

Campus slowly reopens

College offers one-third as many in-person classes as pre-pandemic

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Photo courtesy of Thomas Wasson

In-person classes pre-Covid were just classes, and online learning was a small percentage of the overall courses offered at Clackamas Community College.

While CCC is trying to ramp up a “return to campus,” only 463 classes were held entirely in-person in the fall 2021 term, about one-third as many as before the pandemic in fall of 2019.

Only 388 courses were approved for winter 2022 as of Dec. 2, which is fewer than in fall 2021; the college said more courses might be approved for in-person

instruction before classes start on Jan. 3.

In fall 2021, five times as many courses were held in an online, remote or hybrid fashion, with 980 courses requiring some online component. In 2019, only 171 courses had an online component, according to data from the college.

While the Cougar Cafe reopened in October, other campus resources remain closed such as the library and the weight room. Student services such as financial aid and advising are not available in person.

After Covid, everything changed in a hurry; online classes became the norm and in-person classes were shut down due to quarantine and other pandemic-related procedures.

Graphic design instructor Thomas Wasson brought his courses back to in-person this fall after teaching them online for the 2020-2021 school year.

“I teach all my classes in person this quarter,” said Wasson, who teaches graphic design, animation and motion graphics. “I’m really happy that we’re back at the college. The students are happy that we’re in college. We still have to be careful. So there’s mitigating aspects like the masks and the distancing and all that makes it kind of challenging, but it’s still worth it.” Wasson said not everything is the same.

“One thing I noticed was some students are more timid and not used to being as social,” Wasson said. “It’s really important to just talk with your instructors, but the benefit of being here together is to acknowledge each other.” Burgess said advantages to remote learning are accessibility and

“If you can take your class from anywhere and at a variety of times in a variety of formats, that’s good for people who have constraints, schedules, and those who have disabilities,” he said. “There are ways in which online learning is positive, but I think in turn they’re mostly about access to the classes, not about actually learning the material. When it comes to learning the material, people just learn better there. You’re able to have a back and forth in a physical space.”

Instructors who want to teach in person have to apply to bring their courses on campus.

Wasson said he welcomes students back.

“As for advice, just follow the guidelines, read up on the safety guides on masking, social distancing, wash your hands really well, all that stuff that everybody’s been doing for a year,” Wasson said. “If you remember being in classes, but you haven’t been in awhile, just come in, take classes, and remember that communication is always important.”

Cougar Cafe returns

After being closed for almost two years, the Cougar Cafe reopened for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

The cafe reopened with limited hours at the start of the fall 2021 term, serving students and faculty Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The cafe’s menu features food items including pizza, burgers, wraps, beverages and other menu options; indoor dining is available.

— REILLY SMITH



Students work inside the Cougar Cafe. Photo by Reilly Smith.