What It Is Like being in College During a Pandemic

Lauren Greenham

When I entered my freshman year of college in 2019, I never thought I would have to move home early in the school year because of a global pandemic. First semester of freshman year was very social. I joined a sorority where I made plenty of new friends, attended events with other organizations, and enjoyed being social with my sisters in downtown Greenville. I finally adjusted to a new life before going home for Christmas break. Upon returning in January, I heard slow rumors of a new virus going around. I surely did not anticipate it to be this big of a deal and honestly did not think it would get to the point of affecting me. Well, my mind changed quickly during mid-March when the virus really started spreading. I slowly had to accept the thought process that I would be sent out of the dorms and away from my new friends and new life. ECU students were sent off to spring break with no idea what was going to happen when we returned to campus. Well, we never really did return to campus, unless you count moving out of the dorms. Not to be dramatic but moving back to Raleigh was sad. I had no idea when things would be normal again which scared me and everyone else. I was also scared of how my performance in school was going to be impacted, I never thought about taking online courses, let alone at home in an environment where I tend to be lazy. Despite my worries, I managed and was successful. Yes, I did miss my friends and wanted to be back at school every day, but I found a way to be successful in school at home. I kept the daily routine I had while on campus and my parents tried their best to give me my space. Now I can say I am back at school and reunited with the sisters I dreaded leaving. All my classes have been online both semesters this school year. But I actually have learned to like this new change. I feel online school has given me more freedom and more control of what and when I do things. I can work on assignments anywhere I want on campus and have found sitting on the third floor of the library is the best place to study. Nearing the end of Sophomore year, I truly cannot believe I have spent most of my college career in a pandemic. However, I feel like this experience has made me more resilient and flexible for overcoming challenges I may face in my adult life and professional career. I do anticipate going back to in person classes and being social with peers and professors. But as of now I’m trying to stay positive and enjoy online classes and the free time, flexibility, and self-discipline lessons the lifestyle is forcibly teaching me.