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ASG hears bids for recognition from three clubs

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A "sea" of constituents is how Allegheny Student Government Vice President Joe Leszczynski, '25, described the student turnout at Tuesday's General Assembly. Students sat on the floor, lined the walls of room 301/302 of the Henderson Campus Center and spilled out into the hallway during a nearly hour-and-a-half long GA. Most attended for one purpose: To watch the Allegheny Student Government consider whether it would award ASG recognition to a Turning Point USA club chapter. In the end, ASG decided to table voting on the club until next week's GA.

Guest Speakers

Guest speakers Provost and Dean of Faculty Jennifer Dearden, and Dean of Inclusive Excellence Heather Moore Roberson spoke to ASG about how the college will communicate the ongoing effects of changes in federal policy to ASG and the student body as a whole.

At the beginning of the presentation, Dearden explained that several of the topics they would be discussing were about "policy, not about politics." Dearden stressed that the administration is paying close attention to current events and will continue thinking about how to meet any changes "proactively."



RAY KRISHTUL/THE CAMPUS

Provost Jennifer Dearden and Dean of Inclusive Excellence Heather Moore Roberson address ASG senators and constituents on Tuesday, Jan 28.

"It is worth noting that while there has been a lot of activity recently, there is very little right now that the college is actually required to do," Dearden said.

Dearden listed a few topics the administration is following closely, including recent changes to Title IX that strip protections for transgender students, immigration regulations that may affect international students and recruiting for prospective international students, and the freeze on federal funding which may affect faculty and students who receive federal grants.

Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley added that protections in place for pregnant and nursing employees will be reverting back to standards from 2020, when those protections did not exist.

Because many policies and potential policy impacts are changing frequently, the college does not want to alarm anyone with constant updates, according to Dearden. She said the college is committed to keeping students informed and will continue to value student voices.

Roberson added that the presidential cabinet regularly meets twice a week and is now increasing the frequency of its meetings.

"It is central to Allegheny's mission to create a welcoming environment for all Gators from all walks of life in our classrooms, on our campus and in our world," Dearden said. "We are committed to remaining a school of access and supporting all students through graduation."

Reports

ASG's finance report, given by Director of Finance Dominic Juliana, '27, totaled $5,496.04 this week, with $3,471.04 going to travel costs for Christian Outreach.

Director of Sustainability and Environmental Affairs Aidan McGrory, '26, reported he will continue supporting the merging of the "green clubs" on campus. He also reported working towards a collaborative event with Students for Environmental Action next month.

Class of 2025 President Akari Brown reported continued progress on Senior Week planning.

Class of 2026 President Iris Styers reported receiving test proofs for junior class pins and implementation of Junior Appreciation Week events will begin soon.

Class of 2027 President Liam Shields reported progress in finalizing a students versus faculty volleyball game, confirmed to occur in March after spring break.

Class of 2028 Vice President Bella Spiers reported a meeting with their respective class dean will occur soon.

Leszczynski reported that ASG reports for the Board of Trustees and the Allegheny Experience Committee were completed and will be delivered next week.

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Allegheny searches for a replacement of 24/7 telehealth app 98point6

By **MEGAN ZIMMERMAN**
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Counseling and therapy app 98point6 revoked their service to Allegheny College as they are going out of business, leaving administrators to search for a replacement.

The change was announced in a campus-wide email on Dec. 19.

Services such as these are beyond important for students, said Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley. He introduced the 98point6 app to the college, and is now working to replace it alongside colleagues Dean of Student Experience Ian Binnington and Associate Dean for Wellness and Engagement Gretchen Beck.

Yeckley gave insight into the history of Allegheny's connection to the app as well as the reason it left, and what is being done to implement a different service.

The 98point6 app was available to Allegheny students for about two years and promised them "frictionless virtual care." Clinicians of the app as well as an AI-powered function worked to recognize and treat those experiencing mental health struggles or in need of the guidance of a therapist.

The app was the one to leave the partnership, not the college.

"The information that they shared with us was that they were going out of business, and so effective Jan. 1 they would no longer be operating," Yeckley said.

The college is now searching for a service to supplement its in-person services.

"We are looking at other telehealth options," Yeckley said. "There's just a couple that we have been discussing and been in contact with those companies."

Although the names of those businesses can not be disclosed yet, Yeckley had just recently received a report based on recommendations, and said that there will be a decision made on the company they are switching to in "the next couple weeks."

National companies are being considered this time.

"We have in the past tried to contact a local company and the problem is a lot of our local agencies are also struggling with hiring counselors, or being able to intake the potential volume of calls that might be coming," Yeckley said.

Prided by their almost ten years of healthcare experience, 98point6 claimed on their website that the app "reduces administrative burden, streamlines throughput, increases patient and provider engagement, and creates new revenue opportunities." This being said, Yeckley described the service as "moderately successful," while it was available.

"We didn't get our last quarter's data which was kind of disappointing because we like to see what our usage numbers are," Yeckley said.

There are specific qualities of a telehealth service that they are seeking in a new option.

"We want ease of function for the students, availability of appointments and services, cost is always is a concern for us as well," Yeckley said. "Whether or not students use it, we want them to have the ability to do so and it brings a level of comfort just to know that they could use it if they needed to."

Sophia Shiroff, '28, gave the app a try after being encouraged by coaches, trainers and teammates.

"I definitely like the 24-hour access, and affordability is definitely a huge factor," Shiroff said. "It's nice to have that service available when you need it."

Shiroff was disappointed when it left. She also said that an improvement in advertisement could be made when the new service hits the ground, "making sure the word gets out there, especially to first-year students." There were many who were unaware that the app was at their disposal the first time, said Shiroff.

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In this week's Campus...

ASK ALLEGHENY

Opinion Editor Emma Conti-Windle, '27, and Features Editor Aubryanna Snyder, '27, share what keeps Allegheny students happy in the winter.

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PRESIDENT TRUMP'S INAUGURATION

Staff Writer Anton Hodge, '27, shares his thoughts on the inauguration of the 47th President of the United States and the next four years of his term in office.

Page 4

PHYSICAL PLANT FENDS OFF THE COLD

Staff Writer Paige Kageni, '27, reports on the work that Physical Plant employees do to keep Allegheny's campus running during the winter months.

Page 5

FRIDAY H: 46° L: 19°
Rain: 94%
Sunrise: 7:34 a.m.
Sunset: 5:35 p.m.

SATURDAY H: 27° L: 18°
Rain: 0%
Sunrise: 7:33 a.m.
Sunset: 5:36 p.m.

SUNDAY H: 43° L: 37°
Rain: 44%
Sunrise: 7:32 a.m.
Sunset: 5:37 p.m.

ASG *from page 1*

New Business

ASG heard bids from three clubs in their first round of two weeks of voting.

Ghost Club President Daphne Womack, ’27, said the club has existed on campus for several years, but is now seeking ASG recognition to access ASG funding for on-campus activities and travel expenses. The Senate voted unanimously to approve the club in its first round of voting.

The Allegheny College Rotaract Club also unanimously passed the first round of voting and was represented at GA by Alexander Coccagna, ’27. The club is a chapter of Rotary, a global organization whose mission is to “bring together people ages 18 and older to exchange ideas with leaders in the community, develop leadership and professional skills, and have fun through service,” according to the Rotary website. The club will collaborate with the Meadville AM Rotary Club, according to its constitution.



RAY KRISHTUL/THE CAMPUS

Senators and constituent students observe the proceedings at the ASG meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 28.

The third club present requesting ASG approval was Turning Point USA, represented by President Ian Hutter, ’26, Vice President Braeden Means, ’28, and Secretary Robert Chirco, ’27.

“We’re here today to ask for you to vote for us to have a place for conservative people with our kind of views on campus,” Hutter said while introducing the club. “Right now, there is a Democrat club and there is a socialist club on campus, but there is no place for people with my mindset or my world or political views on campus, and we’re just looking for a place for us to come together.”

During the introduction, Means passed out information sheets which he said contained information “debunking some false rumors that are kind of surrounding our organization.”

The Campus was unable to secure a copy of the document.

While passing out the sheets, Means said that Turning Point USA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which he said “legally means we are not able to back a candidate or political party.” Means further explained that Turning Point USA is a separate entity from a partner organization named Turning Point Action, a group that does engage in political activities like candidate endorsements.

“Turning Point USA is not affiliated with — it is affiliated with but is not a direct line from Turning Point Action where you see videos of Charlie Kirk or people,” Means said. “That’s not us. That’s a different organization.”

According to the Turning Point USA website, Kirk is the founder and president of Turning Point USA and a conservative podcaster and influencer with more than 5 million followers on Instagram. As recently as Dec. 20, Kirk spoke at a conservative conference in Phoenix sponsored by Turning Point USA. President Donald Trump spoke at the conference two days later, which was not his first time addressing Turning Point USA, according to The New York Times.

The club’s proposed constitution provided to ASG says its mission is to guide “citizens through developing knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to meaningfully engage in their communities to restore traditional American values like patriotism, respect for life, liberty, family, and fiscal responsibility.”

Following Hutter’s introduction, ASG senators approved four motions that created a total of 30 minutes for discussion.

Styers began the discussion by asking why Hutter, Means and Chirco did not want to restart the Republican Club that existed before the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The main point is we’re trying to stay away from political parties,” Hutter said. “I feel like it’s better for dialogue because we’re not directly a part of a certain organization or political group. Yes, we do have certain political ideologies, but we are not, I guess, directly involved with either political party.”

Hutter proceeded to explain that the group chose to affiliate with Turning Point because of the funds and resources available to them from the national organization.

During the discussion period, several ASG members asked why the club wants ASG recognition, since external funding is already available to the group.

Hutter explained the club is not looking directly for funding and that the club’s main source of income will come from external donations.

“We’re just trying to get recognized for us to better have a chance to get involved with the campus as a whole and work with other organizations,” Hutter said.

During the discussion, Class of 2025 Vice President Eva Dillaman asked whether College Democrats is an ASG recognized club, and Attorney General Chezka Quinola, ’27, said it is not.

Several ASG members posed questions about Turning Point USA’s proposed constitution.

ASG President Ella DeRose, ’27, pointed to Article II Section I of the constitution that stipulates members must “remain in good standing with the national organization” and asked how the group defines “good standing.”

Hutter said members cannot be criminally convicted and cannot be “disruptive in any way or harmful to anybody.”

Director of Diversity and Inclusion Kaleialoha Froning, ’25, also inquired about Article II Section I, highlighting that the constitution explicitly says “membership shall be determined without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, veteran status, handicap status, or disability.” She noted that sexual orientation is not included in the list.

Hutter said sexual orientation is included in the “et cetera” at the end of the clause.

Leszczynski asked why “sexual orientation” is not explicitly enumerated.

Hutter said the membership requirement phrase was taken directly from the Turning Point USA website and that if it is a point of contention, he could add sexual orientation to the list.

Froning then clarified via a point of information that Hutter was mistaken because there is no “et cetera” included in the phrase. As a result, the current form of the constitution does not prevent against membership discrimination based on sexual orientation. Since Froning explained this as a point of information, Hutter was not offered an opportunity to directly respond.

Shields later added that there is an online ASG template describing to clubs how to define membership in a way that aligns with Allegheny’s Statement of Community. Shields said Turning Point USA’s current definition of membership is not aligned with what ASG requires.

“We’re very willing to make that change,” Hutter responded.

DeRose also asked about a constitutional provision that allows nonstudent “associate members” to participate in the chapter.

“Our financial guidelines state that ‘items and activities of the student organizations should benefit the student body as a whole,’” DeRose said. “I see a discrepancy here in — between having nonstudents from the Meadville community benefiting from the money that every student pays on their tuition that goes into the General Fund that funds ASG-funded clubs.”

Hutter said the provision would allow the chapter to build a broader community.

“It’s not for them (associate members) to take advantage of our funding in any way,” Hutter said. “It’s just for us to be more active outwardly with the community and for people to be more involved with us so we can be more involved with everyone.”

Several ASG members also brought up the Professor Watchlist, a project with the mission “to expose and document college professors who discriminate against conservative students and advance leftist propaganda in the classroom,” according to its website.

Allegheny faculty have had first-hand experiences with the Watchlist in the past. On Dec. 9, 2022, Director of Faculty Development and Biology Professor Lisa Whitenack was added to the Professor Watchlist after she publicly spoke about her research. Her work partially concluded that there are far more white men on Discovery’s “Shark Week” than female and nonbinary scientists. In a Sept. 2022 article for The Campus, Whitenack said that representation matters and that “to someone watching Shark Week and dreaming of becoming a marine biologist, the message they get is that you have to be an able-bodied white male that does field work to be a successful shark scientist.” The Professor Watchlist cites this statement on Whitenack’s page, tagging her statement with the term, “Racial Ideology.”

In response to questions from senators about the Professor Watchlist, Means explained that it is a wholly separate initiative managed by Turning Point Action, not Turning Point USA.

“You can almost think of Turning Point as an umbrella company to all these other branches that they have, and we are a branch of Turning Point,” Means said. “So is Turning Point Action, and we are the nonprofit.”

Hutter explained the relationship similarly.

“We’re a nonprofit,” Hutter said. “Which means we are completely separated from that organization (Turning Point Action) in all ways.”

However, Means’ and Hutter’s explanations do not align entirely with information online. On the Professor Watchlist landing page, the website reads, “Professor Watchlist is a project of 501(c)3 nonprofit Turning Point USA.”

Senator Gary Murray, ’26, also asked the club representatives how much autonomy the group will have and whether the national organization will direct its actions.

“We have a significant amount of autonomy,” Hutter said. “We do work directly and report to a field rep, but she does not tell us what we have to do. We are not told what we have to do.”

During the discussion, Spiers raised a point of information.

“Our job as a student government is to protect the entire student body, not just the ones that we share political beliefs with,” Spiers said. “So if a club is going to provide a safe space for even 1% of the student body, I think it’s our job to bring it into existence. And furthermore, any club that promotes any political beliefs of any sort is going to ruffle somebody’s feathers.”

DeRose asked what type of events Turning Point USA plans to host. Hutter said the group is currently hoping to table, organize a dinner with campus police and host a debate with the College Democrats.

After 40 minutes of discussion, Brown motioned to table voting on the club until the next GA on Tuesday, Feb. 4, and Senator Lyra Lindsay, ’27, seconded the motion. Sixteen senators voted in favor of the motion and one voted in opposition.

> You can almost think of Turning Point as an umbrella company to all these other branches that they have, and we are a branch of Turning Point.”
>
> —BRAEDEN MEANS
> *Class of 2028*

Constituent Comments

This week’s GA featured several constituent comments, all of which were centered around Turning Point USA.

College Democrats President Zula Stenger, ’25, spoke first.

“I want to first start off with saying how much mutual respect I hold for these gentlemen here today,” Stenger said, “and I hope that regardless of your political affiliation, you can have respect for what they’ve come here and done today. It takes bravery, and I will say from knowing them somewhat personally and working with them through the election, they are people of character.”

Stenger proceeded to raise concerns about the Professor Watchlist, particularly regarding Whitenack’s addition to the list in 2022.

“I fully support the right of students to organize and engage in political discourse,” Stenger said, “but I believe we must carefully consider the type of organizations we bring onto campus.”

Cameron Medvitz, ’27, spoke after Stenger, saying ASG recognition of the chapter would directly undermine the values of the campus community and lead to division and high tension among students.

“I’d like to come today asking not for the barring or dispansion of a campus club that upholds Republican and conservative morals,” said Medvitz, who serves as president of the All Gender Equity Society, “but rather to shine a light on the partnership of a closed-minded, hateful organization that promotes hate and fear under the false pretense of freedom at Allegheny College.”

Thegn Penrose, ’27, took issue with what he perceived as mitigation of the link between Turning Point USA and Turning Point Action.

Even though the two groups are not legally linked, Penrose said, it is “purely a technicality,” pointing out that their websites reference each other and identify each other as related organizations.

“They’re (Hutter, Means and Chirco) essentially following a script given to them by the national part of the organization,” Penrose said. “The charters — or constitutions — for Turning Point club chapters are given out standard on the website and talking points about their relationships are also just given out as a party line. Personally, I don’t feel like a club that intentionally misrepresents itself, doesn’t understand its relationship with its parent organization — I feel like all of these are problems that make it sort of concerning. I would not feel like I would trust people to run this club in good faith.”

Milo Watson, ’26, spoke next, saying that Turning Point USA has a history of engaging in acts that are inconsistent with Allegheny’s Statement of Community.

“Conservative groups under that do have just as much of a right to ASG recognition as a group like the College Democrats or a college liberals group or a college conservatives group,” Watson said. “However, affiliation with Turning Point USA is not necessary in order to guarantee that conservative students have an institutionally-recognized voice and a space to gather or a way to connect with people on campus.”

Watson produced printed records of behavior he considered concerning, including news articles alleging Turning Point USA interference with student government elections at other colleges. The Campus was unable to secure copies of the documents.

Watson also asked whether the club would commit to enumerating in its constitution all the ways external funding from the national organization would be used and its definition of being “in good standing with the national organization.”

At the end of his statement, Watson urged ASG to pass legislation preventing any ASG candidate from receiving any monetary, material or intellectual support for their campaigns, as well as legislation preventing any ASG recognized political group from receiving external monetary, material or intellectual support from an outside organization.

(Watson’s statement is his own as a constituent and is not affiliated with any organization. He also serves as Layout Editor for The Campus. His comments do not reflect the views of The Campus.)

As Watson finished speaking, the 20-minute extension of GA past its scheduled ending time expired. Brown motioned to close GA and Class of 2026 Vice President Kenzie Hughes seconded it. Fourteen senators voted in favor of closing GA, while three voted against the motion.

Leszczynski encouraged all constituents who had not had a chance to speak to attend next week’s GA, where Turning Point USA will again be on the agenda for its first round of voting. Approximately five to ten students appeared disappointed in not having a chance to speak.

GA ended at 8:50 p.m. ASG’s next General Assembly is set for 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 4, in room 301/302 of the campus center.

HEALTH

from page 1

Oliver Schneider, ’27, also had experience with the app and was concerned when it left.

“The 98point6 app has impacted me in a positive way. I was able to get a therapist through the app,” Schneider said. “Just knowing that the app could help me if I needed it, was a good fallback plan if I didn’t find a therapist.”

Schneider also said how important the 24/7 aspect of the service was for students in potential emergency situations.

In recent years, the amount of collegiate students experiencing mental health concerns has been on the rise. The American Psychiatric Association reports that as of 2021, “73% of students reported moderate to severe psychological distress.”

“We tend to think of middle age ‘midlife crisis’ as being the hardest time of your life — it’s actually not,” Yeckley said. “Research shows that it’s when you’re in college and getting ready to leave college. I would encourage students even if you’re not sure you want counseling or think you maybe don’t need it, take advantage of the resources while we have them, because sometimes it’s really nice to have that extra person there just to talk to and validate your experiences.”

“It’s a tough time and use your resources while they’re here,” Yeckley said.

If you or someone you know is in need of mental health support, the following options are available to you:

Call/text the Nationwide Crisis Line at 988

Connect with Allegheny’s partners at Edinboro Counseling and Psychological Services (ECPS) at 814-734-3975

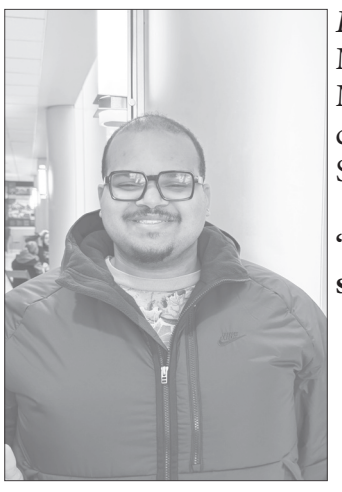
Ask Allegheny

What keeps you happy during these cold winter months?



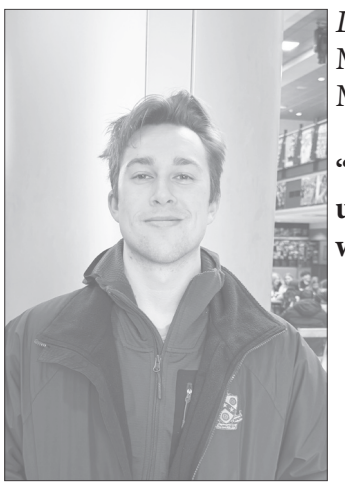
Left: Matt Reynolds, ’25
Major: Math
Minor: Education

“I think I look for the little things, especially when it’s snowing. I look for the sound that my feet make when I’m walking in the snow. ”



Left: Logan Lee, ’26
Major: Business
Minor: Communication and Media Studies

“Binge watching shows on Netflix.”



Left: Jonah Wells, ’26
Major: Physics
Minor: Economics

“Jodi saying ‘What’s up boss?’ every time I walk into Kins.”



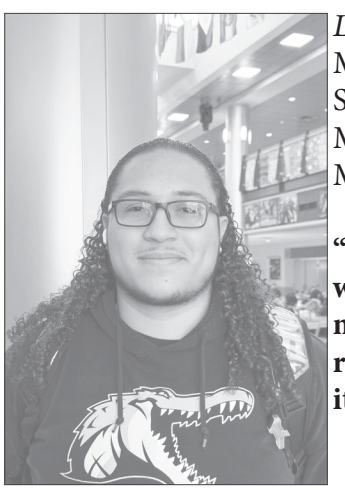
Left: Emelia Hansen, ’27
Major: English
Minor: Minor

“I’m miserable, but spending time with friends, keeping social. It keeps you occupied to see people that you enjoy being around. I hate winter. ”



Left: Vivian Potts, ’27
Major: Computer Science
Minors: Theatre & Film

“A cup of hot chocolate, my three roommates, and a good movie.”



Left: Sam Roque, ’27
Major: Computer Science
Minor: Dance and Movement Studies

“Hanging around with my brothers in my fraternity and my roommates, we keep it together.”



Left: Hannah Herbert, ’25
Major: Environmental Science
Minor: Political Science

“I love to knit, I love to crochet, so like knitting more scarves to keep me warm, and I also do love an adult coloring book, like kind of just destressing activities. ”



Right: Azury Matsuda, ’25
Major: Biochemistry
Minor: History

“I like to work out a lot, maybe play some Minecraft, that sort of thing. ”

CORRECTIONS

In the Jan. 24, 2024 edition of The Campus, an article regarding change of staff within the Office of Public Safety misidentified Ian Binnington as the dean of student success. He is the dean for the student experience.

CRIME BLOTTER

Editor’s Note: The weekly Crime Blotter is compiled using the Daily Crime Log available on the Office of Public Safety’s web page. Crimes reported may still be under investigation. Crimes listed below are collected the Wednesday before publication.

January 27, 2025
Terroristic Threats
Walker Hall
Pending Investigation

January 22, 2025
Criminal Mischief
Walker Hall
Pending Investigation

THE CAMPUS
Since 1876

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A tech war or a battle for digital rights?

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Is banning TikTok the solution, or are we missing the bigger picture? The issue is not just one app, it's about how all social media platforms handle our data. Instead of singling out TikTok, we should focus on creating stronger privacy laws to protect users across all platforms.

When I opened the TikTok app on the evening of Jan. 18, I was expecting to have my last few hours of scrolling or posting my favorite draft videos. Instead, I received this response: "Sorry, TikTok isn't available right now. A law banning TikTok has been enacted in the U.S. Unfortunately that means you can't use TikTok for now."

At that moment, reality hit me. TikTok, the app I had spent countless hours on, and learned so much on, suddenly logged me out — not because of a glitch, but because of a sweeping law. It made me feel disconnected from the online world, raising questions in my mind. Was this ban really about protecting my data? Or was it something deeper? And if TikTok could be shut down overnight, what does it mean for the future of digital freedom and say about how lawmakers can't handle and protect privacy better?

From what I know, the U.S. Congress claims that banning TikTok is for citizens' good, and the Chinese government uses this app to spy on U.S. citizens. But if that's the case, why haven't other Chinese social media apps been banned as well?

TikTok isn't just an app used for entertainment, it's a way for people to be heard and seen. Especially for small businesses, it has been a means of growth and connection with customers all over. As of today, TikTok has 170 million users and 7 million of them are business owners.

TikTok played an important role in the success of Guiliano Raso's business, a food truck named 303 in the Cut.

"TikTok changed our entire business, changed my life," Raso said.

His food truck offers a menu of American classics, with four main dishes and three desserts. For two years Raso's business was steady with few customers stopping by. But now he achieved his dream and opened a second location.

"About two years ago, a video went viral. We blew up overnight," Raso said. "We went from three employees and my parents helping to eleven, having lines every night from the minute we opened to the minute we closed for almost two years straight."

But with a possible TikTok ban, what would happen to influencers and small business owners who rely on the platform to make a living? Many content creators earn their salaries through brand partnerships, sponsored posts and product promotions on TikTok. As the BBC reported, "The app has become a key revenue stream for influencers, who might lose their primary income source if TikTok is no longer available." But if the app is banned, more than 7 million face a loss of income and exposure. The impact of this ban would extend beyond just entertainment or privacy concerns — it would disrupt the livelihoods of countless people who rely on TikTok.

For me, TikTok is more than an app, it's become a part of my daily life and a place where I learn. I've turned to it for so many reasons. Whenever I have a question or need advice, I search TikTok, and the creators there would always help. Whether it's tips for my workouts or ideas for improving myself, this platform is not just entertainment, it's a tool for learning and growing. A lot of people like me are relying on TikTok for a lot of things.

If TikTok were banned, we would be left feeling confused and lost, not knowing where else to turn for help. What other app could fill that space? Would they have the same creators and would they offer useful tips and advice like TikTok does? I understand that members of Congress are worried about privacy, but as a regular TikTok user, I haven't seen anything that would make me feel unsafe or concerned that my privacy is at risk. We, as users, trust the app to share information, learn new things and even grow our businesses. Instead of focusing on banning TikTok, we should be thinking about stronger privacy laws that protect all users across social media platforms.

Shutting down one app may seem like a quick solution, but it would leave millions of people, like me, without a valuable resource that has helped us. Instead of taking away what we use and trust, let's work on ways to make sure our data is safe while keeping the platforms that millions of people depend on. Privacy protection is important, but so is the freedom to continue using these platforms in a safe and informed way.

Four years for the rest of your life, Cowboy

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I have taken up the task of writing an opinion piece on the Inauguration of the 47th president of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump. I think, to be clear on my position, it would be most sensible to introduce my politics. To avoid muddying down the rest of this article, I will speak of ideals. I believe, to steal a phrase from fiction, in "Truth, justice, and the American way." I believe in the idea that the Constitution is a document, sacred, and designed to change and adapt over time. If it was immutable, there would not be amendments to it. I believe all men are created equal, and anybody should have the inherent right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I believe in the separation of church and state, and I believe that every man, citizen or not, has certain inalienable rights. When Lady Liberty cries, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" She does not once demand their race, background, education or religion. Columbia, who stands atop the Capitol building, was only forced to doff her Phrygian cap, the symbol of her freedom from slavery, by the traitor Jefferson Davis.

> "Someone who has been working within politics and politicians since 2015 is not an outsider to the establishment."
>
> —ANTON HODGE
>
> *Class of 2027*

And so, when I looked at the aftermath of the Inauguration, I was as unsurprised. Trump and Chief Justice John G. Roberts failing to execute the swearing in ceremony properly. Billionaires surrounding the ceremony — and yes, before opposition is raised, I do think it's disgusting when Democrats do that with celebrities and the like — billionaires like ducks waddling about for their crumbs (handouts), and then the speeches. The speeches and the executive actions which followed.

From Trump's inauguration speech—"...a radical and corrupt establishment has extracted power and wealth from our citizens…" need I remind the reader of the crowd of the richest men in the world in attendance? The current president seeks to consolidate as much power as possible into the executive. Trump has been within mainstream politics for a decade. There comes a time, with experience and time spent in Washington, where someone can no longer be considered an outsider. Someone who has been working within politics and politicians since 2015, is not an outsider of the establishment.

During the ceremony itself, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson somehow looked happier than the president-elect or vice president. Elon Musk, the richest man in the world, threw out a pair of awkward, clumsy Nazi salutes on stage at Trump's victory rally. I have seen the clip, and I have seen people say it was, just an awkward motion, or, that he was so jumped up on ketamine — not a ridiculous assumption, honestly — he thought that's what a good motion would be, or that it was actually a "roman" salute and not what it was. Quite frankly, if it quacks and waddles like a duck, I will call it a duck. The guy posts about phrenology on Twitter and is from Apartheid South Africa, for God's sake. Melania Trump avoiding kissing her husband was an interesting note, as an addendum. Regardless, none of that is really the "point" of this opinion piece. Everyone knows who Trump is.

I considered, for a time, making this opinion piece a time capsule. An, "I told you so", preemptively, for the next two years at least. A rebuke, of everything I thought would be wrong with Trump's policies, starting from the tariffs, intervention in Mexico, the Greenland fiasco, forced return to the office for federal workers, etc. and working down the list. But I have decided that nobody wants to read that right now. The next four years will feature a lot of anger, much of it righteous. I have decided that rather than publish an angry, spiteful article, which I will no doubt do soon enough, on this day, an appeal to the common citizen. There are two quotations which I am going to point to.

"If you can convince the lowest white man he's better than the best colored man, he won't notice you're picking his pocket. Hell, give him somebody to look down on, and he'll empty his pockets for you." - Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th president of the U.S.

If someone is telling you to hate someone in the same tax bracket, check how much money they make compared to you. Every person on Earth, not in the tens of millions club and below, is closer to a homeless man than any of the CEOs who attended that inauguration, and a person can do everything right or wrong and end up with either result. The quotation I have chosen, I have chosen in relation to the holiday the inauguration has overruled — Martin Luther King Jr. Day. He was taken from the U.S. on April 4th, 1968. Johnson was our president from 1963 to 1969. Don't let a rich man pick your pocket.

"Five minutes for the rest of your life, cowboy!" - Greg Jackson, coach of UFC fighter Donald Cerrone, right before the final round of UFC 141.

I know a lot of people hate sports metaphors, but allow me a moment. To contextualize, Cerrone had been punched in the head 66 times heading into the third round. To those who depend on assistance to live, to those in the LGBTQ+ community, seeing an administration which openly hates them, to students, who the House GOP wants to make report their scholarships as taxable income, — you've been punched in the head a lot.

I'll be frank; you're gonna get punched in the head a lot more. But you've been punched in the head sixty times already. You may as well go out there, protest policies you don't like, call senators and representatives and get involved in community efforts.

If there is anything to say, it is that this is the time to become as politically active as possible. Start working with local politics, national politics, all of it. Fight hate against your neighbors and your friends. Over the past decade, confederates and neo-Nazis have been slowly empowered to the point of being effectively mainstream to the modern GOP with figures like Musk and J.D. Vance. Fight those guys too however you can. Everyone wishes they could ignore politics, but it is political to ignore politics. If you've been punched a lot, all there is to do is go out, touch gloves, and fight for your rights. There will be a group that says platitudes are worthless and this article is too. I would challenge those people to go out and do something practical.

...And what about Earth?

By **JULIA MUSSELER**
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On Jan. 20, Donald Trump was inaugurated into office. It took him less than a day to give the United States's climate policy a serious setback and climate change the edge.

The withdrawal of the U.S. from the "Paris Agreement" that Trump signed in his first week in office will not only have consequences for the U.S. but will be noticeable all over the world. The president is sending a clear message of uncaring to those countries that have been working for years to protect the climate and to those suffering from the consequences of global warming.

Not even climate catastrophes in his own country could stop him. It seems that neither the devastating forest fires in California, nor the snowstorms in Florida gave him pause for thought.

Trump isn't alone, with many other political actors and even climate activists seem to be giving global warming a lower priority than it had a few years ago. The question remains as to why people and, above all, politicians still don't care enough. Why do they give priority to other problems, when especially now is the time to save the world from even more serious consequences with climate policy?

To get an idea of the impact global warming has on our earth and its population, we could start with the "Black Summer" of 2019 and 2020. During these years the most severe wildfires ever took place in Australia. According to Oxfam.org, thousands of people lost their homes and an area as big as the United Kingdom was burned.

It is hard to imagine that this is just a fraction of the natural disasters that appeared throughout the last year.

Natural disasters like floods in South Asia have an increasingly greater impact and worse consequences for the country and its people. To be clear, such weather outbreaks have always existed, but since the last decade, they have taken on great proportions. As Oxfam.org states, the "scale of destruction and devastation […] is new and terrifying."

Strangely enough, the motivation to fight climate change seems to be declining despite the visible consequences. The Trump presidency is only one example of the decline of engagement in climate policy.

But especially now the U.S. should get its act together and bring a 180-degree turnaround in climate policy. For several years now, the U.S. has performed in the lower third of the countries assessed, according to the Climate Change Performance Index.

The CCPI compares the "climate protection performance" of several countries by collecting data of four categories: greenhouse gas emissions, renewable energy, energy use and climate policy. Indexes such as the CCPI help to compare different countries and their performance in climate policy.

Not surprisingly, the results in the 2025 report are not in favor of the U.S.. To be more precise, the U.S. is in the very low category, together with Russia, China and various developing countries.

In consequence of Trump's inauguration, the U.S. is expected to perform even worse. This is particularly concerning because the U.S. has a comparatively large impact on the world's total emissions. In terms of cumulative CO2 emissions, the U.S. is still clearly at the top of the chain, despite the rise of industrialized nations like China, according to Climate.gov.

Even in other countries, which are doing relatively better, climate parties have not achieved as much support for a long time. The European Union is an example.

> It seems that neither the devastating forest fires in California nor the snowstorms in Florida gave him pause for thought."
>
> —JULIA MUSSLER
>
> *Class of 2028*

However, many climate movements in the private sector are no longer as present in the public eye as they were a few years ago. This could include, for example, the international climate organization Fridays for Future which was brought to life by the school strikes of Swedish Greta Thunberg in 2018. The series of global strikes initiated by this mostly student-led organization led to demonstrations with over 20,000 demonstrators in some places.

Although the demonstrations are still taking place, they have not had such a big impact for a long time. The broad masses who got carried away back in 2018 seem to have ended their time as climate activists for the time being.

Of course, Fridays for Future and other climate organizations have achieved many accomplishments over the years, but they as well as their supporters cannot rest on their laurels.

An explanation for this phenomenon could be the uprising of other problems with which democracy is currently struggling. . In Europe, many countries are facing an extreme shift to the right in politics and are confronted with difficult economic conditions.

The Global South in particular has so far been confronted with the consequences of climate change. It could therefore be easy for industrialized countries such as the U.S. to ignore the external dimensions.

However, it is important to note that the Global North will also be confronted with massive consequences in the future. Even if more climatic consequences are yet to come, many countries are already facing immense internal refugee flows.

It is essential to understand that the climate crisis is a global problem. It can't be fought by just some countries to make an impact. Everyone has to get involved. The isolationist policy that Trump and other state leaders are currently pursuing is immensely damaging to the world's population in the long term.

Closing your eyes and ignoring world events or facts that have existed for decades will come back to you sooner or later! Being prepared to critically question your actions and work together with others, for these are key factors in fighting the climate crisis.

The views reflected in Opinion articles are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily represent the view of The Campus newspaper editorial board.

Physical Plant breaks the ice

By **PAIGE KAGENI**

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As students returned for a second week of classes, an arctic blast dropped snow and ice onto the region. Both Tuesday and Wednesday were 16 degrees Fahrenheit at their warmest and fell below zero at night. In an email sent out on Jan. 18, Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley issued precautions to remain safe, including appropriate clothing and recommendations to monitor time outside. At the same time, Physical Plant prepared to salt the sidewalks and push snow from walkways. The department worked throughout the week to make sure the campus remained functional while it was plunged in the cold. Director of Facilities Joseph Michael spoke to the work the Physical Plant did to keep operations running across campus.

> We try to make sure everything is up and running, so the goal, of course, is safety first."
>
> —JOSEPH MICHAEL
> *Director of Facilities*

"We continue to provide maintenance. We try to make sure everything is up and running, so the goal, of course, is safety first." Michael said. "Make sure people have heat and make sure people can get safely from point A to point B."

Michael says that accidents like trips and falls are mitigated directly by the work the department does during the winter. Some conventional methods were unavailable because of the cold, so the sidewalks and roads were pretreated to get ahead of the snow and ice buildup. Preventative measures such as these, and alerting the public to what they can expect with these weather events, are important to making campus a safe place to be.

"We had a couple instances where we were unable to eliminate the ice, so we had to go out with hammers and metal shovels and try and break it up." Michael said. "When we know there's a cold snap coming, we try and let building coordinators, RAs and students know. They know to keep their windows closed, to look out for those sort of things."

Tyler Belz, the stadium and grounds lead, also spoke about his work with the physical plant. He primarily works on the upkeep of the Robertson Athletic Complex, but works at the Maintenance Building with the Physical Plant in the winter. Because of the cold, Belz mentioned that the salt can only work to a certain temperature, which leaves the department with limited options in terms of keeping pathways safe enough to walk on.

"It's been a while since we had a winter like this, snow everyday. And a lot of the time it's been a lot of daytime snow this year, so that's probably why you guys see it so much. " Belz said. "Usually, it snows at night and we clean up in the morning and we're pretty much done with the snow aspect of the day. But, this year has been a totally different animal."

Professor of Environmental Science and Sustainability Richard Bowden also spoke about the extreme cold, as well as what we can expect in winters going forward. As the climate changes and the planet warms up, different regions will begin to see differentiating weather events that they might not have experienced beforehand.

"One of the most rapidly warming places on earth are the polar regions. As it gets warmer, the polar vortex, a concentration of winds that swirl around the North Pole. And then, the polar jet stream, a band of very high velocity winds, high in the atmosphere that stays around the polar area, are normally constrained by very cold temperatures." Bowden said. "As it's gotten warmer, they can now dip farther south, which is why it is that last week it was exceptionally cold. Because the polar vortex weakens, the wind stream then dips down more often in ways that it never have in the past."

Bowden stressed that, even though the weather may feel cold in the moment, the climate change has suddenly ceased completely. The projection for Crawford County and the surrounding areas are fewer snowy winters as time goes on. The snow will stay on the ground for shorter amounts of time, as well as raining more often during the colder months.

"The projections are, for our area, is to see a lot more mixed precipitation events; a lot more melting events, a lot more rain, and less snow on the ground. In summer, projections are, and what we're seeing as well," Bowden said. "In the next 20 to 30 years the average temperature will be a lot more like Atlanta, Georgia. And a lot more extreme events."

> But, this year had been a totally different animal."
>
> —TYLER BELZ
> *Stadium and Grounds Lead*

Physical Plant utilizes different salts for both roads and walkways during their cleanups. The rock salt used on the sidewalks is specifically dyed blue to easily see which paths have been treated and are safe to walk on. The department still recommended suitable footwear for walking, especially in the event where they aren't able to salt the walkways in time.

"A lot of times, you'll see people still wearing their flip flops or something out. So you'd hate to see someone fall. Just make sure you've got good footwear." Belz said. "During a freezing rain, there's not so much we can do. One tip I always try and tell kids if I see them walking is that you walk in the snow. That way, you're not walking on the sheet of ice."

Comedy Corner: Elon Musk, groundhogs and JCPenney

By **JOSEPH KLEPEIS**

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The Meadville Tribune reported on Jan. 20 that the Meadville Area Recreation Complex will offer free swim lessons for up to 200 youngsters from around Crawford County.

Whoever this MARC person is, they are going to have their hands full.

CNN reported on Jan. 22 that the CEO of JPMorgan Chase, Jamie Dimon, said in regards to tariffs planned by the new presidential administration, "Get over it."

Glad to hear a man worth over $2 billion is telling us not to worry about the price of goods going up.

Elon Musk has voiced doubts about President Donald Trump's newly announced project called Stargate, according to The Hill on Jan. 22

Stargate fans haven't had any good news since the last television series was cancelled in 2011 and it seems that trend is continuing.

Politico reported on Jan. 22 that President Donald Trump will meet with Republican key to tax negotiations.

Who is this key and what exactly will they unlock?

Punxsutawney Phil and his partner Phyllis, welcome two new kits (baby groundhogs), a female named Sunny and a male named Shadow, according to the Erie Times-News on Jan. 22.

"I may have to have a sit down with Phil," said Shadow the Hedgehog. "We can't have two hogs named Shadow running around."

ABC News reported on Jan. 22 that Steven Bannon wants more aggressive lawyers to represent him when he next stands trial on charges he defrauded donors to an online campaign to fund a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border, pushing for a more aggressive defense.

"I am hoping my new lawyers will implement a zone defense," Bannon said. "Or potentially a full-court press if things start getting really nasty in the courtroom."

Elon Musk did what has been called a "single arm gesture" while speaking at an indoor Presidential Inauguration parade event in Washington on Monday, Jan. 20.

This single arm gesture is strikingly similar to a Nazi salute. Remember, if it walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it's probably a duck.

A Des Moines Police dog helped locate more than 50 pounds of marijuana at the Des Moines International Airport, according to The Des Moines Register on Jan. 24.

"We knew there was something wrong when the luggage was over the TSA recommended 50 lbs," said a Des Moines police officer. "Had the bag been 49 lbs we probably would not have even checked it."

The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported on Jan. 25 that a $2 million plan has been unveiled to repair the Texas Beach Bridge.

"I'm all for fixing up bridges," said a Richmond resident, "but why are Richmond officials fixing a bridge in Texas?"

JCPenney is trying to reinvent itself again, according to The Dallas Morning News on Jan. 18.

"We've got a few ideas that might help turn the business around," said a JCPenney spokesperson. "We think calling ourselves JCNickel, JCDime or even JCQuarter might entice people to shop with us more frequently."

The Omaha World-Herald reported on Jan. 25 that thousands of cranes have decided to skip the migration south and stay in central Nebraska for the winter.

"It's been terrific for business," said an Omaha construction company owner. "Typically you're hard-pressed to find any cranes for construction in the winter."

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review reported on Jan. 28 that after a 195-year wait, Yuengling beer is on tap at Illinois bars and restaurants.

"It's a shame it took this long," said a Chicago area bar owner. "I can only hope to get some sort of discount for waiting this long for my order to come in.

A restaurant at the San Francisco Zoo has been approved to reopen just one day after it was ordered to close by a city health inspector who discovered a rodent infestation and other health violations, according to The San Francisco Chronicle.

"This was all a big misunderstanding by the city health inspector," said a zoo official. "He didn't realize that the restaurant was French and the rats were actually assisting the kitchen staff."

DISCLAIMER: All quotes are fictitious unless noted otherwise.

Sports Editorials

The juggernauts of baseball get stronger

By **EVAN BELKIN**
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Following their 2024 World Series victory, the powerhouse Los Angeles Dodgers have gone on one of the most ridiculous and borderline overpowered free agency runs in sports history.

Since the free agency phase of the offseason began, the Dodgers have signed eight players, significantly higher than the average of the other 29 teams with roughly two players signed this offseason.

It isn't just about the quantity of the signings, but also the quality. Los Angeles signed Japanese phenom, Roki Sasaki, a 23-year-old pitcher who has a plethora of career accomplishments in Japan's Nippon Professional Baseball, including a career 2.10 Earned Run Average, two all-star appearances, a perfect game, a World Baseball Classic title and the NPB's record for both total strikeouts as well as consecutive strikeouts in a single game.

So far, the second biggest piece of the Dodgers offseason has been the addition of starting pitcher, Blake Snell. The nine-year veteran has racked up two Cy Young Awards, two ERA titles, an All-Star Appearance, in addition to an American League Pennant under his belt.

Other notable signings include Kirby Yates (3.17 Career ERA, 2x All Star), Tanner Scott (1.75 ERA in 2024), Hyeseong Kim (.304/.364/.403 KBO Career), Teoscar Hernandez (2x All Star, HR Derby Champ, 3x Silver Slugger), Michael Conforto (.251/.348/.456 MLB Career), and Blake Treinen (2.78 Career ERA), according to CBS Sports and BaseballReference.com.

All of these additions and resignings come just months after their World Series title, in which they had six all stars, three Silver Sluggers award winners, four players with MVP votes, and of course, generational talent and 2024 NL MVP, Shohei Ohtani.

While the already star-studded Dodgers continue to bulk up their roster, teams like the Pittsburgh Pirates and Miami Marlins are left in the dust. The issue of extreme deviation in roster talent isn't solely due to the Dodgers' motivation to spend money, but also to small market teams' reluctance to spend and the pushback to add a salary cap and floor in MLB.

The topic of a salary cap in Major League Baseball has been of interest for years now, especially because the other major North American sports leagues have already implemented this for decades. The implementation of a salary cap in MLB wouldn't just stop teams like the Dodgers from dominating the free agent market, but it would also force low spending teams to start spending money and become more competitive. The salary cap would certainly come with a floor, creating a much smaller margin of spending between teams.

For the time being, the gap between teams will remain. The teams that spend in free agency will continue to be at the top, while the cheap teams stay towards the bottom, outside of a few outliers.

From 2018 to 2024, six of the seven World Series winners have been in the top 12 of spending in MLB, according to Spotrac.com.

What this means is that teams that don't spend money, to put it harshly, will not win.

This has to change. Baseball is already a dying sport in many people's eyes and the same teams, like the Dodgers, being at the top every year is not going to make people tune in to watch.

Some people have given up on the 2025 season, despite the first regular season game not beginning until late March. Fans of lower spending or non-competitive teams, like myself (a Pirates fan), feel there is no point in entertaining this upcoming 2025 season.

Many analysts in MLB assume and predict that the Dodgers will be the winners of this year's World Series, which clearly does not give hope to fans of other teams, according to ESPN. If this becomes a regular occurrence year after year, then is there truly a purpose in keeping up with baseball?

I believe that if the Dodgers become this year's world champs, there will be little purpose to the coming seasons. They have numerous players locked up for multiple seasons and I don't think the talent of the team will decline.

While I think the state of baseball is in jeopardy while the Dodgers' dynasty arises, I think there is hope in the years after the Dodgers run ends. This is because of a monetary tactic, called deferred contracts.

Deferred contracts are a way to sign players, however, a portion of the money given to that player will be after his contract expires. What this means for the Dodgers is that, while they can sign a bunch of players now, their ability to sign players in the future will be hindered due to their amount of deferred contracts in later years.

One of these deferred contracts is the three-time MVP and two-way star, Shohei Ohtani. Ohtani's full contract is 700 million dollars, however, only 20 million of that is being given to him during the 10 years of the contract, according to The Sporting News. The other 680 million dollars will be handed to him from 2034 to 2043. This means the Dodgers have much more room to spend, as they are only paying Ohtani 20 million dollars a year until 2034. On the other hand, starting in 2034 when Los Angeles has to pay Ohtani 68 million a year, this will most likely hurt their chances of signing other players.

I believe there is something to look forward to after Los Angeles' reign comes to a close. Hopefully, at that point, there will be some sort of salary cap, or salary floor and teams will be much more balanced.

However, for the foreseeable future, the state of baseball is not looking good. If changes don't come soon, there is a possibility that MLB will fall into a hole from which it can't climb out.

Ohio State wins first 12-team playoff

By **ALEX NASH**
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The Ohio State Buckeyes reigned supreme at the end of the first 12 team college football playoff. My thoughts on the matter are simple. The 12 team playoff was great, but the seeding system was terrible.

Teams like Oregon and Georgia had borderline impossible paths to the championship, while Penn State and Notre Dame ran into teams that weren't meant to share a field with them.

There's nothing wrong with giving teams that wouldn't have a prayer of making a four team field a chance, but seeding Boise State and Arizona State above the eventual national champions as well as the runner-ups because OSU didn't win its conference, and Notre Dame played an independent schedule is ridiculous.

I love rooting for the underdog, but in the world of name, image, likeness and the transfer portal, the Big 10 and Southeastern Conference will dominate the field every year regardless of where they're seeded.

If fans truly want to see the underdog win, then the underdog teams should still make the playoffs, but they should be seeded as underdogs, not as top teams.

Not a single top seed was a betting favorite entering the quarterfinals. That's not normal. If anything, it's proof of how badly the first 12 team playoff was seeded.

So how did we get where we are now? Let's take a look.

Notre Dame vs Indiana, Penn State vs SMU, Clemson vs Texas and Ohio State vs Tennessee kicked off the playoffs. Not a single one of those games was within one score. Penn State smoked SMU 38-10, Notre Dame routed Indiana 27-17, Ohio State rolled over Tennessee 42-17 and Texas stood tall over Clemson 38-24.

> "I love rooting for the underdog but in the worlds of name image likeness and the transfer portal, the Big 10 and Southestern Confrence will dominate"
>
> —ALEX NASH
> *Class of 2028*

Surely the second round will be different. All the lower seeded teams are gone. Right?

Well, not exactly. The top four seeds were awarded to the top four ranked conference champions. Those teams were the undefeated Big 10 Champion Oregon, 12-1 SEC Champion Georgia, 11-2 Big 12 Champion Arizona State and 12-1 Mountain West Champion Boise State. Not a single one of those teams was favored in their quarterfinal matchup. Rightfully so, as all four top seeds were knocked off.

Penn State started off the second round by crushing Boise State 31-14. Texas and Arizona State gave us an all-time classic that Texas won 39-31 amid major controversy surrounding a no-call on what many fans would consider targeting. Ohio State avenged its early season loss by obliterating the top seeded Oregon Ducks 41-21. Finally, Notre Dame wrapped up the quarterfinal round by outlasting a Georgia team that limped into the game, without starting quarterback Carson Beck, 23-10.

The semifinals gave us two incredible games. Notre Dame and Penn State started the game slow before exploding in the fourth quarter for a combined 31 points. The luck of the Irish would prevail as Notre Dame would win that game 27-24 on a walk off field goal by previously struggling kicker, Mitch Jeter.

Texas and Ohio State would not disappoint either. Following a buzzer beating 75 yard touchdown by Tre'veon Henderson heading into halftime, Ohio State's defense would hold strong on the goal line against a Texas offense that was primed to tie the ballgame. On fourth and goal, Ohio State edge rusher, Jack Sawyer, would run a Quinn Ewers fumble 93 yards to send Ohio State to the championship game.

So the stage was set, Notre Dame versus Ohio State to win the big one. The game would start off in favor of the Irish as quarterback Riley Leonard would run in from the 1 yard line to give Notre Dame the lead.

That's when the Buckeyes exploded. Freshman phenom wide receiver, Jeremiah Smith, would score on a short pass before running back Quinshon Judkins would take over. Judkins scored three times, followed by a Jayden Fielding field goal to give the Buckeyes a commanding 31-7 lead.

Notre Dame would not go down without a fight though. Two touchdowns from Riley Leonard to Jaden Greathouse would bring the Irish within one score before the Buckeyes slammed the door to clinch the 2025 National Championship.

All in all, the 12 team playoff was a necessary change and a resounding success in its first year.

However, the format isn't perfect and could use some tweaks entering next season.

Looking to the Super Bowl

By **ANTON HODGE**
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The year is 2020. The Kansas City Chiefs, off the back of a red-hot offense, roll into Super Bowl 54 to face off with the San Francisco 49ers. The game will be officiated by Bill Vinovich.

The year is 2021. The Kansas City Chiefs roll into the Super Bowl to face off against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, commanded by Tom Brady. The game is officiated by Carl Cheffers. Kansas City implodes and Brady secures his 7th ring.

The year is 2022. The free world relaxes, as the Los Angeles Rams beat the Cincinnati Bengals in a game officiated by Ron Torbert. Joe Burrow is tragically condemned to the same fate as Dan Marino.

The year is 2023. The Kansas City Chiefs make it to the Super Bowl and face off against the Philadelphia Eagles. The game is officiated by Carl Cheffers. Kansas City wins by three. The winning kick was enabled by a widely-criticized officiating call. Personally, seeing the Eagles lose is nice.

The year is 2024. The Kansas City Chiefs have made it to the Super Bowl, and will battle the San Francisco 49ers. The game was officiated by Bill Vinovich. The Chiefs won by three in overtime. They didn't let Taylor Swift hoist the Lombardi. Some people will find this comment to be a non-sequitur, I would point to how angry it would've made millions of people, as evidence of how funny that would've been.

The year is 2025. The Kansas City Chiefs have tripped and stumbled their way into the playoffs, and then to the Super Bowl. Every opponent they have faced has let themselves be dragged down to the Chief's level, where they lost. They will face the Philadelphia Eagles. The game will be officiated by Ron Torbert.

The year is 2026-

It would be funny, if nearly every game they've played this season didn't have 2-3 bad calls, along with Patrick Mahomes flopping like a fish every time someone bumps him. There is something very interesting about the Chiefs, in that I would contend them to be the boringest, winningest team in the league. They have a very good coach, a quite good quarterback, and a core of players which are good enough with one or two stars. Undeniably, a championship-caliber team, etc. etc.

I would contend that it's because at this point, it's practically an expectation for the Chiefs to win. I don't think that it's a coincidence that 'the NFL is scripted' conspiracies have aligned with the rise of private equity in the NFL, the rise of sports gambling across the nation and the amount of refball allegations the Chiefs have faced.

I would need to do a far more analytical and data driven analysis of the entire season, to give an argument based 100% in facts. So, consider this a 50/50 on facts and vibes.

I don't think the NFL is rigged. I think the NFL has a "problem." Did you know being a referee for the NFL is effectively a part-time gig? Did you know that the NFL has been slower than almost any other sports league, in adopting proper data-driven officiating, like using sensors with a chip in the ball to check the motion of the ball. Soccer's done it for years. Instead, the NFL still relies on a handful of guys, a trusty chain and a bunch of high-speed cameras. Combine that with the rise of sports gambling, as endorsed and pushed by the NFL, and platforms like YouTube — it means there is an environment where every officiating mistake starts getting shared instantly. This is a problem the NFL should've sorted out, years ago.

But, here we are. The Chiefs are in the Superbowl, and if I go on YouTube, I can pull up compilations, multiple minutes long — of every officiating 'mistake' made in their favor. Is it any surprise then, in that environment, that many people mentally check out when watching that team? The baseline assumption is that the Chiefs will get bailed by a call, then make a game-winning drive at the last minute. Like a script. Because it happens, or feels like it has happened, almost every game this season. The fact the problem is this bad should be a condemnation of the NFL and its officiating body.

Don't be surprised if this Super Bowl features multi-minute long videos posted right after the game ends, of every penalty called for no reason, or missed call or both.

Their opponent will be the Philadelphia Eagles. The Eagles have gotten here by, to use runningback Saquon Barkley's own words, "Running it down everyone's throats…" it's a style of football that many analysts had considered outdated, and I am personally a huge fan of. What I am, if the prior article did not show enough, is also a Commanders fan, so, you know, I'm not exactly in the Eagles corner.

With that being said, I really don't want the Chiefs to win this season either. I have gone from, over the course of the past year, really not caring about the Chiefs at all, to specifically disliking Mahomes. Travis Kelce is a wonderful person, really, the rest of the Chiefs team, totally deserve to be happy, no hard feelings. Mahomes is a person who is gleeful when winning, and an arrogant, whiny asshole when he loses, so I would rather see him not get any more rings. Mahomes is the Joey Logano of football, and if you get that, congrats you can get a point.

> "Mahomes is a person who is gleeful when winning, and an arrogant, whiny asshole when he loses..."
>
> —ANTON HODGE
> *Class of 2027*

Statistically speaking, the Eagles are far and away the better team. The Chiefs have gotten here, mostly off of splash plays in between their opponents playing down to them, and enough official interference to nearly single-handedly popularize the idea that sports gambling is influencing outcomes.

55-45 Eagles favor. I hope they don't lose. Maybe a meteor could hit the field?