. Social media has since become a standard promotional tool for artists across genres, making direct interaction between artists and fans much more common. The band's success helped demonstrate just how much an online fanbase could accomplish when given the ability to connect and promote together.

It wasn't the music, the personalities or even the social media platforms themselves that made One Direction so different from other boy bands. It was the combination of five recognizable and relatable personalities, an emerging internet culture and a fanbase that helped turn the group into a global phenomenon. The relationship that One Direction built with their fans helped redefine what a boy band could become.

Their legacy is not just five studio albums and four world tours, but a new blueprint for how artists and audiences can interact and grow together.



Graphic by Sadie Lynn Burrell

Theatre: "Picasso at the Lapin Agile"

Kaelin Palmer
ALLONS WRITER

Burke-Hawthorne Hall is where I spend most of the day as a mass communications major. As I walked to my classroom, I couldn't help but notice the new poster taped onto the wooden door. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette's School of Dance and Theatre was back again, presenting "Picasso at The Lapin Agile." This screenplay was written by Steve Martin, known for his work in comedy films and many accolades, including five Grammy's.

Personally, I'm not familiar with Steve Martin, so walking into Burke-Hawthorne, I was eager to see what awaited on stage. Upon my arrival, I noticed the soft music playing over the speakers. The tune sounded like something out of an oldies playlist, and I loved the ambience it brought as families began grabbing their seats. One family stood out to me in particular, a big bouquet of flowers by their side as they sat in anticipation.

The mother, "Nana" and "Poppo" of Alana Cutno were in attendance to support her role as Germaine. Rana Kittles, Cutno's mother, said this hadn't been the family's first performance they've attended. However, this would be their first time seeing "Picasso at the Lapin Agile," as they expressed excitement and warm smiles. All four of us looked onto the stage, admiring the little details that fully brought the story together.

Nana told me the stage was "beautiful," calling it "old-school elegant," as we shook heads in agreement. I thanked all three for their time, returned back to my seat and continued to listen to the music. My first interpretation was the distinct tune; it made me feel like I was in a pub, with melodies that sound "French-like." I made a conscious effort to not spoil myself by looking at the play's description, so when I read over the director's note, it surprised me.

The note, written by School of Dance and Theatre Interim Director Sara Birk, talked about the ideas Martin sought to conquer in this play. "When Martin speculates about a meeting between Einstein and Picasso as they are both on the cusp of defining words that will catapult them to fame in their respective fields and the public eye, he is giving us what seems like the ultimate opening line of a joke: 'Einstein and Picasso walk into a bar…'"

Reading that after interpreting being in a bar setting, it amazed me how music alone was able to immerse me in that specific setting. But, it wasn't just music, costume technicians Nico Aster, Cutno and Hime Dollis made the setting feel precise. The hard work of stage manager Finley Elliot and assistants Amirah Fields and Julia Wisdom definitely didn't go unnoticed. The set was also designed and built by Jayda Bullard.

The division between art and science and the different perspectives from both Einstein and Picasso intrigued me. Picasso, played by Nick Mackowiak, gave the audience an explosive reveal. His declarative first line, "I've been thinking about sex all day," definitely amused the audience as I heard laughs and spotted wide-eyed faces. Humor was certainly in the house, especially with the frequent bathroom trips by Gaston, played by Joseph Vildibill.

Both Picasso and Einstein are on the brink of publishing their own future ideas. For Einstein, it's his book "Special Theory and Relativity." On the other hand, Picasso will paint "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon." Germaine and Einstein landed a few chuckles as she questioned Einstein on whether or not his book was funny. When Germaine asked if the book made him laugh, Einstein said, "No."

"Well then it's not funny," Germaine asserted. One last element that really stood out to me were the stars twinkling in the background.

The cheers between characters made for a nice ending to the play, along with the picture taken by Sagot, played by Alyssa Eames.

Overall, I had a wonderful experience viewing "Picasso at the Lapin Agile" and I found myself wanting to know more about Martin and his work.

If you missed this one, the School of Dance and Theatre have plenty of other showcases and performances lined up throughout the semester.



Photo by Kaelin Palmer
UL Lafayette performers in "Picasso at the Lapin Agile"

THE VERMILION

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Beaucoup

It's My Song

The Beaucoup section writes about songs that bring back memories for them.



Graphic by Ray Bardales

Jazz Myers
WRITER

One song that will forever have an impact on me emotionally is "Show Me How" by Men I Trust. It was always a favorite song of mine, but it soon held a deeper meaning to me.

Since I was young, I've always had bad health due to my mother having lupus. I also struggled with my mental health being raised by a dad who was in prison for 10 years.

My boyfriend was here for me through it all, and I'm more than grateful to have him in my life.

When I first had an anxiety episode around him, he played this song for me. He always knows how to calm my nerves and bring me back down. He never once let me stay frantic for too long.

Now I look forward to having better days because of him.

Everytime I listen to this song now, it gives me comfort and I think of his care for me.

Sadie Lynn Burrell
GRAPHICS EDITOR

A song that brings back memories for me is "Party in the U.S.A." by Miley Cyrus.

While I am not much of a patriot these days, as a kid, it was my favorite song. I have a memory of being in summer camp and singing it for a talent show. I was a very nervous kid, but I really wanted to perform.

Wearing my nice shoes and outfit I meticulously picked out, I took the small stage.

I think everyone could tell I was scared because people clapped along.

Another memory of this song is the prom I went to during my junior year of high school.

It was one of the first times I went out with my partner.

I vividly remember jumping up and down with him in the group of our peers. We sang and laughed and smiled and I was so happy.

Gabrielle Mouton
NEWS WRITER

I have sort of an early core memory of a song that felt like something cinematic looking back. When I was about six, I remember a crisp fall morning being handed my dad's iPod and some headphones, and when I played the first song, it was "Time to Pretend" by MGMT. Those first seconds of the song washed over me as the intense synth thrummed in my ears.

And when the drums violently kicked into the first verse, I felt dopamine coursing through my veins. I felt the sun on my face and the song just made me feel like I could see my whole life in front of me. It was very existential for me being so young. I replayed the song over and over as I ran around the sprawling field of my backyard, and swung myself into the sky on my swingset.

It is the first time in my memory that I can recall music making me feel so passionate and alive.

Grant Jackson
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Music is almost as timeless as time itself. For centuries, music has been one of the few things that can connect people on a transcendent level. For many of us, there's one song in particular we can always go to when we want to reminisce about a former time. For me, that song is "Godspeed" by Frank Ocean.

Anytime I hear it, time slows down, and I am immediately able to remember being in Greece, cycling around some random island and feeling like time didn't exist.

Whenever I hear "Godspeed," I think of that ride and how it felt like nothing else mattered. Just me, a rented bike, and endless paths I could travel while I was there.

When Frank says, "It's a free world… You'll have this place to call home, always," all I ever wish is to be back in Greece. Biking around in a place I don't know, but still feeling right at home.

Cajun Crossword

Compiled by Vallen Power

No. 8

INSTRUCTIONS

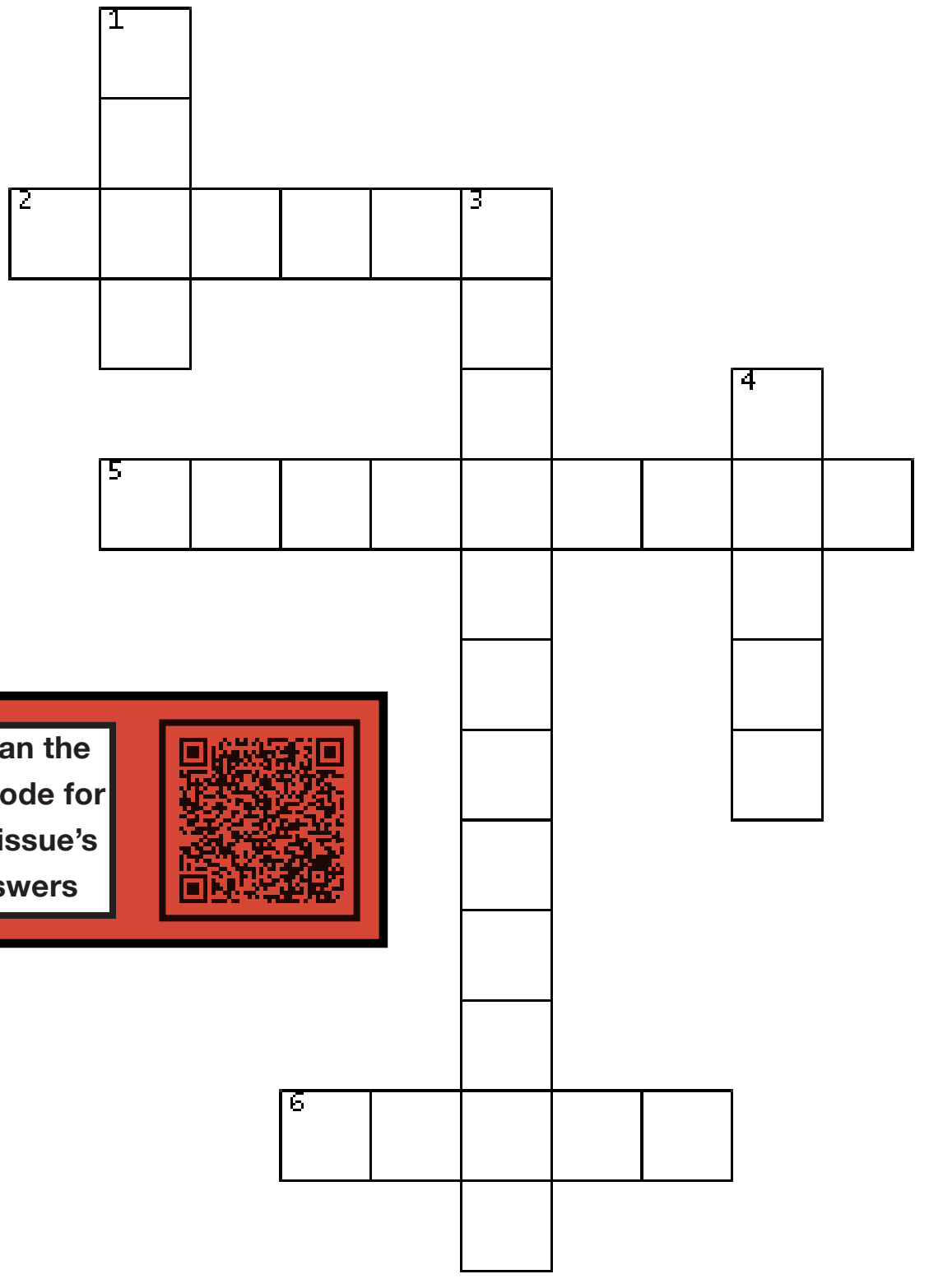
The answers can be found throughout the newspaper, so make sure to thoroughly read each story. Try to find all of them and see if you got them correct in the answers provided in the next issue's crossword search!

ACROSS

2. Freshman forward for Cajuns basketball (last name)?
5. Who played Picasso in "Picasso at the Lapin Agile" (last name)?
6. What traditional Chinese tea-brewing method did Isabelle Brumley and her coworker try?

DOWN

1. The number of tours One Direction embarked on, and the name of their fourth studio album.
3. The increased value of the University's property on Pecan Island eventually plays a big factor in the ____ of a final sale.
4. WICS classes are useful for any _____ who is looking for a career involving foreign relations or culture.





Scan the QR code for last issue's answers

SOUNDING OFF

"What are some issues that matter the most to you this midterm election?"



Luke Ramirez
CHEMICAL ENGINEERING JUNIOR

"Gas prices... they are steadily going up with everything going on in the world..."



Evelyn Amdal
POLITICAL SCIENCE AND HISTORY JUNIOR

"The [spaceport] in Pecan Island... Gas prices... The cost of living hasn't been great, I can't move out..."



Jetta Dipple
CHEMISTRY JUNIOR

"SpaceX being announced to come out to Louisiana, I am very worried about land conservation and what's gonna happen to our farmers..."



Jackson Baker
FINANCE JUNIOR

"Cost of living... Our congress is not properly representing us..."



Hayden Hudson
CIVIL ENGINEERING FRESHMAN

"I'm from New Orleans... anywhere you go, there's homeless people just all over the place... and our city is not really doing anything about it..."



Brenna Gutierrez
KINESIOLOGY FRESHMAN

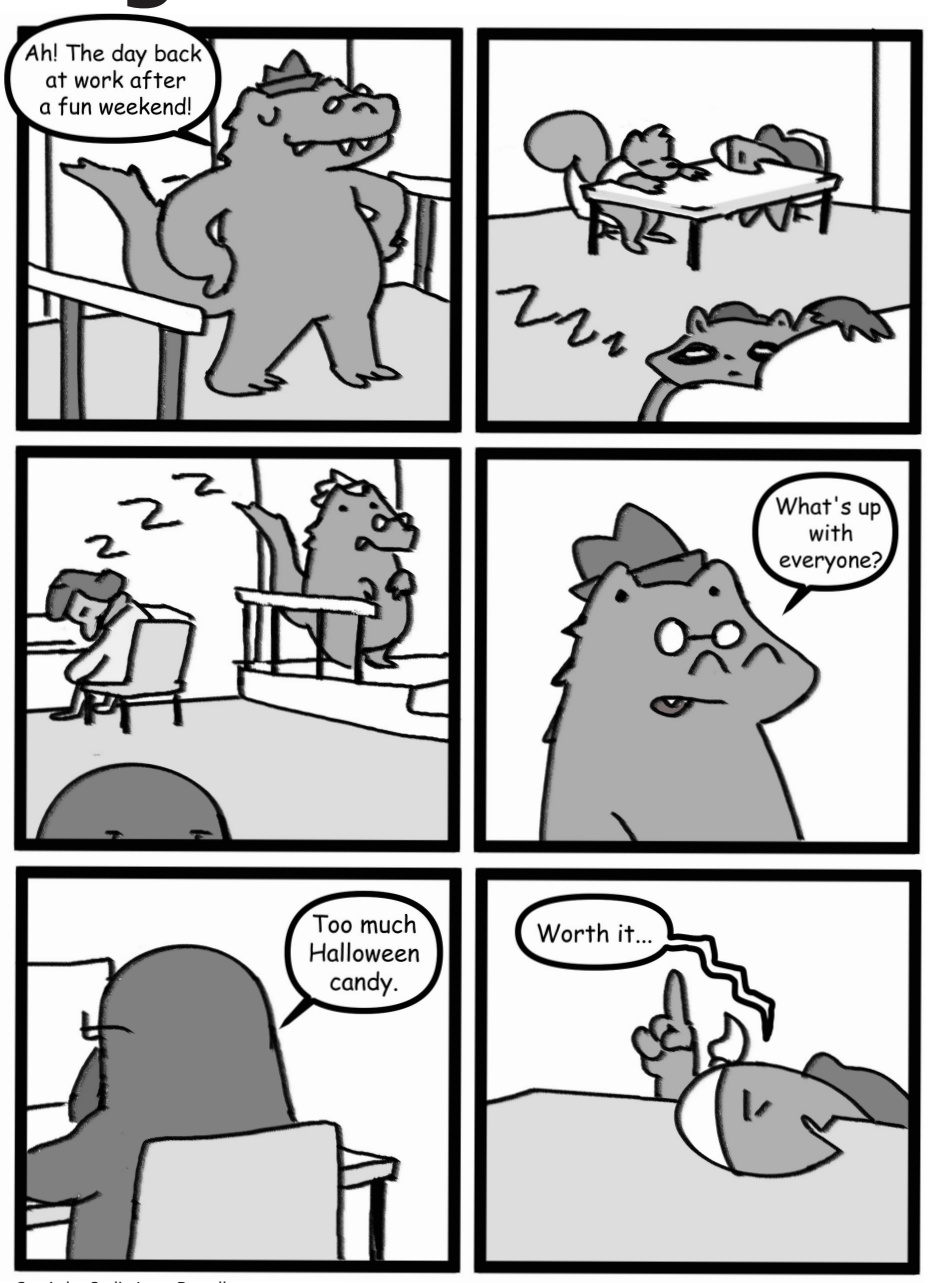
"I'm hoping that the party in charge of the house is switched..."

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. Watch the full Sounding Off interviews on our Instagram @thevermilion.

Photos and interviews by Alyus Dick and Joann Seow

COMIC

Sugar Crash



Comic by Sadie Lynn Burrell

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