



CircleIn



**STUDENT
ENGAGEMENT
IN THE POST
COVID ERA:**
Series XIX



School Name: University of Alabama
Year: Chemical Engineering
Major: Kinesiology
GPA: 3.45

Q: What does your typical school day look like now that everything's online?

The wake-up time is the same as of right now, but I guess the difference would be that I don't need to walk anywhere anymore. My campus is pretty large so the distance between classes can be like a 10-minute walk so not having to commute anymore is nice I guess. I had some classes that were right after each other, so yeah its makes it less likely that I'm going to be late.

Q: Do you find that aspect a little less stressful for you?

Yeah because I can get up later sort of, and I don't have to rush to the next class because it's just at my fingertips. All I have to do is just click a button. Because of that, it is less stressful.

Q: And how about your classes?

Well, I guess I'm missing the classroom environment but then sometimes I feel like I prefer to do everything online. I remember when I was in the classrooms I was in one of those really big lecture halls, sitting all the way in the back and not being able to see the screen. The projector was all the way in the front and sometimes the light just did not hit the project well and you could barely read what was on the projector. I guess it's easier to read now because the professor shares their screen. It's just more convenient and also like today, you can stay online and be able to hear what other students say. Sometimes after the lectures, you can hear the other questions the students are asking, but if you're in person you can't really just stay in the class and hear what the other people have to say

Q: As far as your lectures go, do you find them understandable and engaging more so than in-person lectures?

I actually think I find them more engaging because now professors record their lectures which provides some nice review material if I ever need to go back.



Q: I know a few people have told me that they have some trouble with the recorded lectures because they feel like they're teaching themselves, have you had any problems with that at all?

Oh, I thought you usually had to end up doing that in college anyways.

Q: Have you had any trouble connecting with your classmates at all?

Yeah without the classroom setting it's not as easy to strike up random convos. Because you guys are all behind a screen and everybody can hear you, you can't really ask the imaginary person next to you a question. So it isn't as easy to make those spontaneous in-class friendships but I feel like the group chat apps that are created around the class are more helpful than last year but that may be because I'm in a different class.

Q: Has your teacher done anything to really help you out with distance learning?

So some of my classes were originally not wholly online, so the professors have been very understanding in allowing us to just take their whole class online. Well everybody at least for one professor, so I ended up actually dropping that class. But the other professors, there are few other ones, they were very understanding and they were very nice so now I'm able to stay home. Otherwise, I feel like it's pretty much the same as if we were in non-COVID times except I guess everything is just more convenient. I guess it's because it's easier online, you don't have to walk to the classroom, you just click the button and you're there. You can also hear better, I remember I had trouble hearing last year. I guess the only big part that I might miss is just the in-class interactions but like I feel like those are still there anyways because of the GroupMe class group chat.

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Q: Would you say the homework you're getting right now is more or about the same as last year?

I feel like that's more major-specific and I mean I'm a chemical engineer. We originally end up having a ton of homework anyway, especially in the higher-level classes which is where I am right now. I feel like it's basically the same so I don't know. One of the professors said that he was teaching slower this year but I'm not sure if it's because of COVID. We're spending more time on this relatively easy content because we're still at the beginning of the school year but I'm not sure if that's a direct consequence of COVID.

Q: Do you find it frustrating that you have to do everything from one spot?

Well I think it's convenient, I'm going with the pros first. Because I'm in my room, I don't have to walk anywhere. I don't have to go back to my door and I don't need to travel anywhere to go get food. It's basically already there. I guess it is a bit daunting because I'm a full-time student and it's basically adding a full-time job.

Q: If there was something that you could have your teachers implement to help you out, what would that be?

I guess just being receptive to questions, you know how professors usually just hold office hours? I feel like now because everything got moved online it's harder to connect with teachers. Just attending in-person office hours is more convenient because I remember last year when I was on campus sometimes I would just attend office hours because I was right there.

