

COMMUNIQUE

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THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF CHATHAM UNIVERSITY

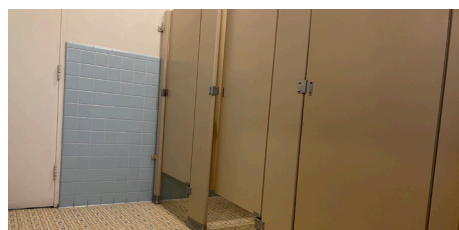
NOV. 16, 2021

NEWS



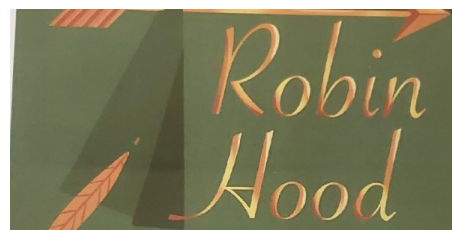
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Diversity plan completion date uncertain



Randi Congleton, previous chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion council's head committee, left Chatham in late October.

By Michaela DeLauter

Chatham University started earlier this year a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) council in hopes of creating greater diversity on campus. Randi Congleton, Ph.D., was the chair of the council's head committee, with the council's plan expected to be completed this June.

Congleton's departure from the University in October and a search for her successor has led to uncertainty as to when the plan will be completed, according to Chatham University President Dr. David Finegold.

Last year, Chatham did not have a university-wide DEI plan. Congleton was the one leading the movement to create this plan.

"We would like to see greater diversity in our student body and our faculty and staff," Finegold said. "Right now, we look an awful lot like Pittsburgh with a large, white population.

"I think we do very well in terms of gender equity and sexual identity. I think we have a very high representation here," Finegold continued. "I would like to see other dimensions of diversity. I think SEE PLAN, PAGE 2

Campus life inspires student-led meme Instagram accounts

By Gena Carter

Chatham University's social media culture is largely dominated by student-created Instagram accounts. Some of these include Free food at Chatham U (@freefoodchatham), Chatham Missed Connections (@chatham.missed.connections), Bored Cougars Unite (@boredatchatham) and Chatham U Affirmations (@chathamaffirmations). SEE INSTAGRAM, PAGE 3

'Tis the season for winter sports

By Carson Gates and Haley Daugherty

It's lovely weather to watch some sports together here at Chatham University. 'Tis the season to come out and support the Cougars in their winter seasons.

Men and women's indoor track and field

Heading quickly into the indoor season, Chatham's track and field team has its eyes set on victory. Leading the charge is newly appointed head coach Eden Bloom. SEE WINTER, PAGE 5



The profile picture of Bored Cougars Unite (@boredatchatham).

University looks to build upon DEI foundation started by Congleton

PLAN, FROM PAGE 1

it would be great to improve that, particularly among our faculty. ... We've lost some faculty of color over the last few years, each with their own circumstance. Overall, instead of making progress, we lost some ground, and we want to reverse that."

To combat this issue, Chatham has implemented the national program, Search Advocates. It provides training to faculty and staff at Chatham on how to search for a new hire in an inclusive and unbiased way.

For campus diversity as a whole, Chatham used an external consulting firm to administer focus groups, and sent out a climate survey in October. The climate survey accessed where Chatham is today regarding DEI by receiving input from the Chatham community.

Before Congleton's successor begins at Chatham, the plan is to finish the work the committee has started, as well as complete the climate survey and get the results so the committee can identify the strengths and weaknesses of Chatham.

To find Congleton's successor, the University is going to do a national search following the Search Advocates program. Students are encouraged to bring any ideas for candidates they have to campus.

A search committee will work on processing and screening applicants to narrow down the field to find three finalists. From there, candidates will be brought to campus as quickly as possible.

Finegold said, "since input will be very vital for this role, if a student says, 'that person is not fit for Chatham,' it's going to weigh very

heavily in the search process.

"One of the reasons [Congleton] will be sorely missed is because she's done a wonderful job during her time here," Finegold added.

Over the past four years, Congleton has made a large contribution to Chatham. She has been promoted twice, hired initially as the director of multicultural affairs. Then she moved up to become assistant dean and was head of the office of DEI. This past year, she was also part of the President's council, the leadership team of the whole University, as well as the Chief Diversity Officer.

"My goal is not to go back to where we were when Congleton started, but to build off of the tremendous foundation of what she's made, so that the person succeeding her will see that they don't have to do all the basic foundation

stuff she did," Finegold said. "My hope is to do the search as quickly as we can to bring someone in who can pick up where she left off."

The results of the climate survey and focus groups will be examined as the University searches for Congleton's successor. Finegold wants students to know that Congleton's departure doesn't mean Chatham is going to de-emphasize any of the things that she has worked on.

"We're 100% committed to carry on the work that Congleton has done, and we want to engage on it," Finegold said. "If [students] have any concerns that they want to bring to Chatham, they are encouraged to do so."

For further information, read more about the Diversity Plan online at my.chatham.edu.

POLICE BLOTTER

All information is provided by Chatham University's Public Safety

10:10 p.m. Oct. 29 - Officers received a call for a cat locked in a closet at Rea House. The lock broke on the door, trapping the cat inside. Officers notified the campus locksmith, who freed the cat.

3:20 p.m. Oct. 31 - Officers at Graham Field noticed damage to the bathrooms. A report was taken to document the damages.

8:40 a.m. Nov. 4 - Officers were notified of a traffic crash at Linzer Apartments. It was discovered that the accident happened off campus and the Pittsburgh police were notified.

2:54 p.m. Nov. 9 - Officers were notified of a sick student at Eastside campus. Upon arrival, officers did find a student who was not feeling well and was transported to the hospital by Pittsburgh city medics.

9:25 p.m. Nov. 9 - Officers were notified of a smell of marijuana in Fickes Hall. Upon arrival, officers located the source and Residence Life was notified.

10 p.m. Nov. 9 - Officers were dispatched to the bottom of Woodland Road where the Chatham shuttle was stuck on a large rock in a resident's yard. The shuttle was unstuck without further incident.

9:45 a.m. Nov. 10 - Officers were dispatched to Health Services for a sick student. Upon arrival, officers notified Pittsburgh city medics, who transported the student to the hospital.

Instagram accounts strive to bring students together

INSTAGRAM, FROM PAGE 1

These accounts are, for the most part, loved by the student body. Combined, they have a follower count nearing 2,000. However, it's largely unknown who their creators are and what it's like to run these meme accounts.

While these accounts' creators requested to remain anonymous, they agreed to share their experience with the *Communiqué* via Instagram direct messages. Many of them described feeling that students' perceptions of their respective accounts have changed over time or their account has evolved.

The creator of Free food at Chatham, at the time of the interview, was contemplating turning the account over to another student after getting "disturbing images in [their] dms."

"I started this account just as ... kind of a satire on how we are a sustainable school, but there's trash all over the place," Free Food at Chatham wrote via direct messages. "It was nice to have a community at first who understood the humor and played into the joke by submitting pictures."

"But," they continued, "some people started sending pictures of things like dead animals ... I don't think it is OK to show someone's pictures of dead animals without their consent."

The creator of Free Food said that, most of the time when they would decline submissions, people were generally receptive and nice.

However, there was one instance when a student submitted a gory, mutilated animal photo. After the creator declined it, the student still posted it on their Instagram Story and tagged the account.

"It was just a turning point that made me realize how fast satire can lose its meaning and turn into something else entirely," they wrote.

Other creators have also experienced a shift in the perceived meanings of their accounts, though their experiences were less intense.

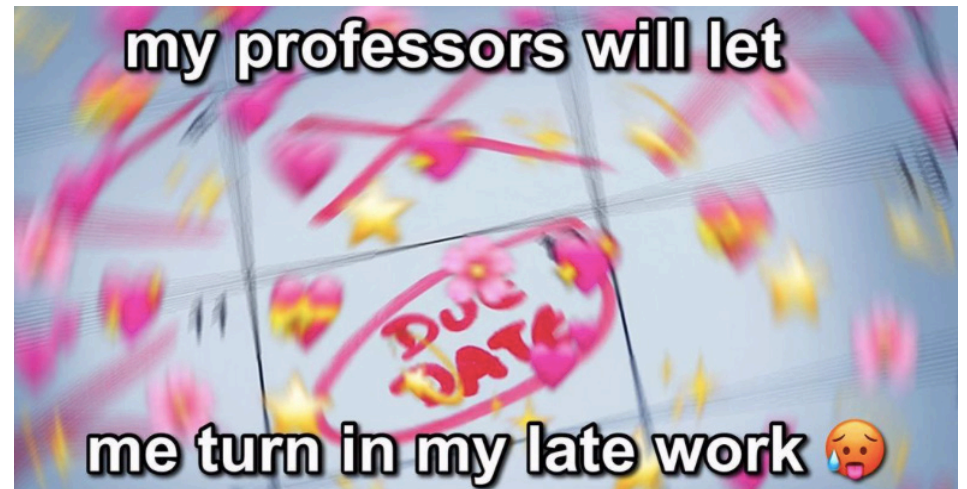
"In the beginning," the creator of Chatham Missed Connections wrote, "the submissions were really hateful and serious. I had to make a whole announcement about proper etiquette and other resources ... rather than have everyone rant to a meme page."

Bored Cougars Unite was originally created to be "a space where students could DM us weird ideas ... and we'd do them," they wrote. "So far, it's mostly been memes and making lighthearted fun of each other and Chatham."

The accounts were made for a variety of different reasons.

"We were just really bored last year, stuck in our dorm rooms with no way to meet or connect with people, and in desperate need of a good laugh," Bored Cougars Unite wrote.

Missed Connections started after the creator noticed that most other schools in the Pittsburgh region had a "missed connections" social



A post made by Chatham U Affirmations (@chathamaffirmations).

media account except for Chatham.

Similarly, Chatham Affirmations was inspired after the creator saw affirmation accounts from their friends at other colleges.

"I love editing photos, so I made a few pictures as a joke just to send to my friends, and they encouraged me to make the account," they explained.

None of these creators know each other personally or run multiple Chatham-based accounts. However, all expressed admiration for each other.

"It would be really cool to have a secret society of folks who run funny Chatham accounts," Chatham affirmations wrote, "but nope."

"I think we have an unspoken bond. I really respect them all," Free Food at Chatham wrote, "and [I] appreciate what they bring to Chatham."

While the University has not interacted with any of the accounts to date, Parkhurst's Instagram

account has responded to Bored Cougars Unite's Instagram Stories, and some ex-Chatham employees follow Free Food at Chatham.

"[Parkhurst] likes to joke as much as we do," Bored Cougars Unite wrote.

Ultimately, the goal of these accounts is to connect the campus, not cause division.

"College is such a rough, scary time of your life," Chatham Affirmations wrote, "and joking about it and having people to joke about it with can really ease any stresses you may have."

"I would love it if this account helps people make friends and connect with new people on campus at a deeper level than just saying 'hi' in the hallway," Missed Connections wrote.

The need for all-gender inclusive restrooms at Chatham

By Abigail Hakas

Chatham University has been a pioneer in college equality for non-binary and transgender students since it opened to all genders in fall 2015, but a large source of inherent inequality still remains: gendered bathrooms.

It doesn't take long before coming across a restroom labeled "Ladies" on campus. While this is not of consequence to most cisgender women -- the majority of students on campus -- it should be.

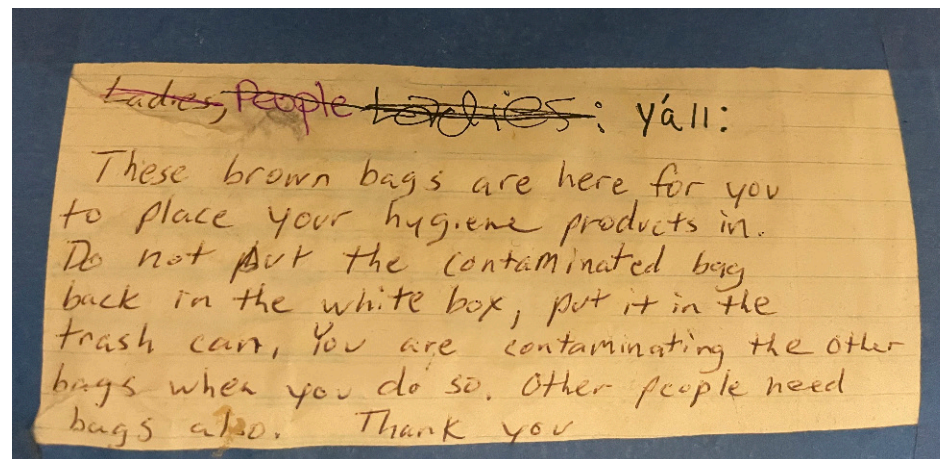
If Chatham is to uphold its own standards for equality, gendered bathrooms must be removed. Separate spheres have long been an issue of importance to anyone but cisgender people. Why is Chatham, a university that prioritizes respecting people from all walks of life, continuing this antiquated narrative of gender binaries?

Not only do gendered bathrooms inhibit the comfort and safety of non-binary and trans people by enforcing a gender binary, they also encourage the idea that cisgender men must be kept separate from women because of sexist fears that men cannot control themselves. The way to prevent sexual violence on campus is through education and the Green Dot initiative, not through separation and fearmongering.

If we are to move forward as a campus and as a society toward equality, then we must do away with our own overlooked preju-

ices. These gendered bathrooms only lead to further confusion and discrimination.

In Coolidge Hall, there is a women's restroom on the first floor near C130; the middle stall of this bathroom has a note about disposing of sanitary products that has served as a forum on gender. "LADIES," it says, which has been crossed out and replaced with "PEOPLE."



A note on the sanitary product disposal bin in a stall of the women's bathroom in Coolidge Hall. The note was originally addressed to 'Ladies' and has since been crossed out multiple times to address different groups of people.

Photo Credit: Abigail Hakas

That's been crossed out, too, and replaced with, "LADIES." The word was crossed out again and ultimately replaced with, "Y'ALL." Each of these words was written in different handwriting, presumably by a new person each time.

This debate over who can use the ladies' restrooms only causes strife among Chatham students instead of being a dialogue that brings us closer together. It's important to acknowledge the impact this

gender-exclusive decision has on the people who identify as male, as well.

Students and faculty should not have to spend time hunting down a gender-inclusive restroom. College is a time for self-discovery, not a bathroom witch hunt.

While the existence of the ladies' rooms is problematic for men, the existence of both ladies' and men's

It is wonderful that students have access to some gender-inclusive bathrooms on campus, as this was an improvement fought for diligently in years past in the name of inclusivity. However, today, the options are unnecessarily limited and demand updating.

The solution to this is simple: remove the labels. The only thing keeping these facilities from being usable by all students is a label. No extensive renovations or construction needs to be done, just a label being changed.

Restrooms with gendered language only serve to inspire confusion and anxiety. Anyone who does not clearly conform to one of the gender binaries is left in the dark, and anyone trying to discover their gender identity is forced to constantly adapt.

This ignorance cannot continue on campus. We as a community must welcome everyone with no exception or we cannot claim to be an inclusive place to all. Chatham integrated to all genders in 2015 but still holds archaic practices that serve only to divide and distress.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Communiqué welcomes readers to submit letters to be considered for publication. Send your reactions to stories, thoughts on Chatham University and whatever else is on your mind to opinion editor Abbey Sullivan (abbey.sullivan@chatham.edu).

Season preview: Winter sports are making an icy comeback

WINTER, FROM PAGE 1

“The goal is to win. I’m excited,” Bloom said. “We have a strong middle-distance crew that’s ready to tear it up this year. We also have some great leadership on the team to hold people accountable.”

Runners and throwers alike have the intention of creating a culture of hard work and positivity.

“We need to improve off of last year’s performances and, as always, to win both individually and as a team,” said third-year sprinter and jumper Justin Desabato ‘23.

Athletes agree that it’s all about hard work and a good attitude.

“We’re focusing on becoming legitimate competition at meets,” said third-year runner Morgan Heller ‘23. “We’ve been working hard in the off-season and are working on coming together during the regular season.”

Track and field’s first meet is on Dec. 4 in Alliance, Ohio.

Men and women’s squash

As a diverse unit of local and international players, Chatham’s squash team competes against a medley of schools, including Division 1 opponents.

With this type of high-level competition, the men’s team is standing with a record of three wins and two losses. Women’s squash, a team with a majority of players who are new to the sport, has a current record of zero wins and five losses.

“We have a strong team, we’re up for any challenge,” said third-



Sofia Ramos Fortanelli '24 plays for the women’s squash team. Photo Credits: Chatham Athletics

year squash player Alaaeldin Abdelkhalik ‘24. “Our diversity doesn’t divide us but rather [it makes us] a more powerful team.”

The squash team faces its next opponent, St. Francis, on Jan. 14 in Massachusetts.

Women’s ice hockey

This is the women’s ice hockey program’s 25th anniversary season. Head coach Mike O’Grady wants this season to be historic for the program.

The Cougars are coming off a weekend sweep of conference opponent Arcadia. This sweep brings the women’s hockey team’s record on the year to 2-4.

O’Grady feels optimistic about how his squad looked in these games.

“We are getting chances. We are just not finishing,” O’Grady said.

The women’s hockey team is back in action on Nov. 17 at home against Buffalo State College.

Men’s ice hockey

Men’s ice hockey got into the

win column for the first time this season with a 5-2 victory over Nazareth. Head coach Michael Gershon considers last season’s success something to build off of for this year.

“We are not surprising anyone this year,” Gershon said.

Gershon and his squad are expecting to make a run this season and host a home playoff game.

The Cougars are 1-2 on the season and host Neumann and Manhattanville on Nov. 19 and 20.

Women’s basketball

Women’s basketball is off to a hot start. The Cougars are out to a 3-0 start and begin their PAC play on Nov. 16 against Thiel College.

Cougars head coach David Saur believes this team is different compared to previous years.

It’s a “really focused and hungry group this year,” Saur said.

With the team’s eyes set intently on a ring, Saur sees a championship in his team’s future.

“That can legitimately be a reali-

ty,” Saur said.

Men’s basketball

Chatham’s men’s basketball team started its season off on the right foot by winning its first two contests.

This Cougar team is led by a veteran presence for this season. Head coach David Richards believes this will be the difference in his team finding success.

“Guys have an edge on them,” Richards said.

Richards feels like his team can win another PAC Championship this season.

Men’s basketball has its next game on Nov. 17 when the team hosts Pitt Greensburg.

Men and women’s swimming and diving

These Cougars have fins! The women’s swimming and diving team is off to a strong start with a three win and two loss record. First-year swimmer Amy Jarvis ‘25 has been named PAC rookie of the week twice in her time so far as a Cougar.

The men’s team stands with a record of zero wins and five losses. Second-year swimmer Karl Gango has been named to the PAC watchlist after making Chatham history last season as the first male athlete to win a solo championship.

The swimming and diving team’s next match will be on Nov. 18 in Oberlin, Ohio.



Hunter Kercheensky ‘23 swims for the men’s team at Chatham.

Drama club returns to the stage with ‘Robin Hood’

By Riley Hurst Brubaker

The Chatham University Drama Club returned to the stage over the weekend at Eddy Theatre for in-person performances of its production of “Robin Hood.”

The show followed Robin Hood, played by Leo Liotta ‘23, and his band of outcasts on their mission to keep the Kingdom of Nottingham from being ruled by the oppressive Prince John. The play marks the club’s first on-stage production after a year of virtual performances prompted by COVID-19.

Despite the return to in-person events, the continuing pandemic required students to adapt to new safety guidelines. One adaptation was the presence of masks throughout the performance. Wearing masks on stage required students to project more than usual and to come up with ways to incorporate them into their costumes.

“Masks were definitely an adjustment. I’ve never acted with a mask on before, and I have asthma, so fighting in a mask can make it pretty difficult to breathe,” Liotta said.

Returning to Eddy Theatre not only allowed for students in the club to connect with each other more easily but also with the audience.

“It’s nice to be back in person,” said Nora Robb ‘23. “Virtual performances felt so impersonal.”

Several other cast members echoed that sentiment.

“This cast has become so tight

through the rehearsal process,” said Evelyn Fay ‘25. “The best part of participating has been getting to work with everyone and put on this amazing show.”

“It’s nice to be back in person. Virtual performances felt so impersonal.”

- Nora Robb ‘23

The cast and crew have multiple performances of “Robin Hood” remaining, including two live shows at 7 p.m. Nov. 19-20 and a streamed performance at 6 p.m. Nov. 21. Tickets for the streamed show can be found at chatham.booktix.com. Admission to the live show is free.

Upcoming events by the Drama Club include a theater workshop in February and performances of “Monstersongs” in March and “The Revolutionists” in April. Theater classes, including THT149: Play Performance and THT240: Special Topics: Dramaturgy, will be running during the spring 2022 semester.

The Drama Club can be found on Instagram at [@chathamudrama](https://www.instagram.com/chathamudrama) or on Facebook at [@chathamuniversi-tydrama](https://www.facebook.com/chathamuniversi-tydrama).



Leo Liotta ‘23, as Robin Hood, takes aim during the first act of “Robin Hood.” Photo credits: Chatham University Drama Club

Students can still see the Drama Club show in Eddy Theatre at 7 p.m. Nov. 19 and 20, or stream the performance at 6 p.m. Nov. 21. Go to chatham.booktix.com.



Cast members of “Robin Hood” pose for a group photo during a dress rehearsal.

The Radar

A series featuring Chatham artists

By Lilly Kubit



Leáh Johnson '22 is studying for a major in interior architecture at Chatham University. She is a painter and sketch artist who likes to utilize line and organic shapes. Her work focuses on hidden symbols, which she includes in every piece. She's inspired by her experiences, passions and observations.

"I like to advocate for what I see and experience, especially if it is important to me. My work speaks for how I feel in the moment, and never leaves to question," Johnson said.

In her free time, she likes to read history books, hang out with her bunny and go on walks in nature. For more art from Johnson, check out her Instagram account @heyheyleahhere.



*"Bob Marley"
(stipple pen and ink)*

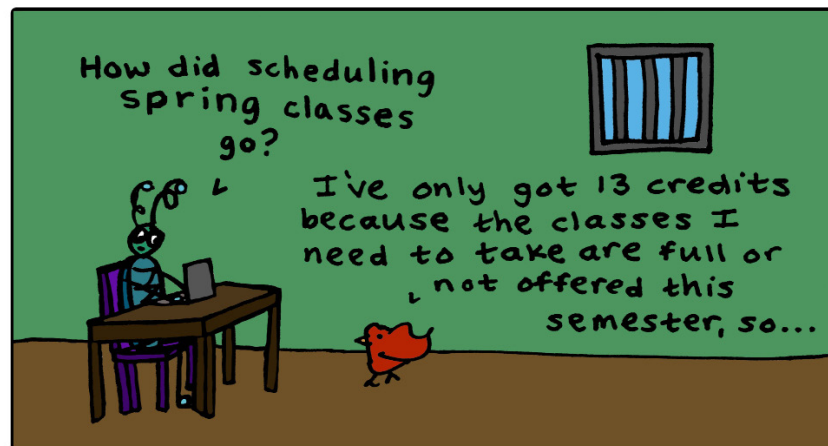


*"Female Form"
(watercolor and acrylic paint)*



*"Native Canvas Primary, Black and White"
and "Native Canvas Realistic"
(acrylic paint)*

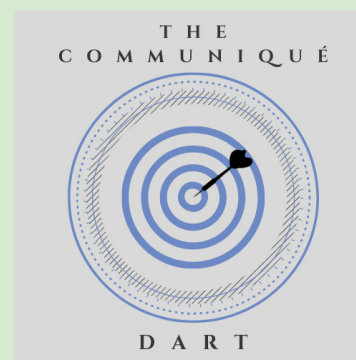
Out of Left Field: Schedule your classes!



Out of Left Field — that's how Doodlebug has been feeling lately. Everything seems like it's happening so fast! New experiences, new locations and new ideas! Stay tuned to see how Doodlebug continues his journey through Pittsburgh's and the world's current events.

Alexis Taranto '24

Take a listen



The Communiqué is publishing podcast episodes! "The Communiqué Dart" will focus on diving deeper into the important stories at Chatham. Follow our social media platforms for more information.

Do you want to join the podcast staff? Please email alice.crow@chatham.edu to contribute to the podcast.

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Corrections

The Communiqué strives to report the news accurately and fairly. If we've made a mistake, please let us know so we can correct it and learn from it. Email (alice.crow@chatham.edu) or (communique@chatham.edu).