

My Experiences

A Brief Chronological Journal of My Experience Amidst the Coronavirus Pandemic

Since it was basically permissible to use any form of medium and style for which to present one's experience during this pandemic, I have such elected to present my thoughts in this form: a series of journal entries regarding my own processing of this entire ordeal and the events that have occurred.

December

It was the end of the year 2019. The first half of my last year as an undergrad was over. I was eager to begin winter break and be able to enjoy a short reprieve from classes until the next semester.

During this time, I had not known anything had been occurring.

January

In the beginning of this year, 2020, things were going relatively well. I had enjoyed the time I had spent with my family for the holidays and was getting my things in order for the incoming semester. It would be my final semester as an undergraduate and (luckily) for me, it was the first and only time I would be a part-time student, so there was more fluidity to my schedule. I was hopeful that this new semester would be easier on me.

This was when I first heard something was going on. A new illness had arisen in China and had spread to other countries. Things were still relatively mild. Most of the focus was on China and how it was dealing with this new virus. I was hopeful that things would get better soon and that by having people quarantined, it would be enough for the virus to be contained, at least in the US.

February

The semester was now in full swing. I was a part-time student, but I had filled the additional time in being part of a volunteer organization, joining a committee, taking care of my sibling, and getting my things in order for graduation. Life was a bit more hectic now. There was much for me to do in this closing semester, but I took everything on a day-by-day basis and made sure that I did what needed to be done. By late February, I had started taking my own precautionary measures such as keeping sanitizer on my person, not touching my face, and other such methods.

This is when things began getting concerning. China was struggling to combat the virus and many people were getting infected outside of China. The biggest highlight that I can remember from this time period were the cruise ships with a majority of their passengers being infected and having to remain on the ship. I began getting worried about how much the infection had spread to other places and the US.

March

We were barely a few days into March when things were getting too serious and the university had to be closed down, with everyone being transferred into online courses. I will not contest the fact that I personally was dreading this as I am not fond of remote learning. I have had a few unpleasant experiences with it and didn't want to make the change, but I knew it was necessary. At first, it was merely a precaution, in hopes that this would just be a safety measure and soon we could go back to normal classes. I crossed my fingers and hoped this was the case.

It clearly did not become so.

Things have officially hit the fan. The United States declared a state of emergency and the COVID-19 illness was officially classified a pandemic. A large number of people were infected and people were dying from the disease. People instantly began hoarding necessities. My family and I had automatically switched our way of interacting outside of our home. We would make sure to do all of our shopping as early in the morning as possible (or whenever the least amount of people would be at the store) and only leave the house if absolutely necessary, getting only what we needed. I believe that I am able to take things in stride so well because I am an introvert. People that are extroverted must be having a much more difficult time adjusting.

April

This was the beginning of the new normal.

Since I only had two classes to worry about, it was easier for me to make the change to an online setting. Zoom instantly became a constant. Participation assignments were added to my retinue of coursework in the class where we did not meet online. Overall, it could have been a more unpleasant situation. Frankly, I got off easy. My thoughts instantly went to those that had labs or physical education/kinesiology courses. I wonder how their experiences were like.

Cases surged. The United States is now the worst hit country with regards to the coronavirus, both in terms of recorded infections and deaths. Unemployment is also a major issue, in which my family was not spared. Fortunately, my mother still works and we have cut back significantly on many of our usual expenses. We are making do and hopefully we will be able to stay afloat as we have been recently. I have also been taking in many more skills with this "free" time I have now on hand. Some of the various things that I have been doing are attempting to learn a new language, playing the piano, sewing, and knitting (I have enclosed an image of my current knitting project with the submission of this entry; hopefully it is attached).

May

We are nearing the end of this month as well. I have done my best in my courses and I am delighted to know that it is very likely that I will graduate this semester. That is also something that I have had to make an adjustment to. My family was very excited to know that I will soon be moving onto the next part of my life, and had plans to celebrate, but that has been canceled. We still plan to make the most of it and celebrating in the future with relatives whenever the pandemic abates, but until then, I still have the honor of being able to graduate.

It is very easy to be depressed about what is occurring and sometimes the news really doesn't help. Still, there are positives. Virtually all of the countries in the world are seeking for a cure and with careful consideration, we will optimistically have a cure soon. The environment has been benefiting much and it is always nice to hear how animals have begun visiting all of the areas that they previously hadn't been seen in. The air is cleaner than it has been in a long time in many areas across the world.

There is no telling what will be in store for us in the future considering everything that is happening right now, but I believe it is important for us to keep our hopes up. To my fellow graduates, if you are able to read this, then I congratulate you. To all others, I wish you good luck in your future studies and endeavors. It is with sincere honesty that I wish everyone the best and that we come out as better people with a greater understanding and appreciation for what we have.