

## **Transcript of Interview with St. Mary's Student by Bianca-Rhae Jacquez**

**Interviewee:** St. Mary's Student - "Interviewee"

**Interviewer:** Bianca-Rhae Jacquez

**Date:** 11/23/2020

**Location:**

**Abstract:** "Interviewee" is a sophomore at S. Mary's University. He was able to sit down over zoom and do an interview with me to talk about his experience of online learning during the pandemic. He goes into depth about the changes in the class structures and the changes in his college experience.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 00:01**

Okay, can you please introduce yourself? And what is your relationship or your relation to St. Mary's University?

**Interviewee 00:08**

Right. Hello, my name is Interviewee. I am a sophomore at St. Mary's University. I'm a history major and a sociology major. And I'm currently in, an officer for the St. Mary's history club.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 00:26**

Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_, so much for letting me interview you today. So one of my first questions I want to ask you is, how would you describe your life as a resident prior to COVID-19?

**Interviewee 00:39**

So my life prior to COVID, um I would say that it was very engaging, like, I had a pretty good relationship with my professors. And then I was, um, I felt very engaged in the St. Mary's community. So I feel like there was, we're always doing something, whether it was like, academic or not, there was always something to do.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 01:11**

What would you, if you had to pick from all the things that St. Mary's does, you know, we have all these events going on. What is one of your favorite events that you have attended at St. Mary's last year since it was your freshman year?

**Interviewee 01:25**

Okay, my favorite was the Christmas tree lighting. And so I'm a little curious to see like, what they're gonna do about that this year.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 01:35**

Me too, I'm very curious how that's gonna happen. So, as you know, on March 13th, we got an email saying that our spring break was going to be extended an extra week, how did you feel about getting an extra week of spring break, and also knowing that your classes were going to be switched to online after spring break?

**Interviewee 02:03**

Initially, I was a little excited, I think I was just in my head, like, oh, extra vacation, and then it kind of hit you. And I started thinking about like, oh, like, I'm going to be thrown off with my routine. Like I already had a set schedule of how I did things and a certain way of doing things. I followed a, not a strict schedule, but I had a pretty tight schedule about what I did throughout my day during the week. So I was a little worried about, I was one, I was worried about money. I was like, did I just finish paying housing for what like, for what reason? But as far as like academics and classes, I wasn't too worried about my grades, because there were pretty good, but I was a little curious to see how like, other professors would adjust.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 02:55**

So on that topic, how do you think your classes last semester, with a short notice, how do you think your professors handled that transition? Do you think it kind of eased your worry in the transition to online classes?

**Interviewee 03:11**

I definitely do think that they made it as smooth as possible to transition to online classes. All my professors changed, they didn't change their curriculum, but they changed the way that they were going to do it. So um, let's see. One class like, we weren't, for some of the classes, I wasn't always required to be online, like virtually there. So I feel like that was like less of a burden on us. And just being able to know that we, because at home, I think we know we all have like different responsibilities, more responsibilities with family, other things going on. So knowing that I didn't have to be like physically on the computer screen at all times was a good thing for me. I think they did a really good job.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 04:00**

How do you think since you are, and you were part of the History club last semester or last year, how do you think outside classes went? How do you think the RSO handled shifting? Do you think it was kind of helpful to have something to distract you while you're at home? Because I know being at home while you're in this mess, it can be really rough, do you think those outside activities were kind of like stress relievers for yourself?

**Interviewee 04:30**

I would think so. Because to me, it was sorta like, Oh, I have something else to look forward to that, it's not academics is like, it's not like a big burden on us. It's not something that caused stress for me. And then just being able to have that interaction with other students was definitely like, made you feel good, like brought a little bit of

normalcy to thing in the middle of all the craziness.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 04:56**

Yeah. How did you feel in terms of like, how do I put it, in terms of the way like, hold on, I'll come back to that question. So when the classes, the different classes, structures were announced this summer, in that email, or we had three options, how did you feel? Did you, were you like, Oh, I have a chance of maybe going back? Did you want to come back to campus? Or did you look at those options and say, No, I'm just going to stay here this semester, and really focus on my safety.

**Interviewee 05:40**

So when I saw that I was, I was supposed to go to Chaminade University and was going to participate in an exchange program. But once I got that email it kind of like, I guess, showed, like, Oh, this is like, very, very serious now like, so then I started thinking about like, well, should I even go to Chaminade University, like in the middle of a pandemic? And so, ultimately, I decided not to do that. And so I had to last minute register for my classes at St. Mary's and figure out what I needed to do, what type of classes I was going to choose. But I did at first when I, once I decided I wasn't going to Chaminade, I did want to go back to campus. But like, taking into consideration, like, I talked to several faculty and staff from St. Mary's, and asked them how things were going in San Antonio, so I could have like a more personal perspective on it. And they said things were pretty bad like hospitals, I know, they said hospitals were filling up. And that was a little scary, like a little moment, I was like, oh, maybe I should stay home. So at the end, I did choose to stay home.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 06:54**

And did you pick any classes that were in person? The combination in person virtual?

**Interviewee 07:01**

No, I did not.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 07:03**

I just have to ask because I know a lot of people picked them and then asked for their professors to let them stay on campus or stay at home. So that was like, even though there was the on campus option, a lot of people didn't go back. So how do you feel now about your classes that you're taking online? Do you think now that professors, for example, professors had to get certifications to be online professors, and they had to do that over the summer. Do you think now that they are certified, that their classes, the flow of your classes are a lot more organized and more structured than them having to rush and go hastily into online?

**Interviewee 07:52**

Oh, for sure. So I didn't, I did recognize this semester, like a lot more professors didn't know how to work like Canvas and know how to one, use Zoom, like being able to share screen

and I guess take like, full advantage of it and be able to make class more engaging. Because I feel like the last semester when we first converted to online, it was just like, okay, just turn on your camera. And like, let's just talk because it was just like, sitting there and listening to lecture on the camera.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 08:25**

Have you had any issues technology wise, or being able to attend your classes this semester?

**Interviewee 08:31**

Um, I wouldn't say I've had like too bad of issues. But I have had like, the occasional like, connection loss and like, connection isn't too strong. Some days I have had like, oh, man, like the professor keeps freezing or I keep freezing. So that can be pretty annoying.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 08:51**

Yeah. How do you think online has affected your, not only your classes, but your outside of like, your university experience?

**Interviewee 09:08**

I think in a way it has made it less personal. So I like, I think I'm a student that thrives in the in person setting because I love to talk and ask questions. So I definitely don't feel like I get the chance to do that while I am online because it's just like, why would I, don't like, you don't raise your hand in the middle of an online lesson. You don't get to stay after class and ask specific questions to the professor get to actually know them. And so I feel like it just makes it a less personal connection to, to everyone like, students and the professors.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 09:50**

Next semester, will you be going back to campus are you going to do at home again?

**Interviewee 09:56**

So I'm going to be staying home again next semester.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 10:03**

How do you think being at home has affected your college experience?

**Interviewee 10:09**

It has really made learning and studying a bit more difficult because you don't have those like campus resources at hand like, like the campus library or I mean campus Wi Fi, or just access to those professionals, you can go to their office, so, and yes, we have it virtually, but it's just, it's not the same. Like I said, I like to have that more personal connection and have a real conversation in person. And I think it just makes it a little harder, because you have to figure out how to work around like family schedule, like you have, have more responsibilities here, you know, siblings, you got to make sure and if, like, if I'm the one staying home with them, like I have to make sure, I have to be the adult for them. And also

be a student and custodian and cook and all the above.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez** 11:09

If we were allowed to go back on campus, and let's say COVID, they're introducing like a vaccination and everything, would you go back on campus, if there is a lot more, I guess, reassurance that it's gonna be safer for you?

**Interviewee** 11:26

If there was like a lot more reassurance that it would be safer, then I definitely would go back to campus. But I would hope that St. Mary's would still take more precautions like still respect, like social distancing, and maybe still require masks for a little bit.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez** 11:43

How do you think St. Mary's handled the COVID-19 situation in general?

**Interviewee** 11:50

I personally, I think they handled it really well. Like I've heard several different stories about like public universities and bigger universities that didn't handle it well, I mean, like, financially, academically. And so I felt like one, implementing the pass no pass option on our first transition to online was very useful. And it kind of lowered the stress for us knowing that, okay, the school was understanding of our struggle as students. And then I really appreciate that the school was able like to create funds, like a private fund for students in case of emergency, and I felt like, they really made it their job to like, reach out to us and make sure that, like, all the students were doing, okay. And even our families were doing okay.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez** 12:45

If you could, let's say, 20 years from now, you have your own kids, and you're talking to them about your college experience during COVID-19. What would you tell them?

**Interviewee** 13:00

What would I tell them about like, my college experience?

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez** 13:04

Yes.

**Interviewee** 13:06

I would tell them that it was like, sort of a pioneer experience, because we were part of that, those first students to go through this online, through this online time period in the middle of the pandemic, like it just has never been done on, I don't think on this scale, in at least in the United States of like, so many kids going online. So I think I would be able to say like, oh, like we were part of history, like we were the first ones to do this. Definitely a unique

experience.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 13:50**

And then my final question is, what are your hopes for campus life and like, the types of classes and after COVID-19 ends?

**Interviewee 14:01**

So I'd hope, after COVID-19 ends, I still would hope that we would be a little more conscious now about, like, how many people are being they're like, are we providing their like, are we providing sanitizer? Are we making sure we're making the right, taking the right precautions, so stuff like this doesn't happen again. But I would also hope that we get that sense of normalcy back and just be able to have those more personal connections again with professors and classmates and just the whole student body in general.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 14:37**

Is there anything else you would like to add about your college experience this year versus last year?

**Interviewee 14:46**

I do. I do. I would like to say that although, like things have changed drastically and there was definitely like negative sides, I think there's still room for opportunity here. So we, you know, there's still time, there's still time to connect with other people and just being able to take advantage of the situation and being able to do what you can while we're online. So it's like, just join, still try and be involved, so try to take advantage of the opportunities that are there, apply to this, apply to that. Do whatever you can, because even if we're online, like those opportunities are still there. And I think this is the perfect time to take full advantage of it.

**Bianca-Rhae Jacquez 15:27**

Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_.

**Interviewee 15:30**

You're welcome.