



### HOUSING UPDATE FOR UPPERCLASSMEN

With the spring semester coming to a close, students receive housing.

Featured on Page 2

### “AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE” COMES TO A CLOSE

During its five-day run, students perform a piece written by Henrik Ibsen.

Featured on Page 3

### WINTHROP SOFTBALL CONTINUES TO PERFORM

With their win over USC Upstate, Winthrop softball continues to soar.

Featured on Page 4

## Upperclassmen seek out off-campus housing as the spring semester comes to a close

With the recent release of housing assignments, many rising juniors and seniors must find off-campus housing, such as The Gathering, a yet-to-be-completed apartment offering August leases.

Evi Houston  
News Editor

In the months since Winthrop University’s announcement that housing would not be guaranteed to upperclassmen students, student outrage and confusion has lessened and the search for off-campus housing has begun. Residence Life released housing assignments in late March, and on-campus options were offered to a select group of waitlisted students throughout the month.

Walkable apartment complexes, such as The Nest and The Gathering,

have been attractive options to students, although their cost and availability may require some to look elsewhere.

Jarad Russell, assistant dean of students and director of residence education at Winthrop University, provided an update on the housing crisis now that students have received assignments. For students who were able to apply for on-campus housing (primarily underclassmen), 95% received their preferred housing and 100% were placed with their preferred roommate. “The only issues were people that needed to

## Local gallery and professor highlight: “In Extremis” by professor Claudia

An interdisciplinary display on climate change and human impact on the South Carolina coast.



Art from the “In Extremis” exhibit

Photo by Zoey Molina

Gabriela Griggs  
AC&T Editor

“In Extremis,” an interdisciplinary exhibition by Winthrop professor Claudia O’Steen, hosted a reception on April 10, 2026. This gallery remains on display at Blue Goose Art Supply on Oakland Avenue until May 2.

As an adverb, “In Extremis” means “in an extremely difficult situation” or “at the point

of death.” This particular exhibit is defined as an examination of climate change and the human impact on the South Carolina coastline.

“As marshes erode, salt water encroaches on the maritime forests, slowly killing living trees and turning them into decaying lumber. This work is the search for a transitional landscape and methods to quantify it. It is about personal and historic observations documenting a shifting

landscape over time, and how all of these things combine to create a new environment that is in constant flux.” O’Steen’s website reads.

This exhibition involves an array of materials, ranging from acrylic paint and wood to timelapses and petri dishes. This gallery is defined as a “multimedia installation,” a kind of curation that is a favorite of O’Steen.

“My favorite [art form] is interdisciplinary installation, and that’s

why I do it, because I enjoy it the most. I think the reason that I find it interesting is because I would get so bored just working in one medium. Because my work is so research based, I like to use different materials and different art forms to explore different types of data and information. I find it really interesting when other artists do that too, [using] a wide range of media to explore

Continued on Page 3



Outside of Courtyard building

Photo by Zoey Molina

join the apartment style waitlist because we could not fit everyone into the apartments that wanted it, but since initial assignments have gone out, we have been able to offer most of those people an assignment in apartments too,” Russell said.

While unable to apply directly for housing, rising juniors and seniors could join a waitlist, which offered housing based off of credit hours and availability. 469 students signed up for the waitlist, of which 290, or about 60%, have received offers as of April 7.

Russell shared that 191 of the 290 students accepted their offer for on-campus housing, and 179 remain on the waitlist.

Of those who have declined an assignment,

most did so because they had already found off-campus housing, not because the assignment did not meet their preferences.

“We will continue to work our way down the list as we have cancellations, but I do not expect there to be a large amount of movement moving forward,” Russell said.

Russell noted that there are still misunderstandings on the use of student financial aid for off-campus housing.

“If your scholarships or loans exceed tuition and fees, the remaining balance may be refunded to you. These funds may be used toward off-campus housing and living expenses. Refunds

Continued on Page 2

## Unknown names, no noise Cultivating school spirit starting on the field.

Adriane Alston  
Editorial Editor

Winthrop students don’t lack school spirit because they dislike the universal tradition that is sports. They lack it because they don’t take the time to know the athletes and feel the athletes don’t take time to know the students who are not athletes.

Every year our university offers free admission to athletic events ranging from lacrosse to track and field to softball, yet attendance still remains inconsistent even in spite of the price staying the same. On paper, that just doesn’t make sense. Free games, competitive teams that are actually good and an opportunity to support classmates should draw crowds in the masses. Instead, many students are still choosing not to go. This is not an access issue, this is an issue rooted in a lack of connection.

The fact of the matter is students don’t show up for people they

don’t recognize or feel connected with.

At larger universities, athletic culture thrives because athletes create a culture where athletes are visible figures on campus. Students see them everywhere from the dining halls, follow them on the hottest social media platforms and when it’s time they recognize their names on game day. That familiarity builds a

desire for investment. At Winthrop, many student-athletes blend into the general population of students. Without that recognition, games feel like randomized events rather than shared experiences that build memories of a lifetime.

When students personally know an athlete, their campus experience changes.

A student who might ignore a basketball

game suddenly shows up because their friend is the point guard for the team. They cheer louder, stay longer and bring others along to experience the joy that comes from investing in others. The sport itself becomes secondary. The connection drives the experience. That shift proves something important, Winthrop

Continued on Page 5



Winthrop men’s basketball attendance

Photo by Jackson Stanton

## Police Blotter



**Chase Duncan**  
Copy Editor

### Students sent to Dean for sexual acts in vehicle

A Winthrop University Police Department officer responded to the 100 block of Cherry Road on April 2 in reference to two students committing "lewd acts" in a vehicle, according to WUPD's online daily case log. The officer made contact with the students and told them to leave the area and they were referred to the Dean of Student's office.

### Student hit in nose with body wash bottle causing bleeding after refusing Chick-fil-a trip

WUPD officers met with a student at Phelps Hall on April 7 in reference to an altercation with a roommate that had occurred the night before. The victim had first let their roommate borrow some body wash. When he went to retrieve it, the roommate asked him to go to Chick-fil-a. When the victim declined, the roommate threw the body wash bottle at him, striking him in the nose and causing him to bleed.

The case log for this incident does not state how or if it was resolved by the police. The incident type for the case is classified under "Assault & Battery," and the disposition for the case is left blank as of April 12, 2026.

### Student arrested for storing personal firearm in dorm room

While responding to an incident between two students on April 7, a WUPD officer was made aware that one of the students had a firearm inside a locked box in their dorm room closet in West Thomson Hall. Officers spoke to the student about the firearm and were given consent to search. The officers found a firearm where they were told it was located and placed the student under arrest.

### Students harass former roommate with McDonald's toys and apple slices

A WUPD officer responded to Ebenezer Avenue on April 8 in reference to multiple students leaving apple slices and McDonald's toys outside of her room. The victim had moved due to a falling out with their former roommates. The students were advised to cease any further contact with the victim.

## Housing update for students Cont.

are typically issued at the beginning of the semester, while rent may be due earlier. Students should plan accordingly," Russell said.

Residence Life has made efforts to assist upperclassmen with finding off-campus housing, such as through a housing fair with local apartment complexes and a website with resources for students transitioning to off-campus housing.

"The off-campus housing fair DiGs hosted was enormously helpful in assisting students with finding affordable options. In particular, The Gathering, which is a new apartment complex located right next to The Nest, was able to speak with a lot of students worried about transportation issues," Russell said.

Ali Salahedin, a computer science major at Winthrop, and Emin Aydin, a business

administration student, are two such students who decided to commit to The Gathering following the housing fair.

"It helped us get an idea of what apartments are around Rock Hill, and we chose The Gathering to be the best one," Salahedin said.

The Gathering will offer its first leases in August, with studio, two, three and four bedroom options. Rent prices range from \$1500 to \$910, including the coverage of furniture and in-unit washer and dryers. The complex accommodates students with amenities such as study lounges and roommate matching services, and has recently developed a presence on campus as they advertise to students.

Aydin and Salahedin's decision to move to The Gathering involved a consideration of quality, cost and accessibility.

Prior to the housing

announcement made in January, Salahedin was expecting to stay on campus. "I knew I wanted to get an apartment at some point for my last year, but I was still planning to be in Courtyard for a little bit longer," he said.

Aydin felt differently. "I'm an international student, so I have some favor for the dorms, but I really don't like the dorms. I was in Phelps, I was in Courtyard, and the cafeteria [has gone downhill] so I was 99% sure that I would go off campus."

Salahedin and Aydin are both members of the Esports team at Winthrop, and shared that The Gathering came to their attention during their frequent walk past it on the way to the Esports facility.

"In February, I asked one of the builders and they said it [would be] finished in July,"

Salahedin said.

Seeing The Gathering at the off-campus housing fair encouraged Salahedin and Aydin to apply.

"So that's probably what convinced us that The Gathering would be the best option for us," Salahedin said.

Living in a new build was a major perk of the complex, which Aydin compared to The Nest, its neighboring apartment complex. "At The Nest, everything is overused [ . . . ] like one hundred people sit on that couch, I didn't want to pay that."

They were drawn in by the appeal of having a clubroom lounge on the first floor, similar to The Nest, where they could make a free coffee and spend time with friends.

Being within walking distance of campus was important for the students as well, as they imagined socializing might be a struggle when staying in apartments a ten or twenty minute drive from university.

As a part of the Esports team, these students receive a scholarship stipend which will reimburse them for housing expenses.

However, "There might be some out of pocket expenses now that we're living off campus," Salahedin said, though he hopes this is not the case.

Salahedin and Aydin noted that they might be an exception to the rule, as they benefit from a scholarship unlike some Esports players and fellow students. They shared that two potential roommates had backed out of The Gathering lease due to pricing and convenience, seeing the over \$900 monthly rent for one room as too much.

"I feel like the school could have done something to help more with that transition, because, like, for us [it's] not so bad transitioning

to off-campus, but I can imagine for many other juniors or seniors that they're gonna probably face a lot more challenges moving off campus, especially like financially, for just being able to support themselves and cook for themselves," Salahedin said.

Regardless of where upperclass students decide to live next semester, moving off campus will certainly change the student life for juniors and seniors.

"I am curious to see how the transition affects other students," Salahedin said. He worries that the stress of off-campus living could take away from the focus required by upper level classes.

Aydin added that socializing with other students may become harder due to distance and the lack of a shared meal plan and communal space.

"That's the one thing that I think living off campus is gonna change, is like, we always go to the dining hall. So now it's like [...] where do we go?" Salahedin said.

Construction for The Gathering is ongoing, and while Salahedin and Aydin hope their apartment will be ready in time, they shared some concerns. "It does seem a bit rushed," Salahedin said.

"Now the actual time [until July] is really short, even for the workers, you know, they may push them to work overtime, cut some corners," Aydin said.

The rush among students to find housing in time may be just as tumultuous as this rush to build housing on time, as upperclassmen find new places to call home and say goodbye to their at times beloved, at times hated Winthrop residence halls and apartments.



Lounge being built inside of The Gathering Rock Hill

Photo via thegatheringinc.com

## South Carolina aims to ease teacher certification drawbacks that are transferrable over interstate lines

### Bill H.5309, The Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact, aims to allow teachers with valid licensure to teach outside of South Carolina state lines.

*Caroline Smith*  
Staff Writer

On March 4, 2026, The Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact was introduced to the South Carolina House of Representatives by Republican Representative Shannon S. Erickson. The bill can reduce teacher shortages across the state by allowing teachers from other states to teach in SC and in the member states.

As of April 2, 2026, the bill is currently being worked on in the House of Representatives and is awaiting approval to pass onto the next step which will bring it to the House floor for a second hearing and voting. SC would not be the only state in passing legislation like this; it will be joining 13 other states from all over the country.

Utah was the first state to pass legislation regarding interstate teaching licensure, followed by Colorado and Kentucky. The likelihood of SC passing this bill is relatively high considering their most recent update on April 2 where they received a "Favorable Education and Public Works" comment

from the committee report.

This bill's main goal is to "establish a collective regulatory framework that expedites and enhances the ability of teachers to move across state lines" and to "support the retention of teachers in the profession by removing barriers to relicensure in a new state," as per Article I.

The bill aims to curb low staffing in South Carolina schools due to the recent decades of teacher vacancies. According to the Learning Policy Institute, as of June 2025 "48 states plus the District of Columbia employed 365,967 teachers who were not fully certified for their teaching assignments."

The school districts who reported that they hired teachers who were semi-qualified or completely under-qualified did so to fill spots of vacancy in desperation. This bill has plans to change that in a way that accommodates for a more seamless licensure transferral process for qualified teachers seeking placements outside of their licensed state.

A common issue that this bill is working to

simplify is the frequent relocation of military families. This compact supports these families by providing eligible active duty military and their eligible spouses an equivalent license outside of the member state, overall streamlining and simplifying the process of transitioning out of member state lines.

This positive note will make it significantly easier for military affiliates to have a smoother Permanent Change of Station (PCS). Commonly the service member is unable to pick the next duty station, so this legislation allows for versatile job placements

for those seeking it.

Further, any teacher holding a Career and Technical Education (CTE) license without a bachelor's degree is subject to being temporarily declined from this transitional licensure depending on the receiving state's industry requirements by law.

Eligibility for receiving a transferable teaching license to the receiving state requires applicants to "undergo a criminal background check in the receiving state in accordance with the laws and regulations of the receiving state; and provide the receiving state with information

in addition to the information required for licensure for the purposes of determining compensation, if applicable," as per Article III.

None of the eligibility requirements are abnormal as teachers are traditionally reviewed under these standard checks to determine eligibility for employment.

The standard for receiving this loan in full without repayment of funds or any interest is to teach in any area in SC with a public school that is in critical need.

*Continued on Page 7*



Outside of the South Carolina State House

Photo via experiencecolumbiasc.com

## “In Extremis” gallery Cont.

I appreciate art that I can look at and enjoy visually, enjoying the materials that are used, but also spend more time with it and let the ideas reveal themselves. I enjoy the process of trying to make connections between works,” O’Steen said.

Many of the materials provided challenges for O’Steen, especially as she worked multiple kinds of media together, like multiple woods, screens, and cords.

“Some of the pieces were technically difficult to build, like some of the wooden pieces located at the front of the space. They were difficult to construct, but the process was very enjoyable... I love working in the woodshop,” O’Steen said.

However, like many endeavors involving technology, there were some difficulties in regards to the works that involved electronics.

“The most frustrating part is technology failing, which always happens. I had a screen in the show that died the day of the reception, so it’s [frustrating having to] frantically replace

that. Usually during the duration of a show, a couple things will fail and you have to replace [them.] so there’s always the stress of if your technology is going to work,” O’Steen said.

For O’Steen, this is her first solo exhibition in the area. “In Extremis,” which was first shown in New Orleans at the New Orleans Film Festival, was also housed in the Spartanburg Art Museum before moving to the gallery in Blue Goose.

“This is the first [gallery] that I’ve had in Rock Hill. I’ve been here a while... but my projects are usually multi-year projects because I do a lot of research. Prior to this one, I was working on a long term project in Lake Superior, so it made more sense to show that work over there. Before that, I did a project in Estonia and more arctic related stuff. This is the first one that was specific to South Carolina where it made a lot of sense to show here,” O’Steen said.

Blue Goose Art Supply, which opened in late 2024, has recently begun hosting many galleries

curated by Winthrop students. This space allows full artist control over how their work is presented in the gallery, which is especially important for solo shows like “In Extremis.”

“It’s such a cool venue... I also think it is great because most galleries around here, in my opinion, are more traditional. I think it’s cool that they’re letting people take over the space and do whatever

they want, [which feels] more contemporary to me. I think the way they collaborate with students is really great; my students have hosted exhibitions there and it really gives them the opportunity to understand what it is like to work with a professional gallery. It’s different than them just installing their work on campus,” O’Steen said.

O’Steen plans to take themes and ideas

explored in “In Extremis” onto campus in the next academic year.

“I am teaching an Art and Environment course next spring that is going to work with artwork similarly to how I [did] in this project. I’m hoping to collaborate with students from across campus, anyone who’s interested in art and the environment can take [the course] and it will end with an exhibition in Blue Goose,” O’Steen said.

That course and subsequent exhibition will be hosted next year. Individuals interested in witnessing “In Extremis” for themselves may do so on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12 p.m.–3 p.m., or on Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m.–3 p.m. until May 2 at Blue Goose Art Supply. O’Steen will also be hosting an artist talk and walk through at the gallery on April 30 at 7:30 p.m.



Person viewing art work inside of the “In Extremis” exhibition

Photo by Zoey Molina

## Winthrop’s theatre department wraps up its production of “An Enemy of the People”

Student performers and faculty transported Henrik Ibsen’s classic tale of truth and integrity to a modern political climate.

Zachary Bell  
Manging Editor

This past week, Winthrop’s theatre department wrapped up its performance of “An Enemy of the People.” During its five-day run, audiences were treated to a dramatic story that examines the conflict between integrity, authority and truth.

Henrik Ibsen wrote “An Enemy of the People” in the 19th century. It follows Dr. Stockmann, a small town medical officer who works at the recently opened spa. After Stockmann discovers that bacteria have contaminated the spa, he makes a plan to publish his report in the newspaper.

Aidan Tibbitt, a senior theatre education major, played Dr. Stockmann. He described what makes Dr. Stockmann a powerful

and relevant protagonist for viewers.

“Throughout the play, you see this character so desperately trying to just tell the truth, and at so many different points being barred from doing so,” Tibbitt said. “I just think that’s something that people can emotionally connect to, because everyone’s trying to speak their own truth at some point or another.”

For Tibbitt, performing on the stage is more than just about entertaining an audience. “A piece like this just has so much to say. I really like to challenge people with the theater I do. I think if you go to see a piece of theater and you don’t leave questioning a previously held belief you did not go see something that was worth seeing. And I think that this definitely does that.”

Rachel Dawson, an instructor of musical theatre, acting and directing, directed the production. She has worked at Winthrop since August 2022. During her time at Winthrop, she has directed “Pippin,” “Noises Off” and “Into the Woods.”

According to Dawson, Winthrop’s faculty chooses plays that expose students to a wide range of styles and genres. “In recent years, we had not staged a work rooted in Modern Realism, so we identified ‘An Enemy of the People’ as an opportunity to do this.”

Dawson went on to say that Ibsen’s play remains highly relevant to contemporary society. “[It is] both an academically enriching and timely production.” She said, “On a personal level, it has been deeply fulfilling

to share my appreciation of his writing while guiding students through the complexities and enduring relevance of his themes.”

Two other cast members shared their experiences with “An Enemy of the People.”

Cara Cole is a senior acting major who played Dr. Stockmann’s wife, Katherine. For Cole, putting on “An Enemy of the People” meant performing a realistic and political story that stands out against the musicals and comedies audiences are comfortable with.

“Allowing people to experience a play that is more in a Realism setting is very important, and especially one that deals with heavy topics as this one does,” Cole said. “I think people should experience a well rounded theater experience.”

Cole captured the play’s

themes with three words: “Truth, corruption and hope.”

“This play means a lot to me,” Cole said. “It has shown me what fulfills me as a performer, which is something I was really searching for as I’m about to graduate.”

Riley Suthard is a junior theatre major with a concentration in musical theater. She played Petra Stockmann, the daughter of Dr. Stockmann and Katherine.

Suthard shared her passion for performing. “As an actress, one of the best things that I can do is give a character a voice and let them say what they need to say,” she said. “Being that voice for them is very special to me, because they’re able to share their stories, or this playwright is able to get across what they want to get across.”

Suthard went on to

emphasize the importance of theatre. “I think theater is a really great opportunity in general for people to see things that may make them uncomfortable.”

According to her, “An Enemy of the People” expresses a powerful message about truth that resonates in today’s political climate.

“I think it’s important that we as people understand that it is important that we stand up for what we believe, and that we persevere and speak our message that we need to speak.”

Suthard continued by encouraging students to support theatre. “It is so important, and it is so special to me and so many people in Johnson and people who don’t even pursue theater and also embrace the uncomfortability.”



Student performers mid-scene of “An Enemy of the People”

Photo by David Hensley

# SPORTS

April 16, 2026

## The softball team continues to soar late into the 2026 season The Winthrop Eagles secure their position as number 1 in the Big South after their series win against USC Upstate.

Omar Woods  
Sports Editor

Since the end of the 2023 season, the Winthrop Softball team has consistently been able to maintain a positive record throughout their seasons. This year is looking to be no different with the softball team currently boasting a pleasant 24–18 record.

The softball team has shown major displays of success throughout this season despite having a rough season opening where they started the season 0–4. On March 20 and 21, the softball team swept Gardner-Webb 3–0. The softball team similarly swept Charleston Southern on March 27 and 28 by the same margin of 3–0.

So far in the season, freshman outfielder Rebecca Amos has led the team in runs scored with junior infielder Peyton Bryden only slightly behind her with 37 runs. Peyton Bryden also currently leads in RBI's for the season having 36.

As it stands, the softball team has only dropped three games to Big South teams this season. They are currently on top of the leaderboards in the Big South with a record of 9–3.

Kendall Fuller, the softball head coach, has led the softball team since the beginning of

August in 2023. Coach Fuller is not a stranger to Winthrop Softball as she was an assistant coach for the program in 2013 and then later became an associate coach and co-head coach in the following years up until 2018.

In the years following her return to Winthrop softball, she was the head coach of the Lees-McRae softball team. While there, she managed to coach a record-breaking season for the school boasting a regular season record of 32–18.

Coach Fuller mentioned that much of the success they have obtained this season comes from the well-roundedness of the team. She explained that every player did their part when it came down to it.

“This team is really fun to work with because we have to win as a team,” Fuller said. “We have really good hitters on our team and good pitchers but it takes all of them to win. It’s not the case where times in the past we’ve had really successful pitchers that could shut-out teams and we’d only have to score one or two runs ... This year, it’s definitely team wins we are having.”

Junior infielder Peyton Bryden shared identical sentiments about what exactly made the team so efficient this season. She shared the idea that a softball game cannot be

won by just one person. “I think we really realized that it’s not one or two people that can do it,” Bryden said.

“Everyone in the line-up is contributing whether they’re a starter or on the bench but then comes in later in the game. Really, everyone is bringing something in and adding to our success.”

Coach Fuller also gave her acknowledgement to the positive culture that the team extrudes. She mentioned that the team has great chemistry with each other and are eager to continue getting better day by day.

“You can tell that they’re just super happy to see everybody succeed. Very selfless team and one that really gets along well. I’d say team culture as far as this being my third season here is at an all-time high,” Fuller said.

The outlook for the remainder of the season remains positive with the softball team’s win against their series with USC Upstate who are currently in second place behind Winthrop. USC Upstate were also the defending Big South Conference champions from the 2025 softball season.

The softball team’s next game will be a three game series away against Longwood on April 18 and 19. The game will be available to view on the streaming platform ESPN+.



Winthrop softball player grounds ball

Photo by Tim Cowie

# SCPA AWARDS



THE JOHNSONIAN  
GENERAL EXCELLENCE 3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE

# EDITORIAL

April 16, 2026

## School spirit Cont.

doesn't have a sports problem, it has a relationship problem.

And student-athletes have already started working to fix this issue.

This semester teams across campus have hosted events designed to break down the walls and encourage a sense of togetherness between athletes and the traditional student. They are actively introducing themselves to the student body. One example is the recent "Pie an Athlete," where students interacted with players in a fun, low-pressure setting. Events like this create opportunities for conversations, laughter and recognition of the individuals who matter to

them the most. They turn athletes into classmates into friends instead of distant figures who seem unrelatable.

But effort from athletes alone won't eradicate the issue. The student body has to meet them halfway in terms of reciprocating this energy. School spirit doesn't just build itself. It grows when students choose to show up and not just physically but socially as well.

That means attending games, participating in sports related events and making an effort to invest in the connection. It also means shifting the mindset regarding sports. Games shouldn't feel like obligations or an experience only

for people with niche interests. They should feel like shared moments that work to redefine the college experience.

For many students, those moments already exist, but for them it just happens off the field. Students pack social events, meetings for their favorite clubs and weekend gatherings because they know the people involved. The same principle applies to Winthrop athletics. When familiarity increases, interest will follow. The challenge is transferring that energy into the stands.

I've seen firsthand how powerful that connection can be. As someone who was a "Saturday

Night Lights" fan in high school, I didn't just enjoy the game, I enjoyed the atmosphere that came with the games. The crowd, the friendships and the shared excitement made every moment memorable even if you didn't see it in that moment. The sport brought people together and the people made the experience meaningful. That same energy can exist at Winthrop, but only if students help in creating it.

The question isn't whether Winthrop can build a strong sports culture. It's whether students want to build a strong sports culture or not. Ask yourself what will Winthrop be known

for after we graduate? Will it be a campus where students continued to be disconnected, or one where they built a community that showed up for each other in all aspects of the student experience?

The answer depends on what students do now. Go to a game. Learn a lacrosse player's name. Bring a friend. Don't just leave after the first quarter, stay until the end. Support doesn't require deep sports knowledge, it requires presence and intention. When students start showing up consistently, the atmosphere will change. Athletes will feel it, teams will feed off it and as a result the entire campus

will benefit from it. School pride doesn't come from winning alone. It comes from cultivating a sense of belonging.

Winthrop already has the teams, the talent and the opportunities. Now it needs the students. If the goal is to create a lasting college experience, then the solution is simple: show up for the people who represent the school.

Because in the end, students never remember the score. They remember who they stood beside in the crowd and who stood beside them on the field of sports and lives.



Winthrop basketball fans hold up facial images and signs in support

Photo by Jackson Stanton

## Man on the street: coping with exam season

### The Johnsonian asked Winthrop students why mental health is important during the spring semester.

Kyan Feser  
Staff Writer

Whether you're a Winthrop Eagle or any other college student, April is a looming cloud over the freedom of summer.

Despite the gorgeous weather, now more than ever, Winthrop students need to get serious, as April marks the beginning of exam season. It's important to hunker down and hit the books, but

maintaining adequate mental health is an often-overlooked priority.

"It's really a lot of people's make it or break it time," said Jordan Schwamb, an elementary education major.

Alongside studying, students might S/U courses, search for summer jobs, or register for the upcoming semester at this time. All of this at once is often overwhelming, Schwamb said.

It might seem hopeless, but there are strategies to stay afloat inside this ocean of responsibility.

Firstly, keeping track of deadlines is a must, even if it's cliché.

"Knowing that I'm behind on something or not knowing how much I have left to do is a really big pain point for me," said Mark Bontempo, a graphic design major.

Spring might be crazy, but planning your assignments spares you some of the stress, he explained. If you allow deadlines to pile up, you might end up burning out.

"If you're having a really bad time right now, it's gonna carry over into the fall, and I think that's a really bad way to start it," said Natalia Barthel, a religion major.

Additionally, these burnouts are often worse during the spring semester, said Ayden Cottingham, a mass communications major.

"I think it's important for students to realize that while school is important, your mental health has to come first because you might not be able to bounce back in the future if you burn out too much. You might fizzle out one final time."

To manage schoolwork, Cottingham suggests being honest with classmates or your professors, making sure

to attend office hours when you can. "If you sit one-on-one with your teacher, tell them you're struggling, they will help you every which way they can," he said.

"It might be embarrassing, but embarrassment is so small compared to struggling mentally."

Outside of just schoolwork, we can subdue the overwhelm with self-care, said Reagan Arxer, a social work major.

While everyone "throws around the word self-care a lot," it's about taking the time to do things that you love while still having the time to study, she explained.

Sophia Cardin, a political science major, said this care is important for students, as we're at transitional points in our lives and can easily feel lost.

"I think it's super important to keep mental health as a number one priority because it's really easy to get caught up in not knowing what you're going to do and not giving as much effort as you should because of that," she said.

It's easy to think you're behind seeing young people on social media, "but you have to cut yourself some slack at the end of the day."



Ayden Cottingham

Photo by Kyan Feser

Part of cutting yourself slack is sitting with your emotions, and recognizing your humanity, said James Amaker II, a commercial music major.

"A thing I've learned over my growth as a person is not being afraid to feel the emotions," he said.

"We were told to suppress the bad feelings, but ultimately it's still a feeling; the more you suppress things, the more it comes back later on." Finally, "you gotta

remember the reason why you're doing it," said Jason Grimes, a mass communications major.

As students, we often forget why we are in college and how these years are stepping stones for our futures. We worked hard to be here, and we deserve the best outcomes.

"While hard times feel like they're hard now, when you look back at it, they're gonna be a breeze in the wind," he said.

"It really wasn't that bad then."



Jordan Schwamb

Photo by Kyan Feser

# ADVERTISE WITH US!

*Advertise with us today and reach over 6,000 students and residents in the Winthrop University and Rock Hill communities- whether you're hiring, looking for interns, performing research, or wanting to get your business out there!*



**mizeh2@winthrop.edu**

*Hudson Mize, Advertising Manager*

## South Carolina teachers Cont.

This raises fears of potentially losing this grant and facing substantial financial repayment if

they decide to transfer their applicable licensure to another member state. The students pursuing these

types of loans will be eligible for it only if they stayed in SC and not transfer outside of state lines. Essentially

meaning that they would be facing repayment of any used loan money with interest.

Education majors can stay connected with their college advisors in their departments to learn more and watch for

updates on this compact while it moves through the General Assembly in the coming weeks.

# Winthrop’s political organizations share their perspective on current events

## College Republicans, College Democrats and Students for Justice provide their views on key issues regarding the United States.

*Dakota Gold*  
Staff Writer

Student political organizations at Winthrop University hold a range of perspectives on current events, reflecting how national issues are being discussed on campus.

These organizations hold events and meetings to stay actively involved in politics, showing college students how their voices can be heard.

Winthrop College Republicans, College Democrats and Students for Justice provide their unique point of views, while also emphasizing campus and national collaboration.

College Republicans said that issues regarding students and the surrounding community are what they prioritize.

“The College Republican organization prioritizes issues that directly affect students and our local community as a whole. So often we talk about what’s wrong with our economy, free speech, and other relevant matters to our nation,” said Landon Polasky, College Republicans president.

College Democrats believe the most important issues regarding the U.S. are investing more funding into education, abolishing or reforming U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and inflation, especially due to war.

Each group takes different approaches to keep their organization and members informed on current events.

“A way to stay informed is that I try to follow a mix of political sources instead of being stuck inside a political bubble. I try to pay attention to official government data, as well as major reporting outlets,” said Polasky.

“I tend to look at both political parties and try to gain a grasp on what both parties are trying to say, especially on topics such as inflation, immigration and foreign policy.”

College Democrats agree that belief in opinions instead of factual information is a prevalent issue. They said people should look at news from multiple reputable sources from each end of the political spectrum, as they do to keep the group

updated.

“We do our best to have several members stay updated on the news and are constantly sharing information with one another. We like to add to this by tabling on campus so it’s not only us that are informed but also the student body at Winthrop,” said College Democrats president, Ollie Whitfield.

Polasky said that collaboration between the College Republicans and College Democrats lowers political polarization among students on campus.

“[...] we try to collaborate together and answer questions and show our differences,” Polasky said.

The president of Students for Justice, Kaydence Hill, said that they work hard to address as many issues as possible. The group has bi-weekly meetings.

“We dedicate a portion of each meeting to specifically cover current events from all over the world. We provide resources on how to

help, where to find more information, and how to spread awareness,” Hill said.

There is a span of opinion on current U.S. immigration issues.

College Democrats said that the country should prioritize the Constitution and human rights. “If there is an absolute necessity for immigration regulations they should be carried out legally and with dignity, respect, and due process for those involved,” Whitfield said.

Students for Justice said the U.S. has been reliant on the labor of immigrants for its entire existence. “It is hypocritical for modern America to actively try to limit and remove the presence of immigrants,” Hill said.

College Republicans believe that the U.S. should respond with both order and fairness. They believe the country has a right and responsibility to control its border, but they recognize the benefits of legal immigration.

“The country should be compassionate, but compassion without enforcement turns

into chaos, and chaos obviously doesn’t help anyone,” Polasky said.

The organizations all gave statements about the United States’ involvement in Iran.

The College Republicans said that since the U.S. is already in the war that it needs to be strong and swift.

“The United States should be strong, careful, and realistic. [...] I do not think the U.S. should be weak towards the Iran regime. If we’re already in this war we might as well ensure that we can end it as swiftly but as safely as possible,” Polasky said.

He continued that he does not want another endless war that costs billions of taxpayer dollars.

“It’s clearly worsening the civilian quality of life through high gas prices,” Polasky said. “So in summary, we can’t appease the Iranian government, but we also don’t need another reckless nation building mission, like a repeat of the War of Terror.”

The College Democrats said that the U.S. should immediately withdraw from Iran. “There is no

reason for a war as violent and expensive as this. This is and will continue to affect more than just the U.S. and Iran,” said Whitfield.

“It affects all developing nations when the oil gets cut off and also impacts places such as Lebanon who sees violence and bombings tremendously increasing every day as a direct result of this war.”

Students for Justice also believe the war is unnecessary.

“It is perpetuating further conflict in SWANA [South West Asia and North Africa]. It also displays a ridiculous amount of attention and commitment to Israel, which is at the immediate detriment to the American people,” Hill said.

They believe that the more important issues lie within the country. For example, they believe the most important issue is the amount of funding going towards Israel.

Instead, they believe this money should be spent on things like SNAP benefits, healthcare, homelessness relief and programs that help the American people.

# ONLY YOU



# CAN SUPPORT STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

April 16, 2026

