School community expresses need for Credit/No Credit option for Fall 2020

By Stephanie Lain

Some San Jose State students said that the university should extend the deadline for students to decide whether the coronavirus pandemic has made it harder to focus on their classes and adjust to online learning. Political science junior Sydney Tucci-Jones said that even through SJSU made the switch to online learning in spring, not all students have adapted to Zoom classes.

“I feel like a lot of kids are going through a ton, there’s a lot of them who have to move back home because of shelter-in-place,” Tucci-Jones said. “Having to (reacclimate) to a new life while having to balance online classes is really difficult for a lot of students to do.”

Tucci-Jones said that because of these circumstances, students hold students to the same academic standard as if they were in person.

“If you don’t know how many students are wearing a mask, it’s really hard to know how they’re doing,” Tucci-Jones said. “It’s just really, really hard.”

Janet Kitajima, a child and adolescent development lecturer, said she was disappointed that the senate didn’t talk more about extending the option. “I felt that the Credit/No Credit extension could relieve students of any stress caused by online learning,” Kitajima said.

“[It was] very disappointing when the senate really said, ‘No.’” Kitajima said over the phone. “I have some students who are struggling with all sorts of awful problems due to these circumstances and I would love for them to have these opportunities to reevaluate Credit/No Credit.”

Kitajima said that the senate should extend the deadline.

“If students are facing much worse circumstances (than online classes), like family members losing jobs and deaths in the family, I think the senate should keep an open mind,” she said.

On April 9, Papazian approved a policy that reopened and extended the Spring 2020 Credit/No Credit petition deadline. The policy was developed by the Academic Senate Executive Committee after students and faculty members voiced their concerns about the negative effect that moving to online classes would have on students’ grades.

The guidelines state that if students receive a credit for a course, their GPA will not be impacted and the class will still fulfill graduation requirements. The policy allows for students to petition for a Credit/No Credit deadline for any grade below a C.

At the beginning of the school year, Cal State Fresno allowed its students to petition for a Credit/No Credit option until Dec. 9, according to an Aug. 20 article by The Collegian, the university’s student-run newspaper.

Students at Cal State Stanislaus have until Nov. 30 to apply for Credit/No Credit courses, according to a Nov. 10 Spartan Daily article.

The ceremony began with a video featuring a plethora of SJSU students, faculty members and community leaders thanking and commending Fauci on his work to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. California State Assemblymember Ash Kalra congratulated Fauci on his award and said the announcement showed the world that scientists can work together for the greater good.

“It is without a doubt about his leadership and dedication to the health and well being of people everywhere. He has saved lives, not just here in California, but across the entire country,” Kalra said.

Follow Stephanie on Twitter @stlais

By Olivia Gerber

San Jose State’s School of Journalism and Mass Communications is honoring disease expert Dr. Anthony Fauci with the school’s highest honor, the Hearst Award during an online ceremony over Zoom Tuesday afternoon.

Fauci was presented with the award to recognize his outstanding communication to the health and well being of people everywhere. He has provided scientific technology advances and that most truths are revealed by independent scientists with no political biases.

“The [Food and Drug Administration] approves those vaccines, but people need to hear the truth, the vaccine and suggest strongly to my friends, to my family and to your students,” Fauci said over the phone.

SJSU President Mary Papazian congratulated Fauci on receiving the award and commended him for his hard work and communication with the American public over the past months.

“The fact that [Fauci] has done so in the face of great stress, uncertainty and pressure demonstrates a level of integrity and honesty that many of our public and political figures have not been willing to emulate,” Papazian said.

Before the ceremony ended, Rucker announced the School of Journalism and Mass Communications was in the process of establishing a new scholarship in Fauci’s name. Journalism professor Halima Kazem and public relations professor Shaun Fletcher said the scholarship would benefit students in the department who are interested in health sciences and mass communications.

During a post-award ceremony meeting with students from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, public relations senior Diana Cook commented on Fauci’s honesty and integrity.

“We don’t have the history and proven record to show that you have stood by the science and not the politics, and then the mask thing was coming, I’m sorry I was wrong, things change,” Cook said. “I think people have now found out more about the pandemic, then you don’t have that believability for future endeavors as well.” Cook said.
Dear Editor,

The anxiety about the future of Greek life overshadows my sorority sisters and me as this Fall semester quickly comes to an end. Many of our sisters plan to have the jarring task of keeping their chapters alive as in-person member recruitment cannot be adapted to online learning. This current pandemic has not been kind to anyone, and students are no exception to that. Anyone, and students are out of one’s control. The future is built upon whether we will be able to return to campus and ultimately our ability to adjust to the changes. I do not see SJSU providing help to students that are here from another country, they also face the issue of finding a job in the U.S. or in their home countries.

I think the reins need to be slightly loosened. I do not see SJSU doing enough to provide help to students. I see that there is some help and workshops but not enough. Also, there are students from overseas that need help as well. I do not see SJSU providing help to students that are here from another country, they also face the issue of finding a job in the U.S. or in their home countries.

Sincerely,

Raye Jessie Santos
Public health senior

Empathize with students

Dear Editor,

This current pandemic has not been kind to anyone, and students are no exception to that. Some students, and even certain curriculums, cannot be adapted to online learning. Regardless of the situation, students are discouraged and cannot complete assignments if they do not have an adequate environment that supports learning. Online and remote learning has made pursuing higher education even more difficult than it was to begin with. Making technology and virtual programs the main vessel to spread vital information to students trying to complete a degree introduces a number of frustrating factors that are out of one’s control. If a student does not have a laptop, stable wifi, or even just a quiet environment to retain class material and successfully complete work, they are automatically at a disadvantage and are less likely to want to continue post-secondary education.

SJSU has been doing a sufficient job in providing technological services for students in need. Last spring, I have been around for quite some time but have become really essential now more than ever. However, I think more can be done regardless of the faculty of SJSU. While I understand every professor underwent training this past summer to be better prepared to teach online, I think everyone would benefit if they brushed up on how to better empathize with their students when things go astray.

Sincerely,

Michaela Serna
Communications junior

Prepare students for jobs

Dear Editor,

Right now, our economy is at the worst it’s been in years. We are losing so many jobs left and right. Every time we look at the news we see more people laid off for unemployment. One, 6.9% of the United States does not have a job. We SJSU students are facing a hard battle of looking for a job in the middle of a pandemic. This is an important issue because a lot of students have massive anxiety and stress while looking for a job. A lot of students have been laid off from their part-time jobs. This added more stress to their lives. Also, many have failed to look for an internship or have lost an internship due to the pandemic. This then results in students not having the experience that employers require in order to get a job. I believe that SJSU is not doing enough to provide help to students. I see that there is some help and workshops but there is not enough. Also, there are students from overseas that need help as well. I do not see SJSU providing help to students that are here from another country, they also face the issue of finding a job in the U.S. or in their home countries.

What SJSU must do is to have support and job fairs for students be ready for a job. There must be workshops that provide students with the skills they need for an online interview. Also, the professors should provide help in any way that they can, such as pointing students in the right direction, for example letting them know where the students can go for help and what services are out there that could help them.

Sincerely,

Mandish Sandhu
Communications senior
Alumni create minimalist jewelry brand

By Stephanie Lam

In creating the online jewelry brand, Meridem the Label, two San Jose State alumni provide customers with minimalist gold and silver necklaces and bracelets while also giving back to their community. Tiffany Nguyen and Matthew Delos Santos, who both graduated from SJSU in 2019, are friends and co-founders of the business. They met through mutual friends as undergraduates and bonded over their interest in wearing and buying jewelry.

Nguyen said she always wanted to own a jewelry business and when shelter-in-place mandates were enacted in spring, she and Delos Santos began researching the steps and paperwork required to establish an online retailer.

“That had a lot of extra free time just staying at home,” Nguyen said over the phone. “Just the thought of [having a business] really ignited a fire in me and I knew this was something that I had to bring to life.”

Nguyen said she and Delos Santos searched online for manufacturers that provided ethical working conditions.

“[Delos Santos and I] wanted to make sure [our manufacturers] paid workers proper wages while being able to provide the quality of jewelry that we wanted,” she said.

Since Meridem the Label launched in September, its Instagram page has accumulated 341 followers as of Nov. 17. Meridem is Latin for “glow,” and Nguyen said the pair chose to name their brand after this word to encapsulate the business’ goal of spreading more positivity in the community by donating its proceeds to non-profits in need.

The business currently donates 10% of its earnings to Operation Underground Railroad, a nonprofit organization that seeks to eliminate child sex trafficking and guides children out of bonded slavery.

“Operation Underground Railroad is non-profit organization that helps children who are trafficked, and we can give back to the community and the business to recommend charities. So many [jewelry] brands focus on making profit. Andres said. I love how [Nguyen and Delos Santos] donate their earnings. We focus on creating a business that gives back to the community and customers. It’s why I bought someone to wear too much jewelry, but I feel like these complement my outfit so well,” Cerda said.

"I've never been someone to wear flashy accessories and I usually like my style, “ Delos Santos said over the phone. “I had a lot of extra free time just staying at home. Just the thought of [having a business] really ignited a fire in me and I knew this was something that I had to bring to life."

Delos Santos said in addition to creating a business that gives back to the community, he and Nguyen also wanted to sell simple jewelry that could be worn for every occasion.

“I just see a lot of younger people wearing every three months and anyone can submit the business to recommend charities.

“We want to make a jewelry brand where we can give back to the community and not just focus on the business and profit,” Nguyen said.

Meridem the Label co-owner and Business administration senior Brian Andrea models the Ash ring and Nova necklace from the brand Meridem the Label.

“Maybe the [business] really fits that type of style,” said Brian Andrea over the phone. “I've never been someone to wear flashy accessories. I usually like my style, “ Delos Santos said over the phone. “I've never been someone to wear flashy accessories. I usually like [Meridem the Label] fits that type of style,”

“[Nguyen and Delos Santos] chose a minimalistic [style] honestly perfect to me,” she said. “I see it for everyday use. If I want to go hang out with some friends, I'll throw a couple earnings . . . because it really shows who serving their community and customers.

“That’s what [Meridem the Label] is doing. I love how [Nguyen and Delos Santos] donate their earnings. Because it really shows who they are as people and what kind of business they want to build.”

Follow Stephanie on Twitter @StephCLam