

Longwood University

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Longwood: Life during COVID-19

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5-7-2020

### Covid-19 Experience

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## COVID-19 Experience

My spring semester at Longwood University in 2020 will forever stand out when I reflect about my time at school. After returning to school from spring break at the beginning of March, I began seeing other Universities cancel the remainder of their semesters due to the outbreak of COVID-19. I expected Longwood to have a similar plan of action once the virus began to spread in Virginia. I did not know at the time that only three short days later, Longwood would hold its final in person classes for the rest of my junior year.

Within a week of Longwood announcing that it would be moving online for the remainder of the semester, I was back at home with my family and moved out of my apartment at school. The transition from taking classes in person to finishing everything online was difficult at first. I found that it was much easier to stay focused and motivated on my schoolwork when I was at school surrounded by my peers. After my parents generously transformed one of our guest bedrooms into a home office for me use, I was able to concentrate and finish the rest of my spring semester. I was fortunate to have amazing professors this semester that helped make the transition to online learning as smooth as possible. Although my course work did not change very much after the transition, I had other responsibilities at Longwood that were affected greatly.

As a senator for the Student Government Association, Vice Treasurer of the Student Finance Committee, and Chair of Elections and Recruitment for Longwood, my responsibilities on campus shifted online. Senate and budget meetings continued throughout the end of the semester over zoom as we tried to help make transition for students as easy as possible. I had no idea that my last in person meeting for the Student Government Association, would be my last. It took me a while to realize that I would never see my friends on campus again that were seniors. I have loved every moment that I have spent at Longwood and it was sad to see this semester cut short.

When I was at school, I spent a lot of time on campus with my friends and the organizations that I am a part of. I am used to being surrounded by a lot of people and the transition into social distancing was difficult at first. Going from spending my entire day with friends to being alone doing homework took time to get used to. Once I got settled at home the effects of the virus were felt even more around the country. I then realized that no matter how sad I felt about my semester ending early, I was in a very fortunate position compared to a lot of people, not just in the United States but also from around the world. I had the opportunity to stay at home and only focus on my schoolwork while so many others were risking their lives as essential workers and medical personnel. I have also been very fortunate so far during the outbreak because no one in my family has been infected with the virus.

At the end of April, I found out that one of my closest friends had contracted the virus and it was the first time that I personally knew someone that had tested positive for COVID-19. I was scared for them and worried about what they were going through. Thankfully they were able to recover and are no longer sick, but it reminded me how serious this virus actually is. It was hard to be home from school and surrounded by all of my friends that attend different

universities, without the ability to see them. I had never experienced the feeling of isolation to this extent while only being a few minutes away from all of my friends.

The outbreak this spring resulted in many negative changes for my semester, but I have learned to focus more of my attention on the positive effects of the quarantine. I have spent the majority of the past three years away from home and at Longwood. The quarantine allowed for me to spend quality time at home with my family and I am forever grateful for that. I was able to wake up in the morning and eat breakfast with my family like I did in high school, instead of grabbing something quick on the way to class. I was able to watch movies, play board games, and spend time with my brother and sister like we did when we were kids. Although the last two months have been difficult and the future of the virus is still uncertain, I have learned to stay positive, safe, and appreciative of the time I have had at home with my family.