

## Bobcat CALENDAR

Visit [frontpage.gcsu.edu/events](http://frontpage.gcsu.edu/events)

### Tuesday

5

7-9 p.m. Flannery O'Connor Zoom talk about author's influence on popular music.

### Wednesday

6

11 a.m. - 5 p.m. American Red Cross Blood Drive, Donahue Lounge at the MAX.

Noon Times Talk by Stephen Palmer on deceptive tactics used by journalists in Ina Dillard Russell Library.

7:30 p.m. GCSU Theatre's "Twelfth Night" production, Campus Black Box Theatre.

### Thursday

7

7:30 p.m. GCSU Theatre's "Twelfth Night" production, Campus Black Box Theatre.

### Friday

8

7:30 p.m. GCSU's "Chamber Music Ensembles" in Max Noah Recital Hall.

7:30 p.m. GCSU Theatre's "Twelfth Night" production, Campus Black Box Theatre.

### Saturday

9

3-5 p.m. GCSU Volleyball vs. Augusta University at Centennial Center.

7:30 p.m. GCSU Theatre's "Twelfth Night" production, Campus Black Box Theatre. Sunday performance at 2 p.m.

## GCSU President Cathy Cox to students: 'Your vote matters'

More than 50% of registered voters in Georgia had already cast their ballot before the end of October, shattering early voter records for the state.

As the former secretary of state of Georgia — who proposed the initial legislation that ushered both early voting and electronic voting into the state — Georgia College & State University President Cathy Cox describes feeling "heartened" by this fact, but she stressed that there is still more work to be done, specifically by young voters.

"This is a really monumental election," she said, in an interview with WGUR-FM 95.3, the student-run radio station in Milledgeville, Georgia. "I've never seen such a difference of opinion between the candidates."

She cited policies regarding family planning, student loan forgiveness and diversity issues as some of the key topics dividing the candidates and piquing the interest of college-aged students.

"All elections are about the future," she said, urging young voters to consider the policies that would impact them personally and make their voting decisions accordingly. "Your vote matters, and there are issues that will affect you."

At Georgia College, young voters are especially engaged politically. In a recent study of the 2022 midterm elections, Bobcats were shown to have a 5% higher voting percentage than that of their peers at the national level. GCSU students have also been recognized nationally for superior voter registration levels.

That's a good start, Cox explained, because the more that young people make their voices heard, the more candidates will begin to tailor their platforms around the priorities of those younger voters.

"Be a critical thinker, dig for good information ... and don't believe everything you read on the internet," Cox urged students. "And find time to vote!"

Tune in to Cox's full interview at the top of the hour, every hour, Monday, Nov. 4, on WGUR-FM 95.3 Milledgeville — or stream it online.



Georgia College President Cathy Cox spoke with Ethan Mollenauer of WGUR-FM 95.3, about youth engagement in the 2024 presidential election. (Photos: Austin Zschach)



## From 'brat' to Beyoncé: How music shaped the 2024 U.S. Presidential election



Senior Victoriyah Friend with Dr. Dana Gorzelany-Mostak.

With the 2024 U.S. Presidential election winding up — music took center stage. Political divisiveness had Americans singing different tunes.

But whether you're tapping to Beyoncé's "Freedom" — a liberation song used by U.S. Presidential candidate Kamala Harris — or swaying to Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the U.S.A." —

often used by former President Donald Trump — one thing's for sure.

Music made the politics more fun.

"Voters are swayed by emotions," said Dr. Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, associate professor of music at Georgia College & State University. "So it only makes sense that candidates are going to gravitate towards a medium of communication that's all about feeling. I think we've certainly seen a lot of that in this campaign season."

In 2015, Gorzelany-Mostak founded Trax on the Trail, an online database that examines how music is used for political strategy. The website has a catalogue of nearly 13,000 campaign songs and has become an educational tool in classrooms and is used by journalists nationwide.

In this election, music continued to play a key role — whether it was Taylor Swift's alignment with the Democratic party or singer Kid Rock performing "American Badass" at the Republican National Convention.

Trump used classic rock from groups like the Rolling Stones and Queen. At rallies, he played "YMCA" by Village People in addition to songs with titles that aligned with his message. These included Elvis Presley's "Suspicious Minds," Elton John's "I'm Still Standing," Tom Petty's "I Won't Back Down" and Bachman-Turner Overdrive's "You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet."

Harris' choice of music was "a bit more eclectic," Gorzelany-Mostak said. The vice president used a broad range of genre from R&B and pop to Latin and hip-hop. Harris liked Aretha Franklin's "Think," Beyoncé's "Run the World," Rihanna's "Don't Stop the Music" and Stevie Wonder's "Higher Ground." Popular artists

like Lizzo and Taylor Swift both endorsed Harris.

"Trump is trying to connote something about strength and tradition," Gorzelany-Mostak said. "Harris, on the other hand, is making a point of being really inclusive with her playlist, and I think that very much ties into the vision she's trying to project."

Senior psychology major Victoriyah Friend of Hinesville, Georgia, entered data on the Trax website, classified artists and geographically mapped where each song was played.

Friend especially appreciated the psychological role music played — how it can strengthen a faltering image and energize voters.

"It really opened my eyes to something I came into college thinking I would never want to do — research," she said, "and now it's something that I truly love."

## Gone but not forgotten: GCSU History students research deaths at Central State Hospital

Just in time for two religious observances, 'All Soul's Day' and the Hispanic 'Day of the Dead' — a time of year when the departed are remembered — two Georgia College & State University history students completed research on more than 3,700 patients who died at Central State Hospital.

Junior history majors Alex Gray and Evelyn Evans of Monroe, Georgia, signed up for internships at Georgia's Old Capital Heritage Center in Milledgeville to fulfill GC Journeys requirements.

But they walked away with a new understanding and appreciation for mental illness.

"It certainly changed a lot of what I think about mental institutions," Gray said. "These were sick people with problems that were not very well understood at the time. It broadened my horizons."

The Heritage Center museum, located at the Depot on hospital property, opened a one-room exhibit in May. "Fast Fading, A History of Central State Hospital" displays maps, historical pictures, lobotomy tools, nursing uniforms, a straitjacket and surgical bed.

For the past several months, Gray and Evans worked



Juniors Evelyn Evans and Alex Gray at Cedar Lane Cemetery, Milledgeville.

with museum director Jessica Whitehead to add a new display, "Death at the Asylum," which records and honors the many people who died onsite. At its peak, Central State Hospital was home to more than 13,000 people suffering from mental health issues.

"As more people came into the hospital," Evans said, "they needed more room. One of the problems they always had was overcrowding. That's something we see in our research."

Whitehead estimates 35,000 graves at five cemeteries are scattered around Central State Hospital. Largely unwanted and abandoned in life, many patients were also unclaimed in death.

Their families either lacked money for funerals or didn't care. Prior to modern transportation and embalming techniques, it was also dangerous to move diseased and decomposing bodies.

Gray and Evans reviewed and charted hundreds of years of annual reports, kept in the Digital Library of Georgia. They were tasked with researching cause of death, defining time periods and how records changed over the years.

Patients died from things like anemia, apoplexy (bleeding in the brain), dropsy (water retention), gastrointestinal illnesses, epilepsy, tuberculosis and "maniacal exhaustion."

"People lived here. They went about their normal business here, and they died here. It's important to remember that," Evans said. "Getting to do research on this was very intriguing. It shows how far we've come as a society when it comes to mental health and also how far we have left to go."



### Did you know?

Georgia College & State University celebrates the outstanding success of our fifth annual Athletics Day of Giving. The 961 generous gifts shattered records, raising an incredible \$171,222 to support GCSU student-athletes.

Additionally, the inaugural Bobcat Bash was a tremendous success with over \$50,000 raised for GCSU Champions Core. This initiative is dedicated to the total well-being of our student-athletes, providing essential support for athletic training, strength conditioning and community-building efforts.

We are immensely grateful for the outpouring of generosity from supporters. This will have a lasting impact on student-athlete lives, both on-and-off the field.

"This was a true team effort that demonstrates our community's commitment to empowering GCSU student-athletes," said Director of Athletics Wendell Staton. "On behalf of all our hardworking coaches and student-athletes, we are so grateful for this incredible display of support."