‘Owl Jam’ unites students for a day of fun

By Vicotria Cruz
Contributor

On April 16, the university hosted Owl Jam in the Lot 4 from 11a.m.–3p.m.

One of the biggest university events this spring, it brought together students for an afternoon of fun, food and live music.

“I think that this is really fun we should do more stuff like this I love owl jam this is great,” social work major Holly Begin, a sophomore, said.

Students appreciated the improvements made to this year’s festival.

“I’m glad they moved it to Lot 4 instead of the lot they had last year and I like how they also added a new thing like the bumper cars that was a lot of fun; it’s always good every year,” psychology major Ariana LeCates, a sophomore, said.

The event was designed to give students a chance to enjoy featured two carnival rides, three food trucks, two dessert trucks and a wide range of inflatables.

“I think that the festival has been very fun and a good way to connect with friends and I like free food so that’s a plus,” biology major Megan Connolly, a freshman, said.

The carnival also sparked “owl spirit” as students were able to connect over fried Oreos and tacos.

“It was very well organized I love the whole ticket idea all the events were spectacular and lots of fun to enjoy with friends and I would definitely come again next year,” biology major Melany Villavicencio, a sophomore, said.

Finance major Mikayla Viger, a sophomore, said that she enjoyed the wider variety of food and rides this year.

The event featured the new addition of bumper cars and a Jamaican food truck.

“I think that it was even more fun than last year they had more stuff and the lines were shorter because of there’s more things to do,” Viger said.

In addition to food and rides, WSIN, the campus radio club, made a huge contribution to the event by bringing live music to the festival.

Three bands—Subject Bloom, Dystopica and Hyper Cynical Peacemaker—performed throughout the afternoon, adding energy and excitement to the atmosphere.

Julio Merced, a sophomore finance major and member of WSIN was proud of what the club was able to accomplish.

“It was phenomenal as a being part of the WSIN club I like the amount of changes we’ve done and seeing better activities for the upcoming years,” Merced said.

Gerryiki Williams, the WSIN Public Relations manager and sophomore computer science major also enjoyed what the club was able to do.

“We wanted to give students an opportunity to hear some live bands especially during the semester where we don’t have a spring concert,” Williams said.

Williams also said he was grateful the club was able to bring the institution’s community together.

“It was really important the E-board to try and get something that’s the whole point of the radio club.”

Mahogony Rich, WSIN general manager, a junior studio arts major emphasized the importance of the event for the club’s future.

“I’ve been really wanting to have gigs on campus, so this is just a step in the right direction for us,” Rich said. “We’re learning from this we can grow from this and hopefully some more members can come out so you know bands will be interested in this too.”

Owl Jam showed students the power of campus events to build community and create lasting memories.

With the success of the festival and WSIN’s live music lineup, students are already looking forward to what next year’s event might bring.



PHOTOS | CARLY RUSSELL

Students swing on the swing set on April 16 in Lot 4.



Public health major Mya Warren, a sophomore, biology major Dania Burgess, a junior and nursing major Kalangi Pedro, a junior.

Selective honors ceremony invites



PHOTO | ICM PHOTOS

A graduate’s cap at the 2024 Commencement ceremony.

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This means that students who qualify for Latin Honors will still receive their cords, but through a different process.

In past years, students receiving Latin Honors could expect to receive their cords at the Senior Honors Convocation.

However, as of this year, cord distribution has been moved out of the ceremony entirely.

“Due to logistical and planning reasons the Latin Honors cords will no longer be handed out at the Convocation,” the email said. “Instead, cords can be picked up at designated events, during Commencement or from the Registrar’s Office.”

This change was made by the Senior Honors Convocation Committee in collaboration with the University Administration.

It was implemented to make the process more efficient for both students and staff.

For some seniors, the change has led to feelings of exclusion and frustration over a milestone they feel should be more inclusive.

“I understand money issues and whatever other thought processes they have about making that ceremony exclusive or smaller, but I feel lots of students feel the same way as me,” Harmon said.

While not all seniors will be able to participate in the Convocation ceremony, every graduate has earned the right to celebrate their accomplishments.

Whether seniors are attending the Convocation or crossing the stage at graduation, their hard work is being honored and celebrated, even if the ceremony is a bit different this year.

Students seek diverse histories

By Brianna Wallen
News Editor

History classes provide students with the opportunity to delve deep into the past and gain a better understanding of how historical events have shaped the present world.

For this reason, the university offers a range of courses specifically focused on social justice, allowing students to explore key issues like inequality, oppression and the pursuit of equity.

According to the university’s website, the mission statement for social justice classes is:

“As part of Southern’s commitment to social justice, faculty have been considering ways curriculum takes up fostering a deeper understanding of oppression, domination and inequality and prepares students to work towards a society that is diverse, inclusive and equitable.”

With a social justice class catalog of over 35 classes in various departments, students have ample opportunities to explore classes that emphasize the ongoing impact of historical injustices and inequalities.

From ANT: 321 “Indians of North America” to WGS: 435 “Women & Social Movements: Gender and Resistance” there are a number of classes that feature the oppression various minorities face.

However, many students have highlighted that the standard history classes do not encompass various perspectives.

Psychology major Emmanuel Jean, a freshman, is currently taking “U.S History 1877 to Present,” and he said the timeline taught is very restricted.

“I feel like they could go into more depth about it,” Jean said. “There was more stuff that black people went through besides slavery.”



PHOTO | UNIVERSITY WEBSITE

Social Justice courses that students can enroll in.

Jean also said that it seems like the information is still the same regurgitated history that he was taught for years.

“Everything was stuff I learned back in middle school and high school,” Jean said. “I feel like it never gets switched up.”

Similarly, nursing major Annetta Gatison, a freshman, said she believes the coverage of slavery is overdone.

“I’m tired of learning the same repeated minority history, like about slavery,” Gatison said. “I didn’t even know about Black Panthers unity junior year of high school.”

Additionally, Gatison said she is interested in taking a course that focuses on other cultures and their history.

“We don’t get to hear about other people of color and what they went through, so these other classes are helpful,” Gatison said.

However, Gatison does believe that history classes should still highlight the history of all minorities, as they contribute to U.S. history overall.

“Other cultures are really underrepresented and I’m tired of learning the same repeated history about only one minority group,” Gatison said.



PHOTO | BRIANNA WALLEN

Psychology major Emmanuel Jean, a freshman in Engleman Hall on April 17.

With students not satisfied in their course content, many have turned to other resources, including social media platforms to learn deeper about history

“I learned 100% more about black history from TikTok than school,” Jean said.

Graduate student of sports and entertainment management, Jahlil Watson, said that he has taken his fair share of history classes at the university.

Watson said that he believes with diversity, equity and inclusion at threat, these social justice classes are more important than ever.

“I feel like Southern does a great job with DEI especially with the time we’re in now,” Watson said.

Watson also emphasizes that with book banning and the erasure of Black history and other minority history in various southern states, he hopes that students will take advantage of his opportunity to learn about their history and others.

“With other colleges and schools like in Florida, they need more emphasis on the real history to really inform students overall,” Watson said.