

In the Year 2020: WSU, World, Culturally

2020 was a year of historic pivots for Weber State University. While the global pandemic reshaped campus life, the university reached major construction milestones and saw its athletic teams make unprecedented history in the months that followed.

The COVID-19 Pivot

Like the rest of the world, WSU's 2020 was defined by the pandemic response:

- **Rapid Transition:** Following state directives in mid-March, WSU suspended in-person classes and moved nearly all courses to remote or online delivery within days. [\[source\]](#)
- **Stewart Stadium Commencement:** After being postponed from April, a unique, socially-distanced commencement ceremony was held in the football stadium in August 2020. To honor the graduates, the university lit the "W" on the mountainside. [\[source\]](#)

Engineering & Growth

Despite the pandemic, WSU hit major milestones in its Davis County expansion:

- **Computer & Automotive Engineering Building:** This \$20 million, 51,000-square-foot facility at the WSU Davis campus officially opened for the Fall 2020 semester. It became the new home for the automotive technology program and expanded software engineering labs. [\[source\]](#)
- **Tesla Learning Center:** The new building at WSU Davis included a specialized Tesla learning center, strengthening the university's partnership with the electric vehicle industry. [\[source\]](#)
- **New Degrees:** WSU launched several high-demand programs in 2020, including a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and a specialized Master of Science in Radiologic Sciences. [\[source\]](#)

A Historic (and Delayed) Athletic Year

Due to the pandemic, many "2020" athletic achievements actually took place during an unprecedented spring season in early 2021, but the groundwork was laid in 2020:

- **Football "Four-Peat":** The 2020 season was moved to Spring 2021. The Wildcats went undefeated in the regular season to claim their fourth consecutive Big Sky title. [\[source\]](#)
- **Locker Room Science:** Notably, football players Xavier Stilson and Kawika Tupuola presented research on using ozone treatment to reduce microbial loads in athletic locker rooms—a timely study given the pandemic. [\[source\]](#)

Other Notable Events

- **New Provost:** Provost Ravi Krovi joined Weber in March of 2020. His 90-day plan "went out the window the first week, as we moved into COVID crisis mode." [\[source\]](#)
- **Solar Parking Array:** The university completed a large solar-covered array over the W10 parking lot, a major step toward its 2040 carbon-neutral goal. [\[source\]](#)

2020: The Pandemic Year

- **COVID-19:** The WHO declared a global pandemic in March, leading to worldwide lockdowns, economic shifts, and the rapid development of mRNA vaccines.
- **The "Hamil-drop":** Disney+ released the filmed version of the Broadway hit *Hamilton* 15 months ahead of schedule in July 2020, sparking "Hamil-fever" worldwide.
- **Mars Perseverance:** NASA launched the Perseverance rover, beginning a mission to search for signs of ancient life on the Red Planet.

2020: The Home-Bound Culture

- **Gaming: *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*** became a digital sanctuary for millions of people during the early lockdowns.
- **TV:** Everyone was watching the same things at the same time, most notably the bizarre true-crime docuseries *Tiger King*.
- **Internet:** TikTok evolved from a "teen dance app" to a primary source of news, cooking trends (like whipped coffee), and humor for all ages.