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COVID-19 & Xavier: Documents

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2020-05-04

### COVID-19 PR Reflection

Madeline Dingle

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Madeline Dingle

COVID-19 Reflection

05-14-2020

Through my experience during the coronavirus, I have realized the importance of human interaction. College is such a unique time because you're given the freedom of being an adult and the ability to live with your friends whom you attend class with. This is such a unique situation because I'm aware that, after college, everyone I know will spread out across the country and, if we stay in touch, all future interaction will be through a screen. This portion of the coronavirus project stood out to me because I believe every person has a unique perspective on the stay at home order. It has affected everyone differently, depending on where they live and their daily routine.

I first realized the coronavirus pandemic was serious when I found out that undergraduate students were being encouraged to leave campus and return home during the stay at home order. I was already home at this time, fully expecting to return to school for online learning. I thought that staying at my house in Cincinnati would help me focus better than if I were to stay at my family home in Illinois. I remember receiving the email right after returning from grocery shopping with my family. I was very frustrated and began to panic because of the uncertainty surrounding online learning in an unfamiliar environment. Personally, I'm a visual learner and a frequent user of office hours to connect with my teachers regarding assignments I do not wholly understand. I realized that, with online learning, I wouldn't be able to interact with my teachers in the same way. The anatomy lab for my biology major required dissecting and analyzing specimens for hours twice a week. For online learning, the class was transformed into a

twenty-minute video each week where the professor would quickly scan through the physical dissection. After a few weeks, Xavier no longer allowed teachers on campus and dissections weren't able to be filmed anymore. Instead, images from the internet were used in short online quizzes. The online quizzes were extremely different from the practical stations that would have been used for a regular exam. I found that some teachers did not understand what a drastic change this was for their students. It was not as easy to learn from stock images and recorded lectures as it would be with physical diagrams and live instruction. Teachers would record lectures and require students to watch a two hour lesson video in place of the fifty minute class period at school. The tests were an even bigger adjustment. While some classes had the exams taken over Zoom, others used a Lockdown browser and webcam.

I found it extremely difficult to learn this way. It was hard to focus on my assignments whilst at home because of the drastic change in my environment and the lack of direct classmate collaboration. Also, I realized that all of my focus was on school and my assignments when I was on campus. The events at home did not have a large impact on my life until I called my parents to get caught up from any during the week. For example, I had three dogs when I first came home and one was very old. She was moving around the house slowly while I was at home and her activity was gradually decreasing. My dad took her to the vet and we soon found out she had cancer and might not make it through the next night. The next morning, she passed away in my backyard. My whole family and I were completely torn apart and my parents and sister were crying for hours. I felt as if all of the oxygen was sucked from the house and I felt so empty because an important part of our family just passed away after struggling for so long. However, that morning I also had a lecture for my Physics class and a test in my Human and Comparative

Anatomy class. I had to tear myself away from my family and log on to school like nothing happened. This was a large example of how family events that wouldn't affect me as much if I was at school made focusing a lot harder.

Some activities that kept me entertained was journaling through the period of quarantine and continuing to train with one of my teammates from high school. I signed up to receive a new journal prompt every day that related to self introspection during quarantine. Also, I am on the Track and Field/XC team and our outdoor spring track season was canceled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. I saw this as a great opportunity to run for pure enjoyment and catch up with one of my high school teammates. She was the only person I ran with for the entire period of quarantine, so my circle of interacting with people was limited to my three family members and her. We took the opportunity to drive to a different running path almost every day and run without worrying about workouts or an intense pace. It was a completely surreal experience being able to fall in love with running again without the competitive pressure of training for a race. It became a regular routine to get up early, journal, and drive to a trail before coming back home to shower and eat. It wasn't until after a nap and two cups of coffee before I could convince myself to write a paper or watch another lecture where I would have to hit pause every two seconds because my professor would speak so quickly. If I was at school, I would have to return from my run, sprint to a lecture class, a lift session, and a lab in the next three hours after my workout session. Although it was nice to have that extra time to relax after training, I was much more productive at school with my time.