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March 25:

Teams react to cancelled seasons



[Mitchell Breuer](#), Editor-In-Chief

March 25, 2020

The week of spring break was supposed to be one not much different from a regular week for Winona State University athletics.

Teams traveled out of the state for competition as they usually would during this time hoping for success, not knowing that this would be their last week of competition for the rest of the spring season due to the rise of the COVID-19 in the United States.

The men and women's golf teams were making their way home after a trip to Las Vegas. The men were impressive in their two invites, placing second in the Minot Vegas Invite and first in the Warrior Vegas Invite, while the women placed eighth of ten teams in their lone invite of the week.

"I mean, what you do?" Jeff Straight, head coach of the men's golf team said. "I guess it's helping, who knows? It's just sad they straight away cancelled everything but, it is what it is."

For Straight it is especially tough because he believed his team was one of the best Winona State has had, as they ranked fourth in the Central Region and 43rd in the nation (the next highest-ranking conference member being 95th).

The team also ranked 15th in the nation in scoring with a team average of 290.

There was a good chance that the Warriors could move into the top-25 by eight a year.

“We would have definitely made regionals, that was a given, not a gift but given because of our status,” Straight said. “Our goal was to make national at St Louis, we definitely had the team to do that. So, this is very disappointing.”

The positive for Straight’s team was that they had played a majority of their season, being a both fall and spring sport, similar to women’s tennis, who were also competing during this time frame.

The same could not be said for Winona State’s baseball and softball teams, who had not started conference play yet.

Both were in Florida as the talks of potential postponement were quickly getting louder as the week progressed.

“It was so fast,” Greg Jones, head coach of the Warrior softball team said.

“Obviously, it is very unprecedented but I think it was the speed at which it was happening made it more challenging. You were constantly doing two things; you were trying to learn and absorb the information and, at the same time you were trying to disseminate the information. You’re trying to be honest and upfront with your team, while at the same time trying to wrap your own head around it and that became really challenging because it was literally happening as we were playing.”

The softball team had played six games, winning four and losing two, when they began hearing more about the coronavirus on Wednesday, March 11.

“We had an off day on Wednesday, like we normally do in the middle of the week and that night we always meet as a team,” Jones said. “We addressed [the students] because that was the first time they made a decision about the NCAA basketball tournament being played without fans. It was then that first email had come from

campus about spring break being extended. It became very real that things were going to change.”

Despite the feeling that a change was coming, Jones said there was no indication that a full-on season cancellation was about to happen.

However, during their games on Thursday, March 12, Jones said he began to hear more speculation on the future of the season and by the end of the day, the announcement had come that the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) was canceling spring sport’s championships.

Jones said he would try to handle the situation through things he could control.

“In our sport, there is a lot of stuff that can happen that is out of your control from umpires to fans to weather, things of that nature,” Jones said. “The other is that we always preach to our players that this game doesn’t define us, and it is never about us, the game is bigger than us. We still had games to play on Friday, we didn’t know what was going to happen when we got home, so let’s stay focused on what we can control.”

As for how his team reacted, Jones recognized how well they handled the situation but did not dismiss the sobering feeling, to which he described as “somebody flipping the checkerboard in the middle of the game.”

However, this did not stop the team from ending their season on a high note.

The Warriors would come out and win their final four games, ending their season with a record of 13-6.

“I think our performance was one of my biggest takeaways for me,” Jones said. “It was the maturity that were able to deal with it early in the day. It would’ve been really easy for them to be selfish there and they weren’t. They played for each other.”

Among the key factors to the team's success were their seniors, a group that will go in Winona State history as one of the best, with the highest winning percentage of any class in Warrior softball history.

Senior pitchers Jordyn Kleman and Alyssa Van Valey scored wins in their final starts at the mound and fellow senior Alexis Keklsey ended her Winona State career the same way she started: with a home run at her final at-bat.

Heading into the team's final games, Jones knew that he needed to honor the graduating group.

"We've made a big deal every year how important our senior class was to us," Jones said. "We don't name captains, we never have, so our seniors are kind of our pseudo-captains, they are our leadership. So, it has always been a big deal to celebrate them one last time. It was going to be a big year anyway, then to get it cut short and then to do things on the fly, it was really emotional. Thursday night, after our games we met with just the seniors, there was a lot of tears and a lot of emotion. On Friday, I just made the decision that winning and losing didn't matter and that it was all about getting them to walk off the field together. This was a group that really help shaped our culture the right way."

So, where are we now?

The golf team made moves to attempt get more tee time before courses shut down like many other businesses in the country.

"Some of my guys went to Arizona and they are there now playing golf," Straight said. "They were just like, 'let's go to Arizona'. Flights [were cheap] and there a couple of guys had family members from there, which is really nice"

Meanwhile, the softball team continues to adjust to living without their usual busy spring schedule.

"I think some of the other challenges they are facing is loneliness," Jones said. "We were used to being a family and being around each other. Now, everybody is back at their homes and we are scattered around the map. They have handled it

extraordinarily well because they understand this isn't about them, but I think they are heartbroken. I've been getting a lot of texts and communication from our team and, I know they just want to get back here and get started again."

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What to expect in crisis counseling



[Ren Gennerman](#), Copy Editor

March 25, 2020

While college can be a stressful time for most, more students are finding themselves at a breaking point that demands emergency assistance. When this happens, many turn to the free counseling services on campus.

According to Kateri Johnson, interim director of counseling services at Winona State University, when students come in for non-emergency help, they are first entered into the computer system through a screening form. On this form, they ask basic information such as the person's name, student ID, birth date and an emergency contact.

After that, students have two questions they must answer: Do you feel that you would be at risk of harming yourself or someone else if you are not being seen today, and have you been sexually assaulted in the last two weeks and you are here because you want support in that?

If anyone marks yes to either of those questions, they are seen with a walk-in counselor. If they mark no, they are then invited to make an appointment to assess needs with the triage counselor before seeing a regular counselor.

However, if a student were to mark "yes" to either of those questions, or were referred by a faculty member or RA, the process looks very different from the scheduled sessions. A walk-in counselor is available Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will see them usually within a half hour of their arrival. According to Johnson, students may or may not be free to leave and come back.

"If someone marks yes, they are suicidal, they have to stay in the office. The front desk cannot allow them to leave," Johnson said. "If the person marks [yes to the sexual assault question], but they say, 'I'm going to go to class, but can I come back?' they can go and come back and are still seen that day."

If a student marked that they were at risk of hurting themselves, the counselor starts with the explanation of the confidential process and that their purpose is to keep that student safe. From there, the student and counselor determine what needs to be done in that moment. This includes a suicide-risk assessment followed by what needs to happen from there.

"We're not making long-term plans here. The plan is how do you get through today, tomorrow, maybe even the next week," Johnson said. "If they express being suicidal with a plan, we talk about going to the hospital and it's not often that someone is

resistant to going to a hospital. If they're coming up here, they have a feeling that's what they need, we are the kind of the conduit to get there.”

If a student wishes to go to the hospital, the counselor has a frank conversation about what will happen. Some students call parents or friends to go with them, but some choose to keep it to themselves.

If they keep it to themselves, the counselor will transport that student to the hospital to get set up in the emergency room.

Within the emergency room, students will be evaluated by a psychiatrist. They will then determine if a medication change is in order or if a longer-term solution is needed. From there, the hospital may work with the student and social workers, therapists, and doctors to determine the best plan for the student's safety.

According to a representative from Winona Health, if a student needs inpatient care, the team works to find a place within Minnesota, as they cannot cross state lines into Wisconsin or Iowa.

Often, students are transferred to a facility in Rochester or further, often even several hours away. However, the most difficult part is finding an opening, as these facilities have limited spaces and are often filled.

If a student is admitted into an inpatient facility, the duration and content of their stay can depend on their condition and where they were placed. Often, the stay lasts between five days and two weeks.

When they come back to campus, their visit to the counseling center for this issue is not on any academic record, but remains confidential in compliance with the HIPPA privacy rule. Upon arrival back to school, the student is often set up with a long-term mental health care plan, possibly including medication, therapy, or other lifestyle changes.

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Player profile: senior basketball player, Caleb Wagner



ARCHIVED PHOTO

Winona State guard Caleb Wagner, a senior from Muskego, Wisc., dunks despite the efforts of University of Sioux Falls forward Teathloach Pal, a senior from Fridley, Minn. during a game at Winona State's McCown Gymnasium on Friday, Feb. 14. Winona State fell 49-51 in a tight game against Sioux Falls.

[Christopher Edwards](#), Sports Reporter

March 25, 2020

After four years at Winona State University Caleb Wagner has his name in the school record books.

As the lone senior on the men's basketball team, Wagner finished his career as Warrior in the top-ten for assists, three-pointers made and free throw percentage in school history.

Wagner said it feels good to be recognized.

“It is a great honor to be in the record books with some amazing players,” Wagner said.

Like other college students, Wagner choose Winona State because of proximity and the basketball team’s reputation.

“The tradition of Winona State basketball was also a factor because I wanted to come to a good program,” Wagner said.

Long before he came to Winona State, he was inspired by the late Kobe Bryant and his own father.

This season, Wagner had the second-most points in a game in Winona State history when he dropped 47 points against Sioux Falls, even though it was in a loss for the team.

In that game he hit six of seven three’s and added five assists.

Although Wagner had a career-high performance against Sioux Falls, his favorite game as a Warrior came against Minnesota-Crookston in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) tournament in his junior season.

In the game, he had 24 points and seven rebounds as the Warriors got the 80-67 win.

With Wagner graduating, someone will have to take over his leadership role.

“Devin Whitelow has a huge leadership role already, he’s a point guard and when we’re breaking down, he is a great leader,” Wagner said.

After graduating from Winona State, he still wants to purse basketball possibly overseas.

As a basketball player, Wagner felt he improved his game through training and extra hours of shots and lifting.

“Getting in extra workouts with Coach Malvik and Coach TJ (Lake) were very beneficial to me,” Wagner said.

If he doesn’t play basketball next year he is also looking into graduate school at University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Overall, Wagner’s time at Winona State University was very helpful.

“Winona State prepared me to always work for what you want and to always cherish what you have,” Wagner said. “I loved my experience here at Winona State and will use many lessons I learned here in my future.”

Wagner ends his career at Winona State with honors such as 2017-18 NSIC Second Team, National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) Honors Court (2018-19) and NSIC All-Academic (2017-18, 2018-19).

Winona State responds to COVID-19 pandemic



Madelyn Swenson, Sports Editor

March 25, 2020

COVID-19 has affected everyone in the United States, including Winona State University students.

On March 12, Winona State President Scott Olson announced that classes would resume again on March 23, with the classes being taught through “alternative methods”.

Eventually, the announcement was made to move classes to online for the rest of the semester, which will start again on March 30.

All faculty, staff and students have been affected by these decisions.

Olson said any decision that affects the education of Winona State students is not an ideal situation.

“It can be difficult to change course so quickly, but that is what’s required in the situation at hand, as the health and safety of our students is paramount,” Olson said.

Jennifer Macho, senior business administration major, said a 20-page group project has been changed to an individual two-page paper to accommodate online learning.

“I also feel as though I am losing out on critical information and lessons that I need to know for my future career,” Macho said in an email.

Mckayla Urbick, senior business administration major, said she does not feel much of an effect from classes going online other than for her Occupational Safety and Health Administration class.

“It has left an unknown for my OSHA300 class, where attendance is mandatory for the certification,” Urbick said.

After the announcement about classes, Winona State announced March 17 that commencement would be postponed indefinitely.

Olson said the indefinite postponement is required because of the current restrictions on large gatherings.

“We don’t know yet whether we can organize a commencement at a later time to honor this spring’s graduates,” Olson said.

Both seniors, Urbick and Macho said they were upset about losing this day but understood why.

“Even though we do not need commencement to be official graduates, the ceremony is a chance to honor the achievements of the graduating class which the spring class of 2020 might miss out on if things don’t get better soon,” Macho said.

One way of combating COVID-19 that other universities have done is close completely, but Olson said he does not see Winona State fully closing. Olson said because of students that cannot go home, like international students, the university cannot close.

“Services may be reduced further than they already have been to ensure the health and safety of our WSU community,” Olson said.

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Garofalo’s work honored fiction and non-fiction pieces



[Kellen Brandt](#), Features Reporter
March 25, 2020

For the fifth year, Winona State University's English department presented the Winona Prize in Creative Writing and awarded Nicole Tompos for poetry and Dahlia Garofalo for both fiction and non-fiction.

Dahlia Garofalo, a senior English major with a minor in sustainability, had the winning pieces for the fiction and non-fiction categories. Garofalo's fiction story is titled "*Bachelor Buttons*" and her non-fiction essay is called "The Rodent Lovers".

"The Rodent Lovers" explores a group of people who love rodents. Garofalo chose to write about this specific group of people because she grew up having rodents as pets and wanted to share some of her thoughts and opinions on the topic.

"It has always made me really sad that people hate rodents and that people have a lot of stigma against the rodents, but they also have a lot of stigma against people who have rodents," Garofalo said.

Garofalo wrote an essay that breaks down this stigma and delves into the world of understanding these complex ideas of love and acceptance of some animals as pets but not others.

“I wanted to expand upon what this actually means in our society when we say that it’s okay to love a dog but it’s not okay to love a rat and it and it creates this hierarchy of love,” Garofalo said.

Garofalo’s fiction piece, “*Bachelor Buttons*”, is about a girl who loses her mom to cancer, and then follows in her mother’s footsteps of trying to take care of her garden as a form of healing.

It also touches on the struggle the husband endures with the loss of his wife and then the reconnection the daughter and father make throughout their healing process.

“I think on a subconscious level, it was also trying to explore myself through this narrator of hypothetically surviving without my mom,” Garofalo said. “There’s been a really long period of my life where my mom was my only safe person and I think that’s where this codependence kind of started.”

Aside from her close connection to her mother, Garofalo touched on her struggle connecting to with her father.]

“My dad and I are just starting to connect, he has been pretty emotionally absent my entire life, so I think it was also this kind of like trying to explore tentatively getting reacquainted with my own dad,” Garofalo said.

Garofalo talked about her experience starting out writing and how she discovered her interest in writing.

“As I got into late middle school and high school, writing became this form of control,” Garofalo said. “At this age you have no control over your life, your parents, teachers, coaches and everyone else tells you what to do, and then all of a sudden I discovered this thing that I had complete control over I could build an entire world I could make characters do whatever I want.”

These experiences helped Garofalo to start her writing.

“It was just this form of being able to have agency over my own life through these characters, so I think it’s kind of a big part of how my storytelling developed into actual writing,” Garofalo said.

Elizabeth Oness, an English professor at Winona State, talked about where many people’s writing content comes from.

“People are at a point in their lives where they’re working out a lot of things for themselves. I don’t really know anybody who has emerged into this world perfect and with a perfect family or zero conflict and just moves through the life like Superman,” Oness said.

Garofalo states that there are three significant moments that have brought her to where she is today in her life and in her writing.

Garofalo was going to come to Winona State as a nursing major but soon realized this was not the path she wanted to follow.

After her first tour of campus and the nursing department, Garofalo recalls a turning point in her life when she burst into tears told her mom nursing just did not feel right and she only wanted to write.

“I specifically remember she looked at me and there was this silence and she just said, ‘so write’ and it was suddenly this wakeup call that was coming back to my authentic self but it was just so simple and it’s so right,” Garofalo said.

Another significant moment in her writing Garofalo recalls is her struggle with mental health and PTSD from being sexually abused.

“I have written stories about people who have been sexually abused and have worked through that and found their own significance in that and that’s helped me find my own significance,” Garofalo said.

Garofalo writes not only for herself, but also for those who read her essays, stories, and pieces of work.

“It gives me a lot of purpose to think that if someone reads my story, and they were sexually abused and found significance, and were able to find themselves in that story can be able to find the beauty in them surviving their own abuse from my story,” Garofalo said.

Garofalo’s third significant moment that have brought her to where she is today in her life and in her writing was being diagnosed with a rare autoimmune disorder.

“I think that really woke me up to the fact that we are never promised any amount of years so I just don’t want to waste even 10 minutes doing something that’s not authentic to myself, and that doesn’t align with what I want to do with my life,” Garofalo said.

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**Player profile: first-year basketball player,
Caitlin Riley**



[Austin Wallert](#), Sports Reporter

March 25, 2020

If you did not get a chance to watch the Winona State University's women's basketball team this year, what were you doing with your life?

Lucky for you, the entire roster is back next season, and they are poised for another run at the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) tournament.

One of the players helping this team get to the top is first-year Caitlin Riley, who has one of the best jump shots in the NSIC.

Although she has the confidence in her stroke, she did have some nerves coming in.

"Being a freshman, I didn't know what to expect, everything was new and different," Riley said. "My biggest nerves came from being away from home and spending time with people I hadn't met yet, but my teammates and coaches were extremely welcoming and made the transition from high school to college very smooth."

Riley seemed to get into the flow of the game early on, but there was some getting used to needed when moving up to division-II.

“My biggest adjustment from high school to college basketball would have to be the attention to detail,” Riley said. “My coaches and teammates taught me so many new things that I had never put much thought into.”

Heeding the advice of her team, Riley and the rest of the Warriors battled their way to earn a spot in the NSIC Tournament.

Things did not go quite as planned after an early loss in the tournament but Riley is grateful for the experience and is confident the team can make a deeper run next year.

“The pentagon is a very fun atmosphere to get to experience,” Riley said. “As a team, we had bigger goals of making it farther into the tournament, but I feel like we can definitely build on the experience and honestly win the conference tournament next season.”

Riley says she values confidence, especially in the game.

“No one can take your confidence, only you can,” Riley said. “When you have confidence, you can do whatever you set your mind to.”

Coined the “Splashed Sisters” by campus radio station 89.5 KQAL, reporters had to know who Riley thought would win in a shoot-out: her or junior Allie Pickrain?

“I mean, I have to say me, right?” Riley said. “Allie’s a phenomenal shooter, but I’ve got more records of hers to break before I can say it’s an outright win.”

The season is over, and everyone is socially distancing, but Riley is still finding ways to prepare for next season.

“During this quarantine I have started running outside and finding new ways to workout inside my house,” Riley said. “It’s just about all I can do right now to help my game.”

Riley and the rest of the Warriors are doing what they can to prepare for next season, and they hope to see you there.

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The story of Jordan Lindgren



Maurice Hudson, Sports Reporter

March 25, 2020

The words “not good enough” strike feelings of inadequacy in anyone who hears it.

“Not” – used as a substitute for a negative clause.

“Good” – to be desired or approved of.

“Enough” – as much or as many as required.

Not good enough.

Jordan Lindgren has experienced those words strung together throughout his football career.

This is Jordan's story from his eyes:

I have heard that phrase many times throughout my football career.

I went from being cut freshman year in high school to becoming the go-to wideout my junior and senior years.

Getting major interest from a handful of division-III schools and minor interest from two division-II schools, I wasn't destined for anything further than that.

No scholarship, no offers, no invitations, no rank, just interest.

Coming off of an adequate high school campaign, I decided to take my skills to Winona State University to try to extend my football career.

By walking on.

Freshman year.

Tryouts and workouts with the team were harder than I expected.

I'm sluggish, tired, not ready, compared to the rest of the players who were competing for spots along with the rest of the team.

I'm working my hardest.

I know that I'm here for a reason, I need to show them what I have to offer.

Mid-workout the coach calls me into the room.

“The room”

This is the place where many football players’ careers die.

“Oh no” I think to myself.

I was sitting there with my heart racing and my teeth clattering, waiting for the coach to talk to me.

The first three words he says are “I am sorry.”

My heart dropped to my stomach.

I came to Winona State to get cut but, I was not done yet.

Sophomore year.

I need to come in stronger, faster and smarter than last year.

Same workout as last year.

The workouts were hard, but I’m ready.

I’m running routes, catching everything, and being the player that I know that I can be.

“Hey, I got through the workout,” I tell myself.

Coach calls me into the room again.

My heart is pounding, knowing that I have been down this road.

“Son, you’re not good enough,” he says.

Not good enough, those dreadful words.

At this point many people would quit but, that was not my intention.

I want to make that team.

I want to grace the Warrior colors.

Junior year, here we are.

Although I've been cut the first two years of my college career, I'm still hungry and wanting to prove doubters wrong.

Opening workouts, the same as the first two years.

Showing out and beating positioned players at their own game.

Surprising myself, other players and doubters that I truly belong and enough is enough.

Lining up at the line of scrimmage and getting ready for the next play, I hear the coach calling my name.

"Not again," I said.

He calls me into the room.

Yes, the room.

As he sits down, my body is filled with disappointment, sadness and regret.

Wondering what I did wrong this time.

My heart starts pumping as he says, "you stubborn bastard, you've must have been working this off-season."

And from then on, it marked the start of my collegiate football career.

If I listened to what they said and quit, I wouldn't be where I am today.

The phrase "not good enough" pushed me to where I am today.

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Winona State reacts to international travel plans changes



[Hannah Hippensteel](#), Features Reporter

March 25, 2020

In the wake of recent developments in COVID-19, international travel plans for faculty and students alike are being suspended through Aug. 31 for safety.

Within these groups of travelers are three main perspectives: those who have been abroad, those who were abroad and were seized home and those who aren't allowed to travel because of the virus.

Dr. Mary Kirk, a professor of social work, and Dr. Amy Koehler, a professor of nursing, fall into the first category as recent travelers to Jamaica during Winona State University's winter break.

Kirk and Koehler accompanied 16 Winona State students from the social work, nursing, criminal justice and sociology departments to Jamaica in early January 2020.

Maddi Peart, a junior social work major who attended the trip, spoke about the ways she thought her time in Jamaica would have been different if she had been there during the time of the outbreak.

“Some of the areas we spent time in were lower-income, so I’m not sure how readily available some of the necessary supplies would have been,” Peart said.

Peart also mentioned the openness of hospitals as one of the main cultural differences when it comes to responding to a large disease like COVID-19.

The professors and students stayed in the University of West Indies’ dorms which had close access to welfare and healthcare agencies.

From there, the trip became more rural with a focus on service-learning in a community setting, including an organized event with the local women’s center and presentations on hygiene.

As someone who has been on several faculty-led trips, Koehler reflected on how the virus has impacted her as part of the Winona State University staff.

“I’m so glad WSU responded the way they did, and we have been supported through so many different departments,” Koehler said.

Because Koehler is a professor in the nursing department, she also emphasized the importance of practicing social distance, good personal hygiene and preparedness over panic during updates on the pandemic.

For a student perspective’s on international travel, junior Dylan Johnson reflected on his time in Prague.

Johnson spent the fall 2019 semester in the Czech Republic, with “occasional visits to other central European countries, such as Germany, Slovakia and Hungary.”

As a transfer student from Truman State University, Johnson also touched upon the regulations for pandemics he saw while abroad.

“The guidelines for these kinds of issues were explicitly mentioned in the application; I felt very secure in the AIFS Prague program’s potential response to an outbreak,” Johnson said.

On his return though, and in light of recent events, Johnson sees his time in Winona as limited with COVID-19.

“The coronavirus has exacerbated feelings of distance from the Winona community for me,” Johnson said.

In the second category of international travelers are those who got to study abroad but were sent home because of the outbreak.

Alexa Jo Schafer, a psychology and communication studies major, chose to spend her fall semester in Florence, Italy.

Schafer says she anticipated the time away from home to be daunting, because she started new without friends and family in a foreign country, but she was also excited.

While there, Schafer was enrolled in The Science of Happiness, Italian Language, Travel Writing and Intercultural Communication courses.

Schafer was sent home on March 6 after intending to be there until May 15; all of her classes have been moved online.

“When I first got to Italy, I cried for hours, but I was even more upset when I found out I actually did have to come home.”

Schafer’s internship through the program’s study abroad office has also been suspended.

With miscommunications between her and the university in the midst of coming back, she faced frustrations.

Now that Schafer is back in the U.S., however, she said the university is “trying to help with costs of travel.”

Schafer says her ultimate hope for this experience is that she is offered a chance to go back during a future semester to get the experience she worked hard and paid for.

“Everyone has lost something due to this; the best we can do is take care of ourselves, practice gratitude and spread kindness,” Schafer said.

The third category of travelers are people who had plans to go abroad which have been suspended as of right now.

In these instances, the Fall 2020 timeline for study abroad is as follows: submit application for WSU approval, apply to partnership or international university, complete travel itinerary and then complete semester abroad.

For those who were looking to be abroad in Fall 2020, all pre-decision materials had to be in by March 1; from there, students were given one month to complete the post-decision materials which includes travel itinerary, airline information and class schedule while away.

For Hannah Weegman, the spread of coronavirus has suspended a trip to Ecuador that was supposed to last from May 9-25 as part of a civic engagement travel study.

The trip, Weegman said, was focused on working with Ecuadorians for three months in hiking-intensive environments.

In order to ensure a spot in her program, Weegman, like many other study abroad students, had to make a pre-payment of \$500.

It is unclear as of now if refunds will be made.

“The most stressful part of the coronavirus news has been not knowing if I’ll get a refund for a trip I won’t get to go on,” Weegman said.

Beyond that, she thinks Winona State is doing all they can without a specific protocol to go off of and has tried to be empathetic in her current situation.

Another trip that waits in the balance is Dr. Jennifer Biederman’s Biodiversity of Belize trip.

Biederman said trips like these take about 15 months of planning and then time for student recruiting.

A total of 16 students were listed as intending to go to Belize in May.

The trip was supposed to be a “two-week immersive field course spent in two ecosystems: the tropical rainforest and on an island perched on the Barrier Reef” which Biederman called ‘iconic to the tropics.’

Biederman said that she is facing disappointment around the travel ban as she has been going to Belize for over 20 years, but she has also looked at the larger context on how Belize’s economy will face suffering as it is largely based on tourism.

When the ban is lifted, Biederman encouraged everyone to find an opportunity to travel, whether it’s to the other side of the state or other side of the world.

She also said that ultimately, the experience of COVID-19 has taught her the privilege of freedom, travel and togetherness.

“We will have all of those things again—and will appreciate them all the more,” Biederman said.

The opinions expressed in this paper are not necessarily those of Winona State University, the Minnesota State Colleges and University system, or the Winona State University student body.