

**COVID-19**

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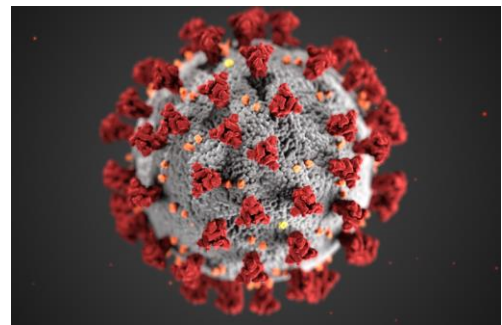
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## Covid-19

A pandemic is defined by the World Health Organization as an “epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people” (World Health Organization, 2020). The most recent pandemic, devastatingly affecting countries worldwide, is a new strain of the coronavirus called Covid-19 or the 2019 novel

coronavirus, shown on the right (World Health Organization, 2020). Covid-19 is a highly contagious, infectious disease that is spread primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes (World Health



Organization, 2020). Although most people infected with this disease experience mild to moderate symptoms, Covid-19 can be fatal to people who are older or have underlying health conditions. Covid-19 has taken many lives and cases rapidly increase daily. In order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, society has made numerous changes to the way people live. One of the major life changes of Covid-19 is that of the education system and the distribution of education to students. Specifically, the Covid-19 pandemic has altered many college students’ experiences immensely, including my own. My college experience, living through this pandemic, is vastly different from what I had envisioned my first year of college to be like.

First, although I was able to live on campus for the first two weeks, ECU unfortunately had to send many freshmen, including myself, home in order to slow the spread of Covid-19 on campus. This is one of the biggest impacts of the pandemic on myself for various reasons. The most significant of these reasons is living too far away to be able to visit campus. I am from St.

Louis, Missouri and I was overjoyed to be able to go to ECU to experience a new area and meet new people from different areas. However, due to Covid-19, I had to move back home and it is not the easiest place for me to go visit, which in turn has made me feel as if I am missing out on the traditional college experience of having independence while living on campus and also being able to hang out with friends I made in those short two weeks. Additionally, another big difference from my vision of college due to the pandemic, is the way my education is distributed. My classes in the beginning of the semester were in person and now have been moved all online. This is extremely frustrating because I believe that it is fundamental to have class in person. Due to classes being online, because of Covid-19, there is a lack of motivation to do schoolwork and a lack of being able to do interactive activities and group work, which is something I enjoyed doing while having in person classes. Not only do online classes eliminate the activeness that in person classes provide, but also online classes do not feel like a valuable experience to me because it is exceptionally easy to feel detached and distant from my courses. Covid-19 has made my college experience different from my vision in the stated reasons above and has also impacted my family financially.

Another difference from my vision and most likely my parent's vision of my college experience is the financial aspect. ECU originally planned for students to have a somewhat normal college experience by having students on campus and a mix of classes in person, hybrid, or online, all the while having Covid-19 restrictions in place such as social-distancing guidelines, no large crowds, masks, etc. ECU made the effort to at least provide the traditional college experience to students during the pandemic. However, after two weeks, Covid-19 spread swiftly throughout the university and they could no longer have all students back on campus, socializing, and slow the spread of the virus all simultaneously. Therefore, when ECU sent me home, my

family was given only prorated refunds for my room and board and parking, while my tuition stayed the same even though classes moved online. This is also extremely frustrating because it is not financially logical to pay full tuition for the in-person classes when I am getting online classes.

In brief, Covid-19 is a pandemic affecting people in many ways, some of these ways being minor and others major. Whilst my college experience is not going the way I planned, I am thankful for the opportunity of going to a school like ECU that is trying to make the best of the pandemic for its students. My vision of college may be different this first year, but I am optimistic that this is temporary, and the world will overcome this pandemic and return to normalcy.

## References

World Health Organization (2020). Coronavirus. Retrieved from [https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1).