



Telling Our Stories: Western's Response to COVID-19

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Story contribution

Throughout this Covid-19 pandemic I have seen and undergone several personal, societal, and academic changes. Everyone, including myself, wears masks when out in public to reduce viral spread, a distance of six feet is maintained between strangers now, and social gatherings have become a sort of taboo as five or less person occupancy is the CDC recommendation (at least in Washington state). Personally, I have gone through two complete moves between cities, seen friendships challenged due to political opinion on both police brutality and this major health crisis, and began my Senior year of college at WWU in an online format. None of which have made for an easy transition to where I am now in my academic career. With only a few classes left before I am eligible to graduate, the course material has been getting exponentially harder and more complex. This makes for some fascinating material to be educated on, but it has proved to be difficult to keep up in an online format. This sentiment is shared by many of my fellow students that I have spoken to about the all-virtual education experience. I have found that I am able to grasp course material better and faster from face-to-face learning opportunities, fieldwork, and group discussion. Learning via online format has led to a personal decrease in motivation to take diligent notes in classes and more likely to procrastinate on work. I tend to become distracted sitting in front of a computer all day in a non-academic setting and have to exert more mental energy than in previous years to pay attention in my classes. However, this is clearly an unavoidable necessity due to the Covid-19 pandemic that has led to the devastating loss of millions of lives. Thus, I am more than willing to do my part in preventing the spread of corona virus by staying home and going to classes through Zoom.

End of contributed text from Sarah Hays