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HSCI 325  
17 May 2020

### My COVID Experience

As a health science major, I love learning about past pandemics and epidemics, and simply illnesses/viruses in general. But I can confidently say I never thought I would experience one myself in my lifetime. To start, I am lucky to say that my immediate family has not had the virus, so my situation could definitely be worse. But as a college student, it is hard. In August of 2019, I moved into my dorm room excited to spend an entire year of school living with my roommate and hanging out with friends. Little did I know that I would spend most of my second semester locked in my house, away from my friends, and with the challenge of the online college experience. If I could go back, there are things I would have done differently while I was at school. I would have spent more time with my friends, gone to more sports games, and I even would have gone to more office hours, simply for the fact that the things I once thought of as nothing super special are now things I wish I was doing.

Since I have been home, the corona virus is always the hot topic of conversation, and honestly, it's tiring to only hear talk about it. When I first got home from school for the semester, there were not any cases in my town so it really hadn't hit me yet. But the minute I heard that there were 4 confirmed cases in my town, with one being my uncle, it became more of a reality in my life. A couple weeks later, 4 cases turned into 18, and then 30. Life just seems so desolate. Parking lots of the mall I always go to are empty. There are much less cars on the road than there used to be. I truly never thought I would be living during an event that is going to be marked down in history. I am glad that people are helping stop the spread of the virus by

wearing masks, but it is such a weird feeling to be walking through a grocery store seeing everyone's faces covered and people avoiding going within six feet of each other. I have a sister who is supposed to be graduating high school this year, and my heart truly hurts for her. If this were to happen last year, I would have been devastated to miss my senior season of softball and my last highschool memories with my best friends before we all went our separate ways. Like I said, I could definitely have it worse. But, it does sadden me to have a large portion of my freshman year taken from me. It saddens me that I can barely see my grandma and my cousins that I am extremely close with. It saddens me that millions have lost their life around the world to this virus. 2020 is a year I will never forget, and I will never take my time at school and with my friends for granted because I now know what it is like to have your normal life taken away from you. And as life goes on and future generations learn about the time we are going through right now, I hope that this contribution gives sight into the COVID experience.