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## Learning as a Student in the Pandemic

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## Learning as a Student in the Pandemic

By Narvin Chhay  
UCF Forum columnist  
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During the lockdown and quarantine period, I learned so many life lessons about perspective and appreciating life.



(Photo by Audrey Popov on iStock)

I will start my senior year at the University of Central Florida this fall. It's hard to think about where all the time went, and it really feels like it was just yesterday when I stepped on campus for the first time.

The journey toward my undergraduate degree has been eventful, especially in regard to dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. You're probably as sick of hearing about it as I am, but with an event as big as this one, there is a lot of ground to cover.

A little over a year ago, I wrote something for an extra-credit assignment for my American history professor. This professor made it clear to us that we were living in a generationally defining moment in history, and that we should soak up as much of what was happening as we could because it will affect the rest of our lives.

This whole experience has taught me to think more on my own.

The assignment was to pick an artifact from our homes that historians would look back on to remember the pandemic. I chose an analog clock from my living room. At the time, all I could think about was how much time I was losing from my college experience. I felt like I wasn't going to learn anything well online from home, and I was missing out on all of the fun times that come with being a college student. To quote myself, I said it felt like "the clock stopped and everything was put on pause, but we are still losing time."

I wrote that when I was 19. Now, as I am fully vaccinated and slowly returning to normal life again, I am 21. A lot of time has passed, and I can look at the words of my past and say that I was wrong.

I thought then that the pandemic and the shutdown of the majority of the world was ruining my four years of college education. But all of the time I spent online and away from the classroom taught me that things also can be learned out of a classroom, too.

During the lockdown and quarantine period, I learned so many life lessons about perspective and appreciating life. My whole mindset evolved into a much more positive state than before and I started to really live life to the fullest.

This whole experience has taught me to think more on my own. For example, when studying for a chemistry exam, not only did I learn about chemistry, but I learned about time management while planning out my studies. And once I got that A+, I learned that I can achieve hard goals if I work hard enough. These are valuable life lessons that will benefit you in the real world.

Lessons are in every walk of life. Every experience, every interaction you can take something from it if you think about it. Through the struggles of the pandemic life, I have gotten better at identifying these lessons and really trying my best to learn from everything.

Once I started thinking this way, I started appreciating my college education a lot more, even if it were cut up by COVID-19. I look at the whole experience not as a setback, but as another part of my education.

To be a student does not just mean to study hard and get good grades; it means to always go through life with open eyes and ears to learn as much as you can.

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