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Reflections questionnaire response by Anonymous on March 24, 2021

Anonymous

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Respondent

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46:00
Time to complete

1. Name - please select "anonymous" or enter your name in the "other" field. *

Anonymous

2. What is your relationship to Bowdoin? *

Student

Faculty

Staff

Alumni

3. If applicable, what is your Bowdoin class year?

4. Has your connection to Bowdoin changed during the pandemic? If so, how?

My connection to Bowdoin felt non-existent from march 2020 to February 2021 as I lived at home with my family and did online school. Zoom Bowdoin felt soo isolating and lonely compared to my usually understanding of Bowdoin. To me Bowdoin really is the people and I was missing my people by being at home. Being back on campus as an upperclassman has brought me so much happiness, joy, and love. As bizarre as it is to still be doing zoom and being tested every few days, I could not be more grateful to live with my favorite people in a place I can call home again.

5. What has it been like to teach/learn/work remotely/continue to work in person?

Learning and working remotely has been a strange experience. I feel burned out a lot quicker than before as I move from class to work immediately by clicking on a zoom link. It is so easy to zone out and I lose focus quickly. I will say I have found refuge in doing the readings for my classes and this may be the first semester where I have actually read every assigned readings without skimming.

6. Who and what comforted you during this time? What has sustained you?

My family, friends, and teammates have been there for me during this whole time. They are the people that have sustained me and I have become more conscious of the people who are there for me or who are willing to reach out and show their love.

7. What is one thing you created or learned during the last year?

8. What have been your social connections in this time of physical isolation?

We got a quarantine puppy and I became so attached to him. It was really hard coming back to campus without it and I facetime my parents multiple times a week to see him in action. Early in the pandemic my friend group was pretty consistent with zooming/face timing each other but it fell off track over the past summer and we struggled to stay connected as a group.

9. Which moments will you remember? What would you like to forget?

I was still kind of healing from a break up and was honestly so grateful for the growth period. I will remember how I got myself back together, threw myself into work, and spent some quality time with my family.

10. If you'd known that you'd be so isolated for so long, what might you have done differently?

I would have deleted tiktok sooner. It sounds ridiculous, but I relied on it for entertainment and laughs to get me through the spring and summer of 2020. I gave it up for lent and I will never use it again, I really think it messed with my mental health. I would have started reading books for fun a lot earlier and read some amazing ones over winter break, like Sally Rooney's Normal People or Gail Honeymoon's Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine.

11. Have you had COVID-19 and/or have you been vaccinated against COVID-19? What was that like?

Neither applies to me.

12. Several significant news events have occurred during the pandemic, including the antiracist uprising, the U.S. presidential election, and the insurrection at the Capitol. Was your experience of these events impacted by the pandemic? If so, how?

I felt entirely powerless during the election and the insurrection. I attended protests and vigils in the summer in Boston and felt really empowered and connected to my community then. I felt like change could happen.

13. What are the challenges you are currently facing?

I am really struggling to make time for fun. The past weekend of spring break was the best weekend I have ever had at Bowdoin, pandemic or not. One of my friends turned 21, the weather was gorgeous, I did not do any work, and I was surrounded by some awesome people. I wish every weekend could be that freeing because it is not sustainable for me to keep working as hard as I am without creating joy for myself and my friends. Its hard to balance Bowdoin, a pandemic, and zoom.

14. If you are self-isolating with family, how is that impacting your experience?

15. What are you most looking forward to, when pandemic-related restrictions have been lifted? Do you think your post-pandemic life will be different from your pre-pandemic life? In what ways?

I cannot wait to go to a party in a sweaty basement. Sounds ridiculous, I know, but I am graduating next year and am not sure I will ever have the chance to do that again. I also am so excited to travel, I miss the beach and the ocean and seeing friends. I cannot wait for a time of intimate reconnection with friends, family and nature.

16. What do you think you will remember most about this time? What would you like people in the future to understand about your current experience?

I will remember the importance of intentional connection and keeping up with friendships. I have never had to think really hard or be so intentional about how to spend time with my friends and family because I always just lived with them in college housing and could find them hanging out wherever, whenever. I hope I will bring this with me after graduation and when I am older- I know my parents often mention how they have talked to certain friends in ages which makes me sad and I hope to approach friendship as I get older differently. I want people in the future to understand that as hard as this time was, it is temporary (hopefully). I do think I am a better person for it. I grew a lot, I worked hard, I focused on myself, I gave love and received love. It was not all terrible.

17. This space is for any reflections you'd like to put here. (4000 character limit)

18. By checking the box below, you agree to allow your answers to be added to the Documenting Bowdoin & COVID-19 archive of the George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives and made available openly and permanently online. *

I agree to the above terms.