

Transcript of Interview with Anonymous Interviewee by Katelyn Espinoza

Interviewee: Anonymous Interviewee

Interviewer: Katelyn Espinoza

Date: 11/21/2020

Location (Interviewee):

Location (Interviewer):

Abstract: St. Mary's University (a liberal arts college) is filled with students struggling to find a balance between a new online learning environment and the pandemic, and there is a group of students who in particular have had a hard time. The freshmen of St. Mary's is this group. This interview tells the experience of a freshman, and how she is handling this unique college experience.

Katelyn Espinoza 0:01

How has the pandemic impacted your freshman experience?

Interviewee 0:06

I would say the biggest way the pandemic has impacted my freshman experience is not being able to move on campus. Due to the pandemic, I didn't feel very comfortable living on campus. I've been really excited to move in with my friend and go through our first year of college together. In addition, I'm not really able to hang out with my new peers unless it's online, mainly because I'm not on campus or in San Antonio.

Katelyn Espinoza 0:33

How would you describe the St. Mary's Zoom experience?

Interviewee 0:38

The St. Mary's Zoom experience hasn't been that bad. I believe the learning experiences remain the same for me. My professor still find ways to have student interaction, mainly through breakout rooms within Zoom.

Katelyn Espinoza 0:53

What disadvantages and advantages have you experienced being an online St Mary's freshman?

Interviewee 1:00

The main disadvantage I've experienced being an online St. Mary's student has been getting easily distracted, I normally find it difficult to focus my time on one thing and being at home has not made it much easier. I think it is due to the fact that I'm just so comfortable being at home now. It almost feels like I'm stuck in summer and I just want to lounge around, except I have a stack of assignments that pile up if I'm not productive. On the other hand, being comfortable in my home has allowed me to be more social online with my peers. This is an advantage because I now have peers that I can communicate with if I have any trouble with that class.

Katelyn Espinoza 1:38

How would you describe challenges of building social connections on an online learning environment?

Interviewee 1:45

In terms of building social connections in an online learning environment, I think it has been much easier for me to be social. Talking to someone while I'm in the comfort of my home has really cut out a lot of stress that I would usually go through when talking to new people face to face. Even if I don't feel comfortable speaking out loud to someone through Zoom, I find the chat feature to be really handy. The study buddy feature on navigate has also made communicating with my peers really easy. All I have to do is click a few buttons and send them an email to get to talk to them.

Katelyn Espinoza 2:17

What school events such as Zaragoza or Move-in Days did you miss because of COVID that you really wanted to attend in person?

Interviewee 2:26

I think the main school event I was bummed about missing was Move-in Day. I grew up dreaming about having the dorm life because of how fun it seemed to be in movies. None of my siblings moved into a dorm, so I had zero experience with what dorm life could be like. I knew when the day came, I would be sad, but I was excited to move to San Antonio. Even if I did move on campus, my Move-in Day would not have been the same. The moments where I could have met all my hallmates wouldn't have been very likely because of restrictions like, social distancing and the number of visitors allowed in our dorms.