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“Student Tuition At Nevada Universities Change Due To Covid-19”

Individuals all over the world are suffering from the pandemic of the Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, which is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person via contact. The news of this virus has recently changed the way that individuals live, in almost every state, individuals are taking it into their own hands and quarantining themselves from the outside world. Joe Scheonmenn conducted an interview with Nevada System of Higher Education Chancellor, Thom Reilly, to gain a better understanding of how colleges/universities are handling their institutions getting shut down while learning still continues as students switch from in person to remote learning. With that being said, this drastic change was not easy for either party, meaning faculty and students. Covid-19 popped up out of nowhere, challenging students to transition from face-to face instruction to communicating via emails and zoom calls. Therefore, colleges/universities have taken it into their own hands by allowing an extended window for students to drop out without a penalty, as well as allow the option to take a pass/fail or a letter grade for their courses.

This is a very stressful time for individuals, whether it's mentally, physically, or financially, everyone had to adapt to the “new normal”. In the state of Nevada, schools went from day to day human interactions with friends and staff to communication via electronics. Although institutions are trying their best to make everything work from a students personal

device, it is clearly shown that learning is not the same anymore. The students and faculty of Nevada demonstrate how adaptable they are when stressful situations occur. This isolation is what is needed during this time of crisis, for the students safety and health is a huge priority. With institutions carrying a substantial amount of students, a virus like this has an enormous chance of spreading rapidly. This transition was not something Nevada planned upon, but this is what had to be done in this type of community. Therefore, Reilly states that these institutions are “going to defer delinquent payments to allow [struggling individuals] to register either for summer classes or the fall semester.” By doing this, students are allowed to further their education without having to worry about gathering money for tuition, especially during a time like this.

In recent news, the coronavirus relief package was passed by congress and signed by president Donald Trump granting Nevada’s higher ed system about \$60 million. With that being said, the money is spread between the higher ed institutions around Nevada. For instance, roughly about \$23 million is going towards UNLV, \$15 million towards UNR, and \$13 million towards colleges of Nevada. With that money, Reilly has ensured that a majority must go directly to helping their students in need, allowing them to have the opportunity to move forward. It is known that the only people working during this time are essential workers such as health care personnel, grocery workers, truckers, gas station attendants, and fast food workers. Many students are currently unemployed, which results in little to no income.

Universities such as UNLV and UNR hold a sizable amount of students who live on campus, whether by choice, homeless, or are from different countries. Many questions have occurred as to how this situation is being handled. For instance, in other countries, all students are forced to vacate their dorms for the duration of the school year. Nevada is not one, Reilly has

stated that “they have allowed students with no places to go to stay on campus.” He ensures that “all precautions are being made to keep students safe and healthy.” These precautions include one individual to a room, food delivery, security, enforcement of the 6 feet apart rule, etc. The main concern during time is students’ health. But it is also important to ensure that students have a roof over their heads and a safe place for them to stay when there are no other alternatives.

As for the graduating class of 2020, this is a really hard time for them as well. They have worked really hard for their degrees and have been waiting for the day that they get to walk across the stage and receive their diplomas. According to Reilly “we do not see any situation that we’re going to be able to have 5,000 people in the Thomas & Mack” stadium, therefore the ceremony that would commence in May will no longer go through as planned. There is just too much of a risk for the spread of the virus with so many people contained in the same space. Yet, Reilly ensures that all students will be receiving their diplomas while the Board of Regents look at alternatives to graduation, such as delaying the ceremony till next semester when things begin to get back to normal.

Work Cited

Schoemann, Joe. “Student Tuition At Nevada Universities Change Due To Covid-19.”

Nevada Public Radio, 2020, knpr.org/knpr/2020-04/student-tuition-nevada-universities-change-due-covid-19.