

HAWAIIAN HELLO

Rangers new and old socialized and played games during Aloha Northwestern on Aug. 16. PAGE 6&7



BACK IN THE GAME

Following a long pandemic pause, sports are back in full swing. Check out what's in store for NWSU football. PAGE 10



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BACK TO SCHOOL

WELCOMING THE RANGERS



Photo by Jordan Green

Paige Robinette, center, a Northwestern peer leader, flashes her Ranger guns as she walks with a group of students during the university's Freshman Orientation event on Ranger Field on Aug. 14. Northwestern welcomed new students when the fall 2021 semester began Aug. 16. For more photos of the event, see Page 8 in this edition of the News.

COVID ON CAMPUS

Coronavirus rules rolled back, but officials watching situation

By **JORDAN GREEN**
Editor-in-Chief

Northwestern officials are encouraging students and staff to be immunized against COVID-19, saying some coronavirus restrictions could be reinstated if active case numbers climb.

"I can't say 'yes' or 'no' at this point," said Calleb Mosburg, the university's dean of student affairs. "There's always a pos-

sibility that it could happen. I think that, if we continue to make the right decisions and be responsible ... we're on track to be able to have a full academic year without having to re-implement these things."

Students across the nation returned to class in August for the second time during the pandemic, but as the highly contagious delta variant spreads, education leaders are weighing safety measures to stop the

See **RULES**, Page 9

Northwestern students, staff sign up for payments under vaccine program

By **JORDAN GREEN**
Editor-in-Chief

More than 200 students, faculty and staff have signed up to earn \$100 as part of Northwestern's new vaccine incentive program, and officials are encouraging more people to participate.

Officials announced Aug. 17 that the university will pay \$100 to all university students and employees who have been

vaccinated or who become vaccinated during the semester. The program began Aug. 16 and ends Nov. 19.

"We're trying not to strong-arm," said Northwestern President Dr. Janet Cunningham. "We're trying to say, 'Help us help you stay in face-to-face classes.'"

Northwestern is one of several universities across Oklahoma that is encouraging immunization as active coronavirus

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NEWS

STUDENTS IN THE LONG, WHITE COATS

Sept. 1 event a chance to meet clubs

By **BENJAMIN KIEWER**
Student Reporter

Northwestern's Student Government Association will give Rangers a chance to learn about campus clubs and make new friends during an event called Meet the Rangers Night on Sept. 1. The Northwestern News spoke with SGA Adviser Olivia Yandel about the event. Here's what you need to know:

Q: Tell us about this event.

A: It is called Meet the Rangers Night, and basically, it used to be a kickoff pep rally for the athletics. But this year, we are tag-teaming it with a club fair as well. Obviously, Northwestern represents more than athletes. We represent students of all different backgrounds, cultures and interests. So, we decided to put the two together.

Q: Where will the event take place?

A: It will be out at Ranger Field. Students can park on the west side [of the] home parking lot, and it will bring you to right where we are going to be at.

Q: What can students do at the event?

A: Right now, we plan to have lawn games out on the football field. We will be handing out 350 free black T-shirts for the black-out game, which is the [Sept. 2] night football game. They can come and meet with the clubs and organizations that have tables or they can go play lawn games with the clubs and organizations.

Q: Which clubs are going to be there?

A: Right now, we have about 10 clubs signed up. ... I am hoping to get at least 20. The RSVP date for the event is Aug. 27.

Q: How can a student participate in the event?

A: Just show up. We are requiring you to have your student ID to get your T-shirt. So, you must have an active student ID

See **RANGERS**, Page 3



ABOVE: Junior nursing students in the Charles Morton Share Trust Division of Nursing don their white coats Friday following a ceremony in their honor. Each year, junior students entering the program receive white coats that they wear during clinical rotations. The ceremony took place in the Student Center Ballroom.

RIGHT: Senior nursing students Kyle Birch, left, and Candyce Marmolejo, right, help junior nursing student Jacylin Longhofer, center, put on her coat.

Photos by Jordan Green



CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: CASE NUMBERS ON CAMPUS AND AROUND THE AREA

STUDENT CASES:

1

active as of Aug. 20. This number includes cases at Northwestern's Alva, Enid and Woodward campuses.

EMPLOYEE CASES:

1

active as of Aug. 20. This number includes cases at Northwestern's Alva, Enid and Woodward campuses.

IN ALVA:

55

active as of Aug. 23. Alva has had a total of 1,036 cases.

IN OKLAHOMA:

23,380

active as of Aug. 23. Oklahoma has had a total of 515,801 cases.

EDITOR'S NOTE: NWOSU reports new active student and employee cases weekly on Fridays at <https://www.nwosu.edu/coronavirus/active-covid-19-cases-nwosu>.

NEWS

VACCINES: Student opinions differ on whether to be immunized against virus

Continued from Page 1

case numbers ramp up across the Sooner State. With the delta variant of the virus spreading, schools across the nation have reinstated mask mandates, and some are requiring students and staffers to become vaccinated.

Northwestern students will be required to show proof of their vaccination before they're eligible for the \$100 incentive. To enter the voluntary program, students must take pictures of the front and back of their vaccination cards. Then, they'll have to email those pictures, along with their names and student ID numbers, to covid@nwosu.edu.

Brenner Clark, a junior nursing major, was one of the first Northwestern students to become immunized in 2021. He said he plans to sign up for the program.

"With the incentive of the money, people will be able to see that and say, 'Hey, if I do this simple thing, then I should be able to get the money, and I'm helping out my community while I'm doing it,'" Clark said.

Payments will come in three rounds, with the first being made Sept. 17. That money will be given to participants who submit proof of vaccination by Sept. 8. Participants who submit proof of vaccination by Oct. 6 will be paid on Oct. 18, and participants who complete the process by Nov. 19 will be paid on Dec. 1.

The university is paying for the program using money it obtained from the CARES Act, which Congress passed to alleviate the financial effects of the pandemic across the nation.

Students must go to the university's business office and sign up to have the money deposited directly into their bank accounts.

College students can use the money from the program to further their educations, Clark said.

"Sometimes, \$100 can be a new book for a college student," Clark said. "In nursing, it probably is going to go pretty quickly, but it's going to a good place, and it's going to help me in the future. It's going toward certifications, membership dues and everything else."



Photo by Jordan Green

Northwestern student Lily Crickmar receives a COVID-19 vaccination from a nursing student during an on-campus vaccine clinic March 24.

Cayla Smither, a graduate student who works at the Share Convalescent Home in Alva, attended a university vaccination clinic Wednesday. She said she was getting vaccinated to protect nursing home residents.

"I just want to be safe," she said. "A lot of people are getting sick, and ... I don't want to get my residents sick."

Smither said she is looking forward to getting her \$100, but that the incentive isn't the main reason she decided to get vaccinated.

"It'll be nice to get the \$100," she said. "If it motivates you, let's all try to beat this COVID virus."

Not all students say money will persuade them to become vaccinated, however.

Chris Heiskell, a sophomore business administration major, said he considered taking the vaccine once the program was announced. For now, he'll hold off.

"It's mostly just kind of my choice and what I feel safe doing," Heiskell said.

Heiskell said he's concerned that vaccines could have negative side effects in the future, but doctors and scientists across the state and nation have publicly said vaccines are safe and effective.

An August poll conducted by Oklahoma City firm Cole, Har-

grave, Snodgrass & Associates found that roughly 65% of Oklahomans believe vaccines are safe and effective. The poll, conducted of 500 registered voters, has a margin of error of 4.3%.

Heiskell said he believes universities should emphasize that becoming vaccinated is a choice.

"I never got offered \$100 to get the flu shot so I could go back to school or get the hepatitis B shot so I could go to college," Heiskell said. "It makes your head wonder, why have they blown this into so big of a proportion to where they're offering to pay people left and right now just to get it?"

Students who have health-related or religious reasons not to be vaccinated can still enter the program, Cunningham said.

"I'm not going to discount that," Cunningham said. "That's all we can do. We can't force people. I wouldn't want to force people."

The university will offer vaccination clinics on Sept. 3 and Sept. 24, allowing Rangers to get the two-dose Moderna and Pfizer vaccines.

More vaccination clinics may be scheduled, and the vaccine is also available at local pharmacies, Cunningham said.

"I'm hoping that it makes a difference," Cunningham said.

RANGERS: Free T-shirts to be offered

Continued from Page 2

to get a T-shirt. After that, it is free-range, so you can go play the games, talk to clubs and organizations.

We will follow-up the event with a pep rally to kick off the athletic season for all our sports and everything. Band will be playing, cheerleaders will be cheering – all that good stuff.

Q: What is your favorite part of the event and why?

A: Just being able to have students support students. Especially this year, I feel like it will be really nice to have a good collection of our athletes, plus all the other people on our campus. Because I feel, a lot of times, athletes may overshadow the students who are involved in many other things that are just as important to making Ranger nation what it is. In years past, it is really cool to see all the students there to support each other, have a good time, get

their free T-shirt and hang out with each other.

Q: Is there anything else students should know about this event?

A: They might want to start lining up early to get the shirts. We plan to start it at 7 [p.m.]. We may move it up depending upon when football gets done with their practices and everything. But right now, start time is planned for 7 [p.m.].

What's up?

AUG. 27:

Friday is the last day to drop classes and receive a 100% refund. It is also the last day to drop classes without having a grade required on 16-week classes.

AUG. 28 and 29:

The annual Lights over Alva event begins at 7 p.m. both nights on the Woods County Courthouse lawn. The event is open to people of all ages and features live music, food trucks, booths from local businesses, games and prizes on Saturday night.

On Sunday night, cup-pong and cornhole tournaments will begin at 7 p.m. Street dance music will be provided by BOSS Music.

SEPT. 2:

Ranger fans are invited to come out and enjoy free food provided by the Student Government Association before the 6 p.m. kick-off of the home-opener football game vs. Southern Arkansas University.

Cornhole and other lawn games will be available. It will take place on the 4th tier at Ranger Field.

SEPT. 6:

Employees and students at Northwestern will be able to enjoy an extended weekend as the university will close for Labor Day on Sept. 6.

Classes will resume and all university offices will be open during regular business hours Sept. 7.

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Letters to the editor shall bear the author's handwritten signature, hometown, classification, title, etc., address and phone number for verification and shall be kept on file. Unsigned letters to the editor will not be published.

Letters must be turned in by noon on Monday to the News office in JDA232. Letters via e-mail are acceptable as long as they follow the rules stated above and can be sent to nwnews@nwosu.edu. Please limit submissions to no more than 250 words. The editors reserve the right to condense or edit any letter for grammar, libel and space limitations. All letters submitted may not be used.

All letters represent the views of the author.

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OPINION

Brighter days are just beyond the clouds

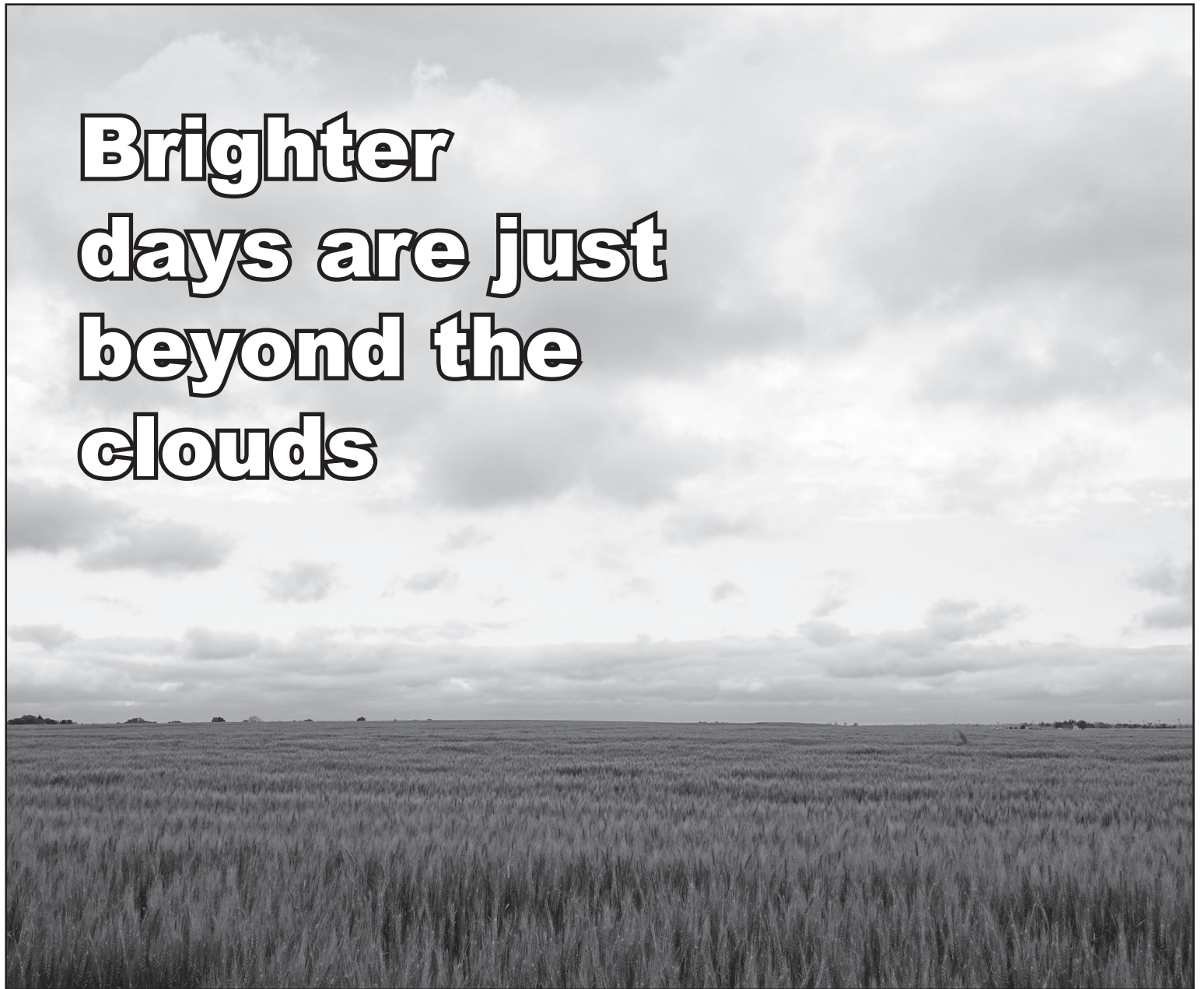


Photo by Jordan Green

A wheat field is shown after a rainstorm in May near the author's home in Blackwell.

A new school year means new beginnings and making positive changes in your life

JORDAN GREEN SAYS



JORDAN GREEN

college.

Doesn't seem like my collegiate career should be halfway over, but here we are.

I was a little dismayed as I drove westward. Rain? Is this an omen? The clouds looked foreboding. That's not the way I wanted to start off the year.

The more I thought about this, though, I realized I just needed to change my frame of thought.

While the stormy weather associated with rain is often seen as a sign of danger (thank you, literary archetypes), rain itself has a cleansing effect.

In a literal sense, it washes away grime and gunk, and it gives life to plants, animals and, of course, us. In a metaphorical sense, it represents new beginnings.

A new school year has a similar effect.

As students return to class, they're

Dark clouds covered the sky, and rain poured down over Highway 11 near Medford on Friday as my parents and I drove to Alva.

I was on my way to Northwestern Oklahoma State University to move into the dorms for my junior year of

being given the chance to start over.

If their grades suffered last year, they can start with an 'A' this year. If they didn't hang around the right crowd in the spring, they can make new friends this fall.

The list of changes goes on and on. I've been looking forward to the new school year, even though I had a spectacular summer overall. I loved my internship, and I've enjoyed every story I've gotten to tell for the newspapers I work for.

I've spent time with my family and friends, and I made new friends.

I've created happy memories that I'll have forever.

But that doesn't mean every part of the summer was perfect. Everyone has challenges, and I faced my fair share, too.

With all things considered, I've been ready for life's next chapter to start for a while. Now, it has.

Classes were back in session on Monday, and though I can tell the school year will be busy, I'm excited for what's in store.

The first two years of my college experience were wonderful, even in spite of the pandemic.

Now that I've got only two more to go, I'm going to do my best to make them just as fun and fruitful.

As my parents and I made our way to Alva in the pouring rain, I looked down the road. Several miles ahead of

us, I could see the sun shining down.

Before I knew it, the storm was over. The sky turned heavenly shades of baby blue and pink, and the grass was a bright, shiny green.

It was a beautiful sight. Thanks to the rain, the world seemed cleaner and fresher than it had in a while.

Does rain have that effect for you? Or have you thought about it in this way before?

If you feel like you're stuck in a funk or need a change in life, consider the changes you can make today.

Perhaps it's just a change in your mindset. You don't have to start a new job, move to a new place or start a new school year.

Try getting up in the mornings and realizing that every day is a new day.

You can make positive changes in your life starting right now. For some, that's as simple as not repeating a mistake today that you made yesterday. (And if you can avoid those, that's a great new beginning.)

I settled into my dorm with the same mindset. I've been given a fresh start.

This is a new chapter in my life, and I'm already starting it off on a high note. In hindsight, that rain storm wasn't bad at all. It was a sign that brighter days are yet to come.

Sometimes, they're just down the road – and we just have to look for them.

OPINION

Welcome back, Rangers

By **DR. JANET CUNNINGHAM**
Guest Columnist

Welcome back, students! I am excited to see such an active campus again while being able to meet and greet many of you.

These last two weeks have already been extremely busy, and I hope you have had the opportunity to make connections.

As you have noticed, Northwestern is moving forward with our school year as planned, which is a traditional classroom set-up with no face covering mandate.

Of course, we encourage wearing face coverings if you feel comfortable.

We are watching COVID data and reports to ensure we are making the best decisions.

With moving toward normalcy, I am ex-

cited to attend concerts and plays, sporting events, and get to know our students on a personal level.

If you see me around campus, please come say “Hi” and introduce yourself. I enjoy meeting our Ranger family and hope you have the best experiences on our campuses.

To make the best of your time as a student, I have some tips to share with you.

My number one tip to succeeding during the school year is to attend your classes.

Northwestern does have an attendance rule in place, and our instructors do notice if you’re missing.

You will meet new people, you will learn more and retain more information, and you will receive personal attention from your instructors when in the classroom.

Some instructors may even give partic-

ipation points!

I highly encourage you to get involved on campus.

The culture at Northwestern is very welcoming, which leads to great student organizations and clubs. Ask questions and get involved – you will be a busy student if you do so!

If you find there isn’t an organization that fits your interests, visit with Student Services and develop your own group.

My last tip for you is to choose an organizational system that fits your needs.

Whether you’re an avid user of sticky notes or prefer to keep your calendar of activities on an electronic device, stay organized and on top of your assignments and commitments. If this is something you struggle with, purchase a planner and hand-write all your activities while also

placing them in your cell phone calendar.

Writing your items down, along with an alert from your phone, will help you remember your schedule. As we look ahead, I encourage you to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. This not only adds a layer of protection for yourself, but also helps protect your loved ones as you return to your families over the breaks and holidays.

We have a great incentive program that was recently announced and we encourage you to take part in that. I am looking forward to seeing you at all the events Northwestern has to offer this year and happy you chose to become a Ranger.

Ride Rangers Ride,

President Janet Cunningham

Dr. Janet Cunningham is the president of Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

Play time is over for some of us; let’s get back to work

By **DEVYN LANSDEN**
Editorial Editor

If you snap your fingers, that is how fast summer went by.

I am officially a senior, and I am kind of terrified. But I am also very excited because I have a lot of things going on. I am not going to get into that today, though.

What did I do this summer? Not a lot, but I am still going to tell you.

I worked in the recruitment office all summer with my friends and fellow student workers, Nick and Scotty. We gave a ton of tours.

During the summer, not much goes on around campus, but we stay busy giving tours and helping out with summer camps.

I went to Beaver a lot and saw my family, which was my favorite part of the whole summer.

I tried to go home as much as I could because I knew that, once school started, I would be busy.

We got a new puppy, and he has been going through his terrible twos. His name is Otis, and he has the craziest personality I have ever seen in a dog.

He is so funny, and my dad tells me all the time that, one day, I am going to have to take Otis. I would not be mad.

I have an interest in video, so this summer, I got a camera, and that also turned into an interest in taking pictures.

I used my model, Otis, of course. I also took some pictures of a friend playing basketball just to get some practice in. I took

**“Let’s all work hard
this semester and get
things done.”**

— **Devyn Lansden**

family pictures of my friend’s kids.

The month of July was very eventful. I turned 21 on July 3, got my wisdom teeth taken out and went to Las Vegas with my family.

I always hear horror stories about wisdom teeth surgeries, but mine was not bad at all.

I just was in pain for what felt like forever, but it was only a week and a few days. I was on a

strict rule: every four hours, take Advil. I was on that schedule for a while. But as soon as I felt better, it was already time to fly to Vegas.

My boyfriend, Eli, came with us to Vegas. He is scared of heights, if that tells you anything about how the flight went.

No, I’m kidding. He was fine, and when we got to Vegas, it made it all worth it.

A “Devyn moment” happened before we left, though. My driver’s license expired more than a year ago.

No one noticed, so everything was fine. But, of course, that would have happened to me.

We went at the end of July, so when we got back, I was super sad because that meant school was starting soon.

The rest of the summer, I hung out in Alva getting ready for school.

I am in NSA, and I am a peer leader for a Ranger Connection class this year. So, that was something I looked forward to.

We had a meeting one day before Freshmen Orientation, and I have had one class so far. I love the kids I have in it. I am so lucky and excited for this opportunity.

This summer was a little uneventful, but I enjoyed every day with my family and friends.

I know this year will have many “lasts,” and I cannot believe I am almost done.

But I will cherish every moment. Let’s all work hard this semester and get things done.

Have a great school year, everyone.



Photo by Devyn Lansden

Editorial Editor Devyn Lansden’s dog, Otis, chases a ball during a game of fetch in June.

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Photo by Devyn Lansden

Otis pants after a game of fetch and poses for the camera.



ABOVE: Students pose for a group picture (Photo by Devyn Lansden).



ABOVE: Students line up to get food. (Photo by Devyn Lansden).



ABOVE: Northwestern student Bubba Furlong, left, watches his dog Zorro while Northwestern student Anthony Jones, right, watches his dog Legend. (Photo by Jordan Green).



BACK TO SCHOOL

HOWDY FROM HAWAII

At Aloha Northwestern, the rowdy Rangers return

They're back! Northwestern students returned to class Aug. 16 following a summer of relative freedom — compared to most of 2020, that is. Coronavirus restrictions have been lifted on campus, meaning students are able to socialize without distancing. They did just that on Aug. 16 when the Student Government Association hosted Aloha Northwestern, an annual event featuring outdoor cooking, inflatables, music and games. Here's how the scene looked.



TOP: Students play a game of volleyball during Aloha Northwestern (Photo by Devyn Lansden.) ABOVE: Students cheer on a teammate during a game of kickball (Photo by Jordan Green).



TOP: Sophomore nursing major Ella Freyman, left, and Holli Black, a sophomore accounting major, right, brave the rock-climbing tower at Aloha Northwestern (Photo by Jordan Green). ABOVE: A Northwestern student shows off her Ranger guns (Photo by Devyn Lansden).

FEATURE

BACK TO SCHOOL



Photos by Jordan Green

Members of Northwestern's freshman class sit in a small group on Ranger Field during Freshman Orientation on Aug. 14. Students participated in a variety of events during the day.

FIELD DAY

Freshmen participate in orientation events on Ranger Field



ABOVE: Dean of Student Affairs Calleb Mosburg, right, greets students during the university's Freshman Orientation events on Ranger Field Aug. 14. **RIGHT:** Alva Mayor Kelly Parker speaks to students during the university's Freshman Orientation events.

CAMPUS

SGA officers host meet-and-greet

By **JORDAN GREEN**
Editor-in-Chief

Northwestern's Student Government Association officers spoke with nearly two dozen Rangers about getting involved in the organization during a meet-and-greet in the Student Center on Monday night.

"Our goal was to put a name to a face with all the officers," said SGA President Dawson Maxwell. "I feel like we accomplished that."

As the new school year begins, officers say they want to increase participation in the organization, which plans events and serves as a liaison between students and university administrators.

"One of my personal goals for SGA is to increase the amount of senators we have," Maxwell said. "If we increase the amount of senators we have, every person has a different background and different views and everything, so they can better represent the whole student body."

Student body senators vote on issues brought before the SGA. Senators are expected to attend meetings and discuss matters with other members. At first, the job can be difficult, and meeting procedures are sometimes hard to



Photo by Jordan Green

Student Government Association Vice President Yosbelli Lora, right, speaks to Northwestern students during the SGA's meet-and-greet event Monday night in the Student Center. SGA officers are hoping to increase participation in the organization by reaching out to students to increase representation in the student body.

understand, Maxwell said.

By speaking to students before the SGA's first official meeting, Maxwell said he hoped to allevi-

ate their anxiety and build rapport with other members.

"This was a little fun way to not be so formal the first time and

kind of introduce us officers," Maxwell said.

Olivia Yandel, the SGA adviser, said the organization helps

students stay connected and informed about campus events.

"We also are the club with the most power," Yandel said. "If you want to make a difference on this campus, if you want to change things, if you guys want to make Northwestern better, SGA is the club to be in."

The organization's first meeting will be Monday at 6 p.m. in the Senate Chambers above the Student Center. Meetings will last about an hour, officials said.

"We have food at every single one of our meetings, whether it's queso, salsa, popsicles, cookies or Chex-Mix," Yandel said. "Feel free to come and hang out with us and learn about Northwestern."

Freshman Cora Beth Taylor attended the meeting and said she plans to join the organization.

"I learned that there is a lot to do on campus," she said. "The more you do, the more fun you have, and the more people you meet, and the better time you have on campus. It just makes me excited because I've always been the person that, I love people."

Taylor said she looks forward to serving other students as an SGA senator.

"It'll give me an opportunity to have a voice on campus, to represent my fellow students," Taylor said.

RULES: Mask mandate would be hard to bring back under new law

Continued from Page 1
virus from sweeping through schools.

Northwestern joined other schools and universities when it switched to distance learning at the start of the pandemic in 2020. Students returned to class in August 2020 with mask mandates and dormitory visitation restrictions in place for the school year.

Those rules were lifted before the start of the 2021 – 2022 school year at Northwestern, but masking remains optional for students and employees.

Mosburg didn't say whether a specific number of active cases would trigger a return to previous rules.

"I continue to come back to stressing vaccination," Mosburg said. "I want to give us every opportunity that we can to be able to stay on campus, not have to have masks on, to move back to normal."

While pandemic rules were repealed campus-wide, the changes were particularly notable in the university's dormitories, said Matt Adair, the university's housing director. In the last school year, students were required to wear masks any time they were outside their dorm rooms, and visitation was limited.

Those rules are gone, and "we are happy to be smiling at each

other in the hallways again," Adair said.

Some coronavirus safety restrictions could be more challenging to revive than others.

Senate Bill 658, which the state legislature passed this year, bars public schools from implementing mask mandates unless Gov. Kevin Stitt issues an emergency declaration for the area the school is in.

Stitt has said repeatedly he won't issue a declaration. Instead, he's promoted the vaccine as being safe and effective and continues to say that masking is a matter of personal responsibility.

Some Oklahoma public schools, however, already have

implemented mask mandates that appear to be in conflict with state law as the virus spreads in their districts.

"Any decision like that would be consulted with our legal team," Mosburg said. "Right now, I'm not going to say 'yes,' or I'm not going to say 'no,' but I think there's going to have to be definitely some legal consult that would happen if that decision ever came into the realm of possibility."

SICK STUDENTS: STAY HOME

Students who have been exposed to someone with

COVID-19 or who have symptoms of the virus themselves should self-quarantine and notify the Student Services office, Mosburg said.

"If they start developing symptoms, then don't come to class, but communicate with your faculty, communicate with my office here," Mosburg said.

The university will work with students who have the virus on a "case-by-case basis," Mosburg said.

"Some instructors may have Zoom access or have a virtual option for them," Mosburg said. "The biggest thing is communica-

tion between the student and the instructor.

"Our faculty do a great job of working with students."

The university is no longer performing its own contact tracing, Mosburg said. That work will be left up to local health officials, including the county health department.

University officials continue to monitor local coronavirus data, Mosburg said.

"I think, this year, we're moving forward, and people are doing so responsibly," Mosburg said. "A great way of moving forward is to get the vaccine if you can."

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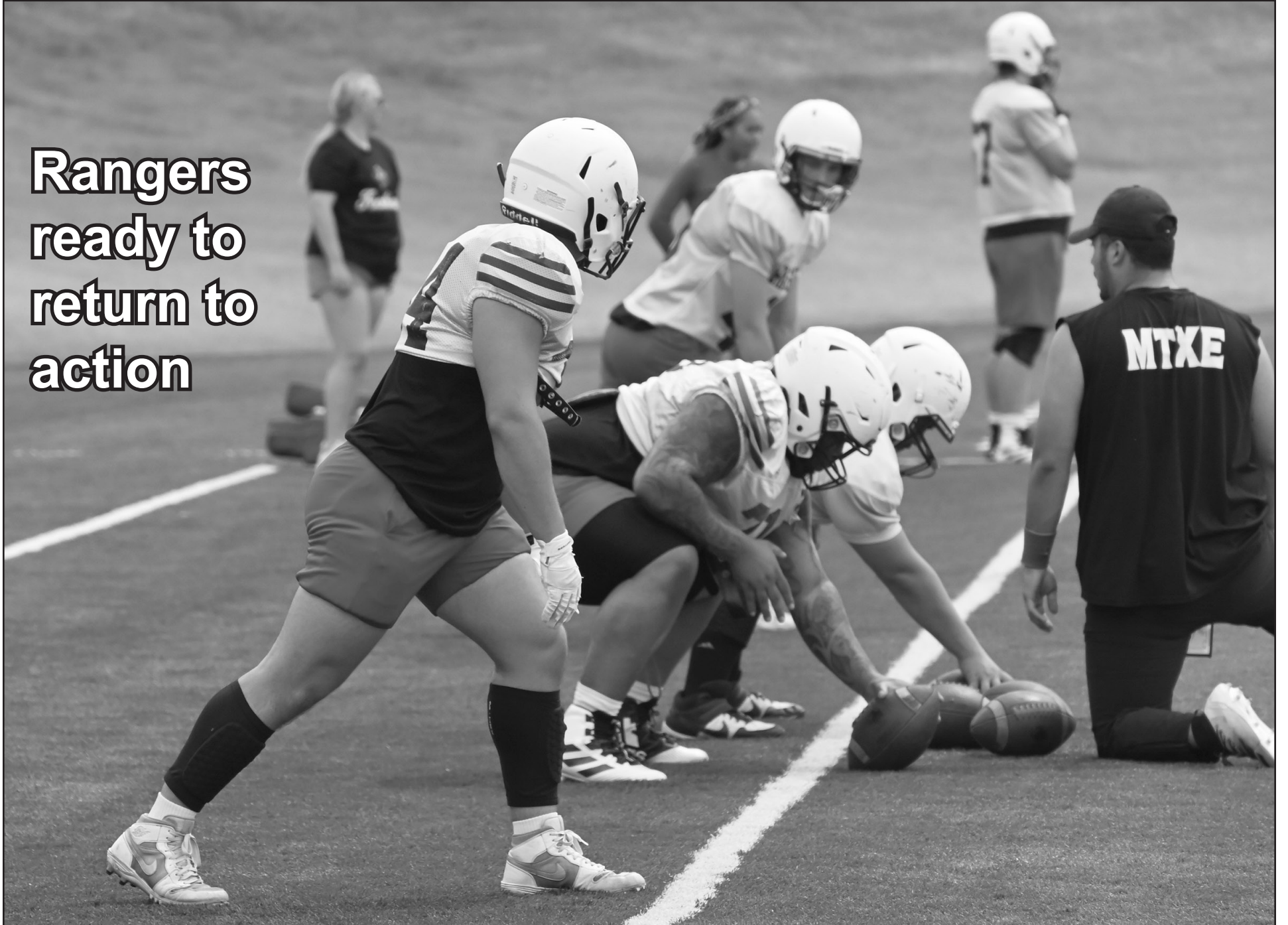
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SPORTS

FOOTBALL

THE BOYS OF FALL

**Rangers
ready to
return to
action**



Photos by Devyn Lansden

Members of the Northwestern football team prepare to snap the ball during a practice on Ranger Field on Aug. 18. The team's season starts Sept. 2 against Southern Arkansas University.

By **CADE KENNEDY**
Sports Editor

After waiting two years for a football game, the Rangers will take the field Sept. 2 following a 4-7 season in 2019.

The Rangers will face a problem that several teams across the Great American Conference will deal with: a lack of experience.

"We essentially have three different classes of freshman getting ready for football," said Matt Walter, the head coach of the Rangers.

The Rangers will not be completely without experience, however, as they have 14 starters and 43 lettermen returning.

The Rangers have made some changes in terms of coaching on both sides of the ball. Josh Evans is the new passing game coordinator for the Rangers. Ken Gordon, the defensive coordinator, was named the assistant head coach.

Despite several teams facing the same issues as the Rangers, Northwestern was ranked 9th out of the 12 teams in the GAC pre-

season coaches' poll. Ouachita Baptist, the defending conference champion, was selected as the favorite to win the conference.

Some players say they are not worried about the preseason polls. They say they just want to get out on the field and compete.

"I'm just looking forward to getting to play after nearly two years," kicker Connor O'Neal said. O'Neal is one of several players who was a freshman in 2019 but had to redshirt because of COVID-19.

"I'm looking forward to see how we compete this year," said kicker Shea Yurkunas.

The players are not the only ones with this mindset, however.

"I'm looking forward to being out on the field and competing again," Walter said. "Many of the players got to see their friends get to have a season while they did not, so I'm sure they want to be out on the field, too."

The first game of the season will be Sept. 2 at Ranger Field. Northwestern will play the Muleriders of Southern Arkansas. The game will start at 6 p.m., and fans are encouraged to dress in

black for the game. The Rangers have maintained a 1-6 record against the Muleriders since 2013, with the lone win coming in 2017.

The next home game will be Sept. 25 against East Central at 6 p.m. The Rangers and Tigers have won four games against each other since 2012.

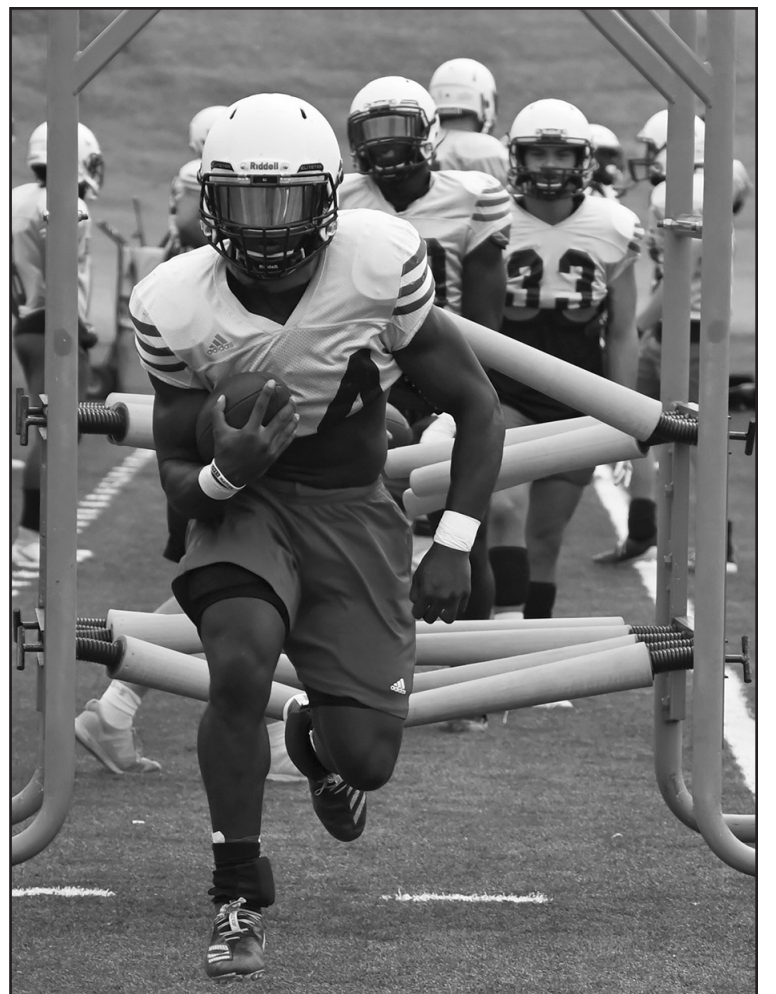
The next home game will be during Homecoming weekend Oct. 9 against Arkansas-Monticello at 4 p.m.

The Rangers have maintained a 5-3 record against the Boil Weevils since 2012.

On Oct. 23, Northwestern will take on Southern Nazarene at 3 p.m. at Ranger Field. The Rangers have maintained a 6-2 record against the Crimson Storm since 2012.

The next week, the Rangers will play Harding on Oct. 30 at 2 p.m. at Ranger Field. Northwestern has not beaten the Bisons since joining the GAC.

The final home game of the season will be against Southwestern on Nov. 13 at 3 p.m. Northwestern has kept a 4-3 record against the Bulldogs since 2013.



Northwestern football players are shown during practice Aug. 18.

SPORTS



Photos by Devyn Lansden

The Northwestern soccer team played a home exhibition game against the Southwestern College Moundbuilders on Aug. 21. Starting Sept. 2, the Northwestern women's soccer team will play its first full season since 2019.

BOUNCE BACK

Ranger soccer ready for first full season since 2019

By CONNOR GRAY
Assistant Editor

Starting Sept. 2, the Northwestern women's soccer team will play its first full season since 2019, and no coronavirus restrictions will be in place.

"We are really looking forward to having a full 18-game schedule after an abbreviated season with COVID last year, and having a strong 31-player roster so we have depth and competition at all positions," said Alex Piekarski, the head coach for women's soccer.

The team had a short season in the spring, playing six conference games and one non-conference game. The team lost five games and tied twice, with most of their losses being by one point.

Because of the pandemic, the team didn't get to show what it was made of, Piekarski said. Safety precautions made practicing difficult.

Players no longer have to wear masks, making communication easier, Piekarski said.

The team has 18 returning players and 13 new players, including freshmen and transfers. Piekarski said he has enjoyed seeing them come together as a team.

"Our team did a really good job laying out their goals for the season, with everyone continuing to work and grow while maintaining a positive team first approach," Piekarski said. "We feel that if we are able to sustain that throughout the season that the results will take care of themselves."

His players say they feel the



A Northwestern soccer team member plays during a home exhibition game against the Southwestern College Moundbuilders on Aug. 21.

same way.

Caitlyn Bidart, one of team's defenders, said practices have changed this year.

"It felt good to finally be able to breathe again, as wearing the mask made it difficult to catch my breath," Bidart said.

Reagan Allen, a goalkeeper, said the team is keeping a positive mindset.

"We're very excited to get to play since we are finally getting a chance to have a full season and to show what we can do," Allen said.

The team played a home exhibition game against Southwestern College from Kansas on Saturday.

After three 30-minute periods, the girls dominated with a tally of five goals to Southwestern's one goal. After giving up the first goal, the defense for Northwestern refused to let Southwestern score. The offense put more pressure on Southwestern's defense.

Northwestern will have two more exhibition games before the season starts on Sept. 2 against Midwestern State University of Texas.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR RANGER SPORTS:

| Date | Sport | Team | Location | Time | Special Event |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-----------------|
| 8-26-21 | WSOC | at Oral Roberts University | Tulsa, OK | 5:30 PM | (Exhibition) |
| 8-28-21 | WSOC | vs Fort Hays State University | Alva, OK | 6:00 PM | (Exhibition) |
| 9-2-21 | WSOC | vs Midwestern State University | Alva, OK | 3:00 PM | |
| 9-2-21 | FB | vs Southern Arkansas University | Alva, OK | 6:00 PM | [Blackout] |
| 9-3-21 | WVB | vs Texas A&M - Kingsville | San Angelo, TX | 2:00 PM | {Angelo St.} |
| 9-3-21 | WVB | vs Anderson University (SC) | San Angelo, TX | 8:00 PM | {Angelo St.} |
| 9-4-21 | MXC | vs Wichita State University | Wichita, KS | 8:30 AM | |
| 9-4-21 | WXC | vs Wichita State University | Augusta, KS | 9:00 AM | |
| 9-4-21 | WVB | vs Western Colorado University | San Angelo, TX | 10:00 AM | {Angelo St.} |
| 9-4-21 | WVB | at Angelo State University | San Angelo, TX | 6:00 PM | {Angelo St.} |
| 9-5-21 | WSOC | at Newman University | Wichita, KS | 2:00 PM | |
| 9-7/8-21 | WGOLF | vs SWOSU | Blue Springs, MO | | |
| Central Region Fall Preview | | | | | |
| 9-9-21 | WVB | at Friends University (Kan.) | Wichita, KS | 6:00 PM | |
| 9-10-21 | WXC | vs Cameron University | Lawton, OK | 8:00 AM | |
| 9-10-21 | MXC | vs Cameron University | Lawton, OK | 8:35 AM | |
| 9-10-21 | WVB | at Pittsburg State University | Pittsburg, KS | 9:00 AM | {Pitt St. (KS)} |
| 9-10-21 | WSOC | at U of Nebraska at Kearney | Kearney, NE | 2:00 PM | |
| 9-10-21 | WVB | vs St. Mary's University (TX) | Pittsburg, KS | 4:30 PM | {Pitt St. (KS)} |
| 9-11-21 | WVB | vs Truman State University | Pittsburg, KS | 12:30 PM | {Pitt St. (KS)} |
| 9-11-21 | WVB | vs University of Sioux Falls (S.D.) | Pittsburg, KS | 5:30 PM | {Pitt St. (KS)} |
| 9-11-21 | FB | at Henderson State University | Arkadelphia, AR | 6:00 PM | |
| 9-12-21 | WSOC | at Wayne State College | Wayne, NE | NOON | |
| 9-13/14-21 | WGOLF | vs Northeastern St. | Broken Arrow, OK | | |
| 2021 NSU Women's Classic | | | | | |
| 9-13/14-21 | MGOLF | vs Southern Naz. | Oklahoma City, Ok | | |
| GAC Preview | | | | | |
| 9-14-21 | WVB | vs SEOSU | Alva, OK | 6:00 PM | |
| 9-15-21 | WSOC | at Panhandle St. | Goodwell, OK | 7:00 PM | |
| 9-17/18/19-21 | M&WRODEO | vs Colby CC | Colby, KS | | |
| 9-18-21 | WXC | vs Bethel College (KS) | North Newton, KS | 10:00 AM | |
| 9-18-21 | MXC | vs Bethel College (KS) | North Newton, KS | 10:45 AM | |
| 9-18-21 | FB | at Oklahoma Baptist | Shawnee, OK | 6:00 PM | |
| 9-18-21 | WSOC | vs Oklahoma Christian | Alva, OK | 7:00 PM | |
| 9-19-21 | WVB | at Fort Hays State | Hays, KS | 2:00 PM | |
| 9-20/21-21 | MGOLF | vs Northeastern State | Muskogee, OK | | |
| 2021 NSU Men's Golf Classic | | | | | |
| 9-21-21 | WVB | at Southern Naz. | Bethany, OK | 7:00 PM | |
| 9-24-21 | WXC | vs Emporia State University | Emporia, KS | 5:15 PM | |
| EMPORIA STATE XC INVITATIONAL | | | | | |
| 9-24-21 | MXC | vs Emporia State University | Emporia, KS | 6:00 PM | |
| EMPORIA STATE XC INVITATIONAL | | | | | |
| 9-24-21 | WVB | vs Oklahoma Baptist | Alva, OK | 7:00 PM | |
| 9-25-21 | WVB | vs Bethel College (KS) | Alva, OK | 1:00 PM | |
| 9-25-21 | WVB | vs Central Christian (Kan.) | Alva, OK | 3:00 PM | |
| 9-25-21 | FB | vs East Central University | Alva, OK | 6:00 PM | [Family Day] |
| 9-28-21 | WSOC | vs SWOSU | Alva, OK | 6:00 PM | |
| 9-28-21 | WVB | vs SWOSU | Alva, OK | 7:00 PM | |
| 9-30/10-1/2-21 | M&WRODEO | vs SEOSU | Durant, OK | | |
| 9-30-21 | WSOC | vs East Central | Alva, OK | 6:00 PM | |
| 10-1-21 | WVB | at East Central | Ada, OK | 6:00 PM | |
| 10-2-21 | FB | at Ouachita Baptist | Arkadelphia, AR | NOON | |
| 10-4/5-21 | MGOLF | vs Henderson State | Hot Springs, AR | | |
| Battle for the Belt | | | | | |
| 10-5-21 | WVB | at Oklahoma Christian | Oklahoma City, OK | 6:00 PM | |
| 10-7/8/9-21 | M&WRODEO | vs Oklahoma St. | Stillwater, OK | | |
| 10-7-21 | WSOC | at Harding University | Searcy, AR | 5:00 PM | |
| 10-8-21 | WVB | at Henderson State | Arkadelphia, AR | 6:30 PM | |
| 10-9-21 | M&WXC | vs Fort Hays State | Victoria, KS | 9:00 AM | |
| FHSU TIGER OPEN | | | | | |
| 10-9-21 | WSOC | at Ouachita Baptist | Arkadelphia, AR | NOON | |
| 10-9-21 | WVB | at Ouachita Baptist | Arkadelphia, AR | NOON | |
| 10-9-21 | FB | vs Arkansas-Monticello | Alva, OK | 4:00 PM | [Homecoming] |
| 10-10-21 | WGOLF | vs Henderson State | Hot Springs, AR | | |
| 2021 NCAA DII Central Region Preview | | | | | |
| 10-14-21 | WSOC | vs Oklahoma Baptist | Alva, OK | 6:00 PM | |
| 10-15-21 | WVB | vs Arkansas Tech | Alva, OK | 6:00 PM | |
| 10-16-21 | WVB | vs Harding | Alva, OK | 1:00 PM | |
| 10-16-21 | WSOC | at Southern Naz. | Bethany, OK | 1:00 PM | |
| 10-16-21 | FB | at SEOSU | Durant, OK | 2:00 PM | |



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BACK TO SCHOOL

A NIGHT WITH THE STARS



Students gathered on the lawn near Coronado Hall to watch the movie “White Chicks” at 9 p.m. on Aug. 17 as part of the Student Government Association’s slew of events for “Howdy Week,” the first week of the fall semester. Students sat on blankets and ate snacks during the viewing of the film.

Photos by Jordan Green