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### Philosophy of Education Reflection: How COVID-19 Impacted My Semester

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04/26/2020  
Final Reflection

## How COVID-19 Impacted My Semester

Ever since I was a senior in high school and knew I was attending SJFC the following fall, I've had this inspirational feeling of anticipation for the "next stage" of my life. When I got to school and realized it didn't automatically change me into the person I wanted to be, I looked forward to Winter Break. And so on. It's not all bad, and its not like I've had an especially trying time at college, but I still kept looking forward, feeling like I wasn't enjoying what was in front of me.

Looking ahead to this semester, over Winter Break, I told myself I need to do my best. I am enrolled in some of the most interesting, but most challenging courses—I needed to stay focused—I told myself. The anticipation of turning 21 in February, and bonding with my roommate more than ever made me eager for the semester. I hadn't "gone out" since sophomore year, but the prospect of *finally* being able to go to bars had me excited for and cautious.

I did something unprecedented, and went out on a Tuesday night with a friend to a local pub. We had more fun than I had had in a while and I thought—living in the moment and going with the flow felt good this time. The next day more colleges closed. Thursday we got the email—we had to go home. I didn't really know how to feel. It didn't feel real, especially because we had just come back from Spring Break and I was still getting back into the swing of things, and now we have another week off. I moved most of my stuff home and started unpacking.

By the time classes started back up, online, I was joined at home by my father, and very often his girlfriend. I love them both very much and we all get along great, but we all have

different work habits—and only one bathroom. They work downstairs, and me upstairs. We have nice back yard, near woods, and are in-town in a small town. It could be a lot worse. We could be cramped on top of each other like my roommate and her 5 other family members are at home in Brooklyn. We have space, but my schoolwork has definitely been impacted. As an English major, I have lots of assigned readings that I used to do on the quiet floor of the library. I used to practically live there when we were on campus. Even though I've got the top floor of my house, it is seldom ever silent. We all love music—me included—but I cannot read with noise around me. During the day sometimes and almost every night, live music is being streamed through our house—our very nice, and loud, stereo system. My dad is willing to turn it down a bit, but not completely. His girlfriend offers her empty house as a quiet place—I don't accept the offer.

As I sit here, looking ahead at finals week, I know I haven't completed the assignments, done the readings—learned—as much as I would have at school. No one is a perfect student all the time, but I know I would have done better at school. I miss seeing people. I miss talking to people. I miss the food. I miss the classroom. I even miss being nervous. While I cannot deny some disappointment in myself for how I'm finishing up the semester, I can oddly confirm that I'm feeling better about who I am. Having the experience of being in college taken from me has made me appreciate it so much more. When the unexpected happened, something I hadn't looked forward to, I was forced to start appreciating not only what I had lost, but what I *have*.

There is no excuse, no distraction from me bettering and focusing on myself right now—and in that way, COVID-19 contributed to my semester, almost positively. I, of course, don't truly mean that it was a good thing, but it has made me slow down, look around, and be grateful. Yes, it is annoying that I have to deal with noise—but I have two people who love me and help me out around me. I have two adorable cats that cannot get enough of me. I have a sister who

comes over sometimes. I have an amazing collection of books. I have an amazing mind. I have a purpose.

This silver-lining cannot erase the disappointment I feel, but it starts to reroute it, anyways. It will never make up for the time lost with my roommate, the time lost in the classroom, and especially not the times lost with the kids from Maplewood. When I'm back, I'm going to savor it. I'm not going to try to run and rush to the next thing, the next stage. I'm going to slow down, and say yes more to life, like I did that Tuesday night in March.