

Chaos During Cornhuskin'

By Freya Dahlgren, Staff Writer

Around noon on Friday, Nov. 5, the Meredith College student body received an email informing them that the main event for Cornhuskin' had been moved up 24 hours to that evening. Because of this change, some individuals were no longer able to attend Cornhuskin's main event due to work or other commitments. Additionally, prop building for some of the classes had not yet been completed.

While the rain plan for Cornhuskin' stated that in the event of inclement weather, the main event would be moved to Sunday, Nov. 7, it also mentioned that if weather concerns were predicted for both Saturday and Sunday, "a decision may be made to move Cornhuskin' up a day to Friday, Nov. 5." The plan proceeded to explain that the event could be moved to the next weekend, as well.

Class of 2023 co-chair Aminah Jenkins stated that "around 10:30 [a.m.] on Friday, all of the co-chairs were added to a group chat with Gaige Cogswell, [Assistant Director of Student Leadership and Service,] and others from MRA [where] they asked us how feasible it would be to move it to Friday night. We were all in agreement that this wouldn't be ideal."

Jenkins said the Cornhuskin' co-chairs were called to a meeting in the amphitheater at 2:30 p.m. to discuss if this change to Friday was going to work. Jenkins stated that she "had to put off eating to make the meeting in the amphitheater to have [her] voice heard." She continued, "I feel like the decision was made with little consideration for the amount of work that goes into this tradition. People who spent weeks coming to practices and spent money on dancer packs had an opportunity

taken away from them in a matter of hours. And for co-chairs, we were left scrambling to get everything we needed and help our class prepare."

Class of 2025 co-chair Ella Cannon said, "I was very stressed

the event." She noted that SLS was aware that the co-chairs "did not support a switch to Friday evening." However, due to the potential poor weather, Cheryl Jenkins said "there would have been no



Class of 2023 co-chairs Conception Cruz (far

left) and Aminah Jenkins (middle); photo by Molly Perry

with everything we had to do in that short amount of time from when we knew [about the change] to when Cornhuskin' was actually happening." Savannah Stainback, '25, added, "I did not go to one of my classes as I knew personally I wouldn't be able to focus on my class with everything that we had to do in around six hours."

When asked about why and how the decision to move Cornhuskin' was made, Cheryl Jenkins, Director of Student Leadership and Service, said, "On Friday early morning, we learned of the forecast that a rainstorm was predicted to... stay with us in the Raleigh area until Sunday afternoon." Cheryl Jenkins stated that following this realization they "decided to entertain the idea of moving Cornhuskin' to Friday evening... After numerous conversations with co-chairs, MRA officers, Events Office staff, judges, Dr. Jean Jackson, scorekeepers, etc., SLS made the decision to move

and Sunday evening for the Island [in the amphitheater] to dry. As we have experienced in previous scenarios when the Island was wet, the area is unsafe for students for dancing." An additional change that was made involved canceling Can Art and the sophomore/senior serenade and rescheduling the activities for another day. This change was made in consultation with the co-chairs. "The Cornhuskin' Co-chairs provided input that we had asked too much of them and the student body to put Can Art, the serenade and all of the other events into one day," Cheryl Jenkins explained.

Cheryl Jenkins was also asked about the support that co-chairs received from SLS when this change was announced. She stated that the "co-chairs wanted... grace in the judging. We informed the judges about the circumstances and asked the judges to provide

some 'grace' in judging since the students had just had to change things so quickly." Finally, Cheryl Jenkins added that "the Office of Student Leadership and Service would like to thank everyone for their cooperation with the move to Friday night... We in no way wanted to have a negative impact on this Cornhuskin' experience. We are so thankful for all of you who have worked so hard to show that Meredith's students could do Cornhuskin' in a pandemic."

In general, even without changes to the schedule due to weather concerns, Cornhuskin' can be a difficult time for co-chairs. When asked how her mental health has fared overall during Cornhuskin', Aminah Jenkins stated, "It gets worse the closer we get to Corn. I spent a few days sleeping on my couch because my room and bed were filled with Corn materials." Cannon added, "I have been more stressed lately since I've had a lot on my plate." Another co-chair who wished to remain anonymous said, "Honestly, [my mental health has] gone downhill. There is a lot of pressure put on co-chairs and I wish our fellow students understood that we are trying our best and this is supposed to be fun."

All of the co-chairs felt as though their mental health could've been better supported through the Cornhuskin' process. One co-chair felt as though it would have been helpful to start preparations and planning sooner. Aminah Jenkins stated, "It would be helpful if people would be a little more patient with things. At the end of the day, we're students. We have academic and personal obligations outside of Corn that we're also trying to stay on top of."

The Return of In-Person Cornhuskin'

By Freya Dahlgren, Staff Writer

For the first time since 2019, Cornhuskin' returned to its in-person setting on campus at Meredith College. In addition to Cornhuskin' including more in-person events this year than it did in 2020, several changes were made for this year's Cornhuskin'. COVID-19 protocols, improved event accessibility and logistical adjustments were implemented for Cornhuskin' this year. Additionally, due to forecasted inclement weather on Nov. 6, the original date that Cornhuskin' was to be held, the main event was moved to

the evening of Friday, Nov. 5.

The Office of Student Leadership and Service (SLS) announced the COVID-19 protocols in place for Cornhuskin' before the Cornhuskin' season started. These protocols include adherence to Meredith College's COVID-19 Community Standards, lower capacity at events and pre-registration for activities. Guests, including alumnae/i, were not invited on campus for Cornhuskin' this year. The exclusion of the Saturday morning parade from Cornhuskin' 2021 was also meant to decrease

the number of people on campus.

Adjustments were also made to hall raids this year. Hall raids now take place earlier in the evening instead of at the traditional times of midnight or 1 a.m. Residential students who have emotional support or service animals were provided with hall raid schedules before the raids took place in order to accommodate their animals.

Cornhuskin's main event took place in two separate groups this year. The freshman and junior classes were able to sit together

in McIver Amphitheater for their skits, Hog Callin' and Tall Tale performances, and the sophomore and senior classes sat together following the odd classes' performances. While SLS originally had planned to seat every class separately, this decision was made after "careful consideration and looking at the amount of RSVPs" according to SLS.