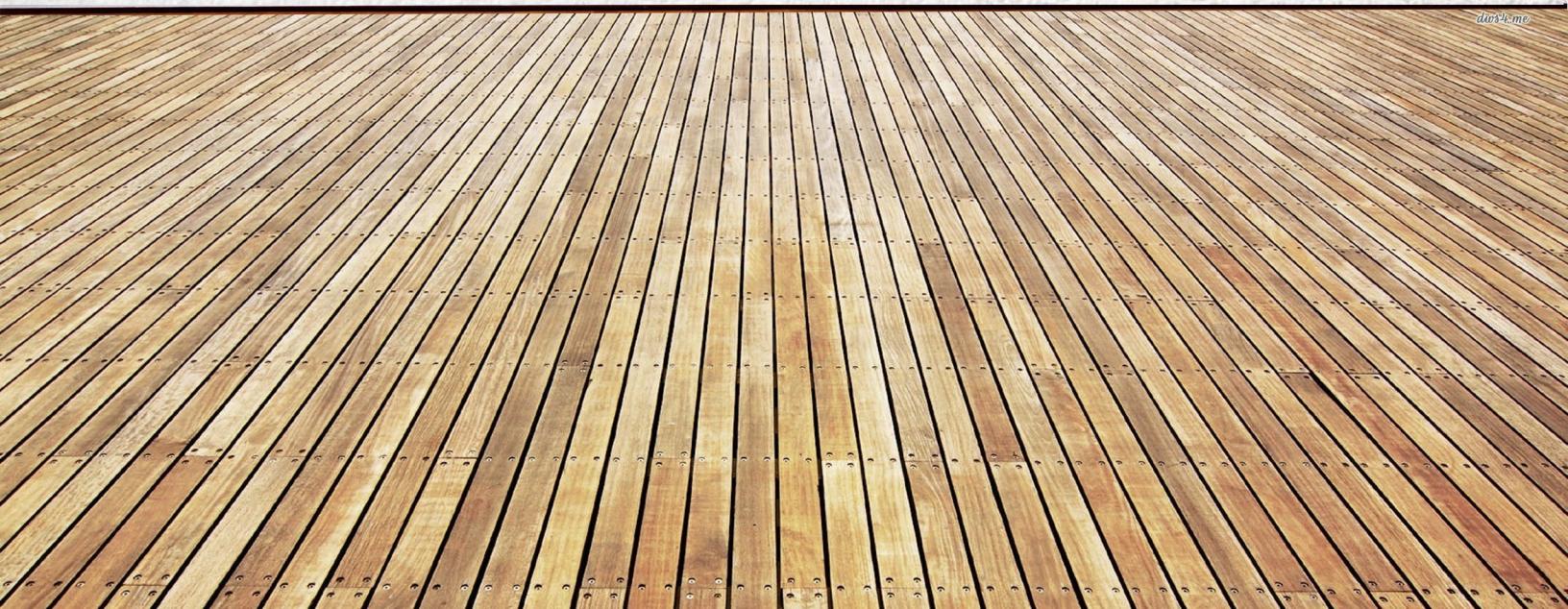
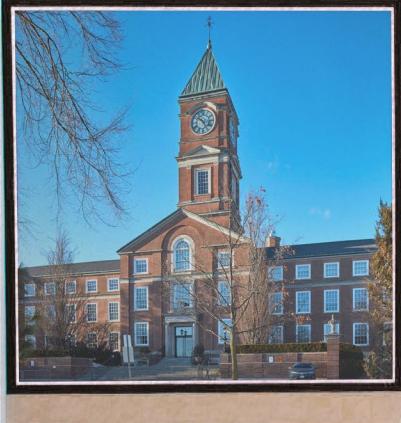


CONVERGENCE

APRIL 2021 - SPECIAL EDITION

UPON GRADUATION



TAKING A YEAR OFF

KEVIN LIU
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

This past academic year was not only an unusual year for UCC students, but also for our recent UCC graduates. Given the pandemic's impact on on-campus learning, we know that taking a gap year has become a very popular choice.

Michael Young, *Convergence*'s former Editor-in-Chief, is currently taking a gap year before going to Harvard next year. My economics teacher Mr. Borden happened to take a sabbatical last academic year. As such, I interviewed both of them to gain their perspectives on taking a year off. Michael shared what he has been doing during the past months, and Mr. Borden, drawing on his experiences, has left some great advice for students who might be considering a gap year themselves.

MR. BORDEN'S PERSPECTIVE AND ADVICE

Mr. Borden, I know that you took a sabbatical last year. Could you let us know why you decided to do so?

My partner and I have always loved travelling, and we both believe that it is important to live in a variety of places to gain perspective. Toronto has many opportunities, and life here is so different from how the majority of the world lives. We had both lived abroad before we met, and wanted to do it again, but together this time. When I decided to sign up for a year off (2019-2020), it was back in 2015. The school is generous to support teachers to take time off, but you have to sign up four years in advance.



Could you tell us a little bit about your experience during that period? I am guessing that you must have done some hiking and camping...

The reality of the year off was very different from our initial plan. We originally decided to take a year off thinking that it would be easy for us to travel with young kids. (In 2015 my partner was pregnant with our first.) When 2019 rolled around, we had two young boys who we had travelled with fairly extensively, including road trips to the east and west coasts of Canada, and a trip to southern Africa. What we discovered was that travelling with kids was really challenging, and very different from our previous experiences. We decided instead to stay in Toronto while my partner continued to work (she is a teacher at Greenwood College School), while I took a turn staying at home with the boys and taking care of the housework. Yes, we definitely travelled a lot, too. I took the boys to Newfoundland and enjoyed camping while my partner worked. We also took them to Arizona and Cuba. It was a wonderful year with lots of time with my kids.

In retrospect, do you enjoy your experience and do you think it is worthwhile to take a year off?

I'd taken three years 'off' before this one, and they have all been 100% worthwhile. This one was special because I was able to explore Toronto every day



with my two-year-old. He is a happy guy and made a great buddy on all of our mini-adventures. Most days we would leave the house at 8am and not return until 4pm. We went to the ROM, the AGO, our local climbing gym, sing-along groups, various libraries, greasy spoons galore, and explored parks and playgrounds across the city. Toronto is amazing, and has so many things to do. When the pandemic hit, we were really fortunate that I was home to look after the kids, allowing my partner to focus on her work.

Could you give some advice to our students who might be thinking about taking a gap year after Y12?

KEVIN LIU - EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
DEVLIN MONIZ - CO-MANAGER
RAYMOND LIU - CO-MANAGER
JASON GAO - HEAD GRAPHIC DESIGNER

DANIEL LU - SENIOR EDITOR
TYLER STENNELL - SENIOR EDITOR
RAHUL NANDA - EDITOR
KEVIN HAN - EDITOR

ALEX WANG - SENIOR LAYOUT EDITOR
ERIC AN - SENIOR LAYOUT EDITOR
TBD - LAYOUT EDITOR
MS. COLLEEN FERGUSON - FACULTY ADVISOR

I would always and absolutely encourage students to take a gap year. As I mentioned before, I've taken four! There is so much out there to learn and do, and it is so important to see how other people live, and, if possible, step into their shoes. My advice would be to travel as much as you can for as long as you can. In many cases that may mean working or volunteering abroad, or simply traveling cheap. When I cycled across Central America in 2005 with a buddy, we slept

in a tent and only spent \$5-10 per day. It was one of the most incredible experiences of my life, and we still talk about the trip all the time. While travelling in Spain and Argentina, I volunteered on farms (WWOOFing), and didn't spend any money aside from the plane ticket. There are lots of options for people to travel.

And lastly, is there anything else you would like to add?

Learn a language! My IB French came in very handy when travelling. I was able to speak to, and learn from, so many more people. It also helped me learn Spanish. I realized after UCC that French was the most practical course I took in high school.

Thank you so much, Mr. Borden. I'm sure our readers will love to read about your fascinating stories and insights.

MICHAEL YOUNG'S EXPERIENCES

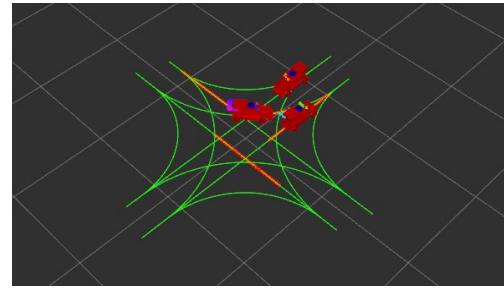
I understand you have chosen to take a gap year. What led you to make the decision to do so?

Throughout high school, I hadn't really considered taking a gap year. I knew I had that option, but I had always planned to attend university after graduating from UCC. Early on, Harvard was preparing to invite all first-year students to campus. Although classes would be held virtually, I felt I would still be able to meet and connect with my classmates outside of class. However, in mid-July, Harvard informed all the international students that we could not live on campus due to visa restrictions. At this time, Harvard gave us another opportunity to decide whether we wanted to take a gap year. I realized that if I chose to take online classes from home, I would both miss out on an entire year of residential life and not get to experience what my American peers would. I ultimately decided to defer my enrollment and instead start university the following fall, in hopes that everything would be back to normal by then.

What have you done during the gap year so far since you graduated from UCC?

I've been doing a couple of internships to explore some of the fields that I'm considering concentrating in at Harvard. Currently, I'm researching self-driving cars and their decision-making process. I am training a set of cars to successfully cross an intersection in a simulated world and then testing these trained models on cars in the physical world. I've also picked up the piano and guitar again and have been learning to play

new songs. This year has certainly been both a rewarding and relaxing transition from high school to university.



Based on your experiences, for what kind of students or under what kind of circumstances would you recommend a gap year?

From my experience, I would recommend a gap year to students who are highly self-driven. The very open-ended nature of a gap year means that students have to take initiative and seek opportunities for themselves. However, it would be easier to pursue a gap year in a typical year. While I requested a gap year at the end of July, students normally decide whether to take a gap year by early May. This gives gap year students more time to plan out their year and apply to exciting enrichment programs and internships — both in Canada and abroad. If you're at all interested in a gap year, I'd recommend reading about others' experiences online and creating a bucket list of everything you'd like to accomplish. You can always reach out to me too if you have any questions about a gap year!

After your gap year, I understand you will be going to Harvard. Has Harvard kept in contact with you, and have you done any preparations for

the exciting years ahead?

Harvard has done a good job keeping in contact with us. The university kept our Harvard email accounts active, so we've been receiving updates from the administration as if we were a current student. We are also receiving the same communications as newly admitted students, and we will soon receive a package officially welcoming us to the Class of 2025. I'm very much looking forward to Visitas (our admitted students' program), which will kick off in a couple of weeks. This is when we'll meet the remainder of the admitted class, chat with upperclassmen about their experiences, and learn about the resources available to us over the next four years.

In retrospect, do you have any advice or suggestions you would like to give to UCC students? Or do you have anything you would like to add?

I know you've probably heard this many times before, but take advantage of your limited time at UCC. Looking back, I don't think I fully understood just how much UCC meant to me until my last year at the College came to an abrupt end. I truly miss all my friends and teachers who made my four years at UCC so memorable. In short, make sure to cherish every moment at this amazing school that we're all so fortunate to call home.

Thanks a lot, Michael, for taking the time to talk to me. I hope you will continue to enjoy your gap year and wish you all the best at Harvard.

DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHY, DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES

TYLER STENNELL

SENIOR EDITOR

Our recent graduates went to universities in different locations all around the world, and due to COVID-19, they are experiencing different learning models and college lives. I interviewed four Class of 2020 graduates who are currently studying in the UK, the US, Ontario, and British Columbia. They shared with me their unique experiences and their valuable advice to current UCC students.

BILLY SHI - UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, UK

Where are you going to university now? What program are you in, and how are you enjoying it?

I am currently studying Engineering at the University of Cambridge, UK. It has been very fulfilling. The coursework is intense, but very interesting, and I have been loving it. Regular changes in pandemic restrictions are a bit frustrating, but I am able to see it from a brighter side: living in a much quieter Cambridge, I get to spend more time with my professors, and also have some one-on-one afternoon walks (with English tea, of course) with them.

What learning model has your university chosen to adopt during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Cambridge is adopting a hybrid model, with lectures online, small-group teaching in-person where possible, and labs in-person mostly.

What opportunities did the university offer to bond socially with other students (e.g., did you find residency particularly important, which co-curricular activities did you join, and how did you discover those activities)?

Cambridge benefits quite wonderfully from the college system, in that each college provides some unique services to students. I am personally at Queens' College, so I have had quite a few online quiz nights, and many college family game nights. We also have defined households consisting of my neighbors, so it really is like a family that can support each other, legally and emotionally.

I also discovered a few interesting university-wide societies, so I am current-

ly involved in a few long-term projects. One of them is to engineer a rocket that aims to reach much higher than 10km, and I am part of a small team designing the nose cone and the parachute. Another major one is a project that aims at solving household air pollution in East Africa, mainly targeting Tanzanian Maasai huts. That is a far-reaching, start-up project which aims to deliver products starting next year, and eventually reduce some of the three million deaths caused by household air pollution. Overall, a very busy schedule, but very rewarding.

What is the structure of the academic program at your university like for your first-year classes (e.g. was it predominantly lecture-based, and what kind of resources and support were available)? Do you think that COVID-19 has had a large impact on your academic experience?

We have about two or three lectures per weekday, three or four labs per week, and around two supervisions per week. Supervisions are small-group teachings, where you sit together with a professor and another partner, to discuss lecture content and practice problems.

COVID-19 definitely changed the way I see lectures. They are online, mostly recorded, and of course the technology isn't always reliable. But I find it helpful to be able to watch a recorded lecture at any time I want, at any speed I want, and for as many times as I want.

Resources and supports are there if you discover them. I was very fortunate to have spent a lot of time together with my director of studies, who directly supervises me and perhaps also creates the exams (shhh...just kidding). This is



mainly because I email him every week to ask questions, and he invites me out for walks once a while too. We talk about everything from the history of Cambridge to chips in computers.

After experiencing a university-level academic program, how well do you think the IB curriculum prepared you for it? Do you have any particular advice or suggestions that you would like to give to UCC students?

I may provide a different answer than those studying in Canada or the US. The UK university program is very academic-focused, and there isn't much flexibility compared to North American programs. To put it into context, I do about ten hours of maths and physics every single day (that includes weekends too sometimes...). So you really have to love what you study to be able to enjoy the program.

With that, I think IB prepares you very

well overall. It is true that the IB program doesn't reach as much content compared to the UK A-levels (e.g. UK high schools teach 2nd-order differential equations, but IB doesn't). However, IB students are much better at studying strategies, and at articulating ideas. I find that super helpful, much more helpful than math formulas which I can catch up quickly with. The Extended Essay, IAs, and TOK (yes, TOK) practiced how I adapt to new knowledge, and how I concisely and accurately present ideas in the form of a lab report, a presentation, or an essay.

Any particular advice? Know that you are well prepared for university, not because you know some formulas or remember some terminologies, but because you possess the skills, and those skills will be with you much longer than any formulas do.

How were you able to stay physically active while balancing university life and quarantine?

I go on walks and runs around this gorgeous town. I have probably discovered only 5% of what this 800-year-old place possesses. It was fascinating and motivating to visit JJ Thompson's lab

where he discovered electrons, and to run around the buildings where Stephen Hawking used to do research. I may have also accidentally touched the same manometer Rosalind Franklin (shhh...), and of course there is the famous Newton's apple tree which has no apples on it currently.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Not particularly, maybe you would like to know that I am also taking a French course (just for the fun of it, not for grades at all, but I think I passed my first exam).

CHRISTOPHER ADOLPHE - UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, ON

Where are you going to university now? What program are you in, and how are you enjoying it?

I am a Schulich Leader studying Engineering Science at the University of Toronto. I am enjoying the program, but I am missing the in-person social interactions.

What learning model has your university chosen to adopt during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Primarily synchronous lectures and tutorials, with some asynchronous lectures.

What opportunities did the university offer to bond socially with other students (e.g., did you find residency particularly important, which co-curricular activities did you join, and how did you discover those activities)?

The majority of Frosh Week was online over Zoom, however there were a few outdoor in-person events. I was very keen to live in residence, however I found the COVID restrictions very isolating and eventually moved out. Looking forward to living residence next year though! I joined the University of Toronto Aerospace Team, as a member of the Structures Team in the Rocketry Division. I also joined the University of Toronto Sports Analytics Group. Unfortunately, all intramurals are on hold, so I am definitely missing the sports.

What is the structure of the academic program at your university like for your first-year classes (e.g. was it predominantly lecture-based, and what kind of resources and support were available)? Do you think that COVID-19 has had a large impact on your academic experience?

Given my program is engineering, there is a combination of lectures, tutorials and labs, but most of the class time for courses is lecture-focused. Virtual office hours are held weekly for all courses. As well, the University provides an online forum for each class called Piazza, where students can post questions that can be answered by both professors and fellow students.

Yes, I believe COVID has negatively impacted the following:

- Ability to interact and get to know professors and TAs
- Residence experience
- Ability to meet in-person with classmates for group work
- Very limited social events
- Eliminated opportunity to participate in intramural sports
- Frosh week experience as most of it was online

After experiencing a university-level academic program, how well do you think the IB curriculum prepared you for it? Do you have any particular advice or suggestions that you would like to give to UCC students?



I think the IB curriculum prepared me well in terms of managing workload, time management, and the course knowledge and content acquired compared to my peers.

My advice is:

1. Get involved at your university. Given the number of opportunities, one can initially feel overwhelmed, but remember this is not unique to you, as universities are much larger institutions than UCC.
2. You have to advocate for yourself at university. Given the grand scale of many universities, it is up to you to make the best of your university experience. Profs won't monitor your attendance or your progress on assignments, etc. At the end of the day, it is ultimately up to you. There are resources and supports available, so be sure to make use of them.

3. Keep well-being top of mind. During stressful weeks, it can be easy to forfeit sleep, physical exercise, nutrition, social interactions, etc. So, be sure to plan things out in advance (highly suggest making use of a calendar), so that you will have time to do the things that you enjoy.

4. Your program decision coming out of high school is not final. Although it is a very important decision which program and university you choose, there are op-

portunities to switch to ones you never knew existed while in high school.

5. Stay in touch with your brothers from UCC.

How were you able to stay physically active while balancing university life and quarantine?

At university, gyms were closed, so it was pretty tough. Now that I have left residence, I use our home gym and go on runs frequently. I have also been able

to skate on outdoor rinks through the winter. Without intramurals, these have been a great outlet.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

When you go to university, go with an open mind. It can be daunting at first, but be sure to make the most of it. You only have four years and they go by quickly.

PHILLIP KONG - POMONA COLLEGE, USA

Where are you going to university now? What program are you in, and how are you enjoying it?

I am in my first year at Pomona College in Claremont, California. Pomona is an undergraduate liberal arts college, which means that there are no graduate schools (medicine, law, research, etc.). Everyone who enrolls at Pomona essentially studies the same program - "liberal arts" - but has to declare a major at the end of their second year.

I am currently taking a variety of courses in STEM, humanities, and languages to fulfill some general education requirements (eerie reminiscent of the IB) and to explore my interests. I am currently considering majoring in Molecular Biology with a minor in Philosophy or Math, though they are very much subject to change still. I am enjoying it a lot as I appreciate the ability to study a wide variety of subjects while being able to concentrate and dive deep into certain disciplines that interest me.

What learning model has your university chosen to adopt during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Pomona is completely online this year, for both the fall and spring semesters. The campus is closed due to the unfortunate COVID situation in Los Angeles County. So basically I'm at home taking Zoom classes along with everyone else at Pomona.

What opportunities did the university offer to bond socially with other students (e.g., did you find residency particularly important, which

co-curricular activities did you join, and how did you discover those activities?)

A lot of activities that would typically be offered on campus have been attempted to be recreated. Honestly, though, most of them were not successful. The non-spontaneous nature of Zoom and other video apps hinders a lot of socializing that would usually take place between students. So the way in which I've been forming connections with other students is by participating in clubs and organizations and making an active effort to schedule some study sessions with my classmates.

I've been writing for *The Student Life*, the newspaper of Pomona and four other liberal arts colleges in the vicinity, as an opinions writer. Writing is a passion I carried with me from UCC (shameless plug for TBAW). This semester I also became a staff writer for *Tabula Rasa*, the student-run *Journal of Philosophy* at the Claremont Colleges, where my senior editor is actually a UCC Old Boy and the managing editor graduated from Branksome Hall (small world!). I discovered these activities through the club fair as well as talking to my professors and various student-mentors I had.

What is the structure of the academic program at your university like for your first-year classes (e.g. was it predominantly lecture-based, and what kind of resources and support were available)? Do you think that COVID-19 has had a large impact on your academic experience?



I would say my first-year classes are probably somewhat different compared to that of my peers. My classes are all pretty small, the largest being my intro biology class with thirty people and the smallest being my Calc 2 class with four. Because of these class sizes, we have a lot of small group work and discussions, which are very similar to what I had at UCC.

One notable difference, though, is the content of the classes. Unlike what I took in high school, classes in university are usually pretty specific and everyone can take them (less so for STEM). For example, last semester I took a history class solely focused on 20th Century China with students from all year levels and fields of study. I hadn't taken a history class since Y9 history and I was classmates with fourth-year history majors. It was a really interesting and rewarding experience. This semester, I

have a similar experience with Continental Philosophy.

In terms of resources and support, I have found attending office hours and studying with my classmates to be the best part of some of my classes. Unfortunately due to COVID it all had to be over Zoom, which isn't the most conducive for learning especially when you're trying to write math equations using a trackpad. That said, I've enjoyed having conversations with my professors and peers who come from very diverse backgrounds and learning about other people's experiences.

After experiencing a university-level academic program, how well do you think the IB curriculum prepared you for it? Do you have any particular advice or suggestions that you would like to give to UCC students?

I'm sure you have all heard from past Old Boys that the IB prepares you extremely well for university, so instead of rehashing that sentiment I'll try to give some personal examples.

The first is the depth of content that is taught in the IB, specifically at UCC. I took accelerated general chemistry last semester (2 semesters of general chemistry in 1) and almost every topic was covered in HL chemistry. In fact, when I studied for my midterms, I went through my note packages from Ms. Ahmed to clear up some concepts that my professor might have gone over very quickly.

The science courses at UCC also prepared me very well for writing lab re-

ports and thinking about the scientific process. I realized that I had an edge over my peers because Dr. Morris had us interpret graphs from scientific papers all the time. In terms of time management as well, I think I carried a lot from UCC over to university. I currently have two papers, a midterm, a french composition, and articles for TSL due in the next two weeks and honestly, the stress doesn't feel unfamiliar at all from what I typically had in Y11 and Y12 (joking obviously because stress is bad and UCC is doing its best to minimize it).

I'll give one piece of advice to those who are currently in the IB and one to those who are about to enter it.

For those in the IB, take a step back and look at everything in the grand scheme of things. It may be difficult, especially with the insular environment of UCC (I think the insularity has both benefits and drawbacks). But if you are able to talk to some people who don't go to private schools or are not taking the IB, you can begin to appreciate and maybe recognize the "detriments" of the IB. For example, think about the EE. How crazy is it that we write a 4000-word independent research paper in high school? Even crazier is the fact that we get an individual advisor to work with through this process.

For those not yet in the IB, be open-minded. I mean this with regards to everything. Be open-minded about what courses you take, which co-curricular activities you dedicate yourself to (you will eventually have to choose a few to focus on), and what you want to get out

of your last two years at UCC. Looking back in retrospect, a lot of these decisions honestly are not as life-changing as you may think, and there are no particular paths one has to follow in order to achieve "success." Sure, take courses that will be prerequisites for university programs because the IB allows slightly less flexibility than other curriculums. But when you have some other choices, just do what you can see yourself dedicating a large portion of your time to. After all, these are some of the only things that you truly have control over.

How were you able to stay physically active while balancing university life and quarantine?

It's been somewhat difficult. Not having access to a gym or a pool has been weird, as for many years I was either at one or the other on most days. But I've been able to start some new habits with what's available to me. I've been running around my neighborhood a lot (maybe part of me still wants to make up for the lost track season from last spring) as there is less traffic these days and I can exercise whenever I want due to online classes. Also, after looking at the screen for so long, it feels really nice to be able to just exercise, something I took for granted on non-pandemic days.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Just enjoy yourselves and be kind to each other, you might not find another community of like-minded individuals who are able to have such strong bonds later on.

SHAAN HOOEY - UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, BC

Where are you going to university now? What program are you in, and how are you enjoying it?

I'm at UBC's Vancouver campus right now. More specifically, I'm in the BIE (Bachelor of International Economics) degree program. We do a little bit of everything: math, economics, finance, etc... As someone who has always had a lot of passions in diverse fields, it's been quite a nice fit for me to see how the world works from multiple perspectives.

What learning model has your university chosen to adopt during the COVID-19 pandemic?

My program specifically was quite lucky. Because there are only 100 of us, we were able to take synchronous online classes. This means that I have online zoom lectures and discussion groups which at least provide for some degree of interaction with my profs/TAs. I know that in many larger faculties, like Arts, students have only gotten the opportu-

nity to see pre-recorded videos of their lectures all year.

What opportunities did the university offer to bond socially with other students (e.g., did you find residency particularly important, which co-curricular activities did you join, and how did you discover those activities)?

UBC prioritized getting first-year students on campus, which was really nice

to see as it allowed us to have some semblance of a first-year experience and meet some new people.

However, beyond that, there wasn't much. Many clubs closed indefinitely and very few opportunities were well advertised. As a result, there were a lot of students that ended up never leaving their rooms for anything other than meals and didn't feel involved in the community at all. That part was really hard to see because I felt like the residence managers had failed the community.

This realization actually sparked my interest in becoming President of the Orchard Commons Residence Association, which has given me a platform to execute changes that I believe will make students feel more connected to their peers here on campus. I was also recruited to the Varsity XC/T&F teams here at UBC, so that takes up a fair bit of my time, as well.

What is the structure of the academic program at your university like for your first-year classes (e.g. was it predominantly lecture-based, and what kind of resources and support were available)? Do you think that COVID-19 has had a large impact on your academic experience?

My classes this year were fully lecture-based. In most cases, there was some sort of weekly assignment (synchronous discussions, homework, etc...) to hold us accountable and help us stay on track, but that was about it.

One of the greatest lessons I've learned this year is that academic success can be achieved without any additional support. You can do it all by yourself if you want it bad enough. This realization has propelled me to grow not only in terms of my academic knowledge but in terms of how I approach academics altogether. I would say my general love of learning has made it easier for me to work towards my academic goals.

That said, the amount of screen time

per day has definitely caused the headaches from my concussions to come back. Some days, after like 12 hours by the computer, I find it hard to do pretty much anything. I'm just trying to make it until the end of the year when I'll have much more control over my daily screen time.

After experiencing a university-level academic program, how well do you think the IB curriculum prepared you for it? Do you have any particular advice or suggestions that you would like to give to UCC students?

The rumors are true!!! The IB is the best preparation for university, even in Canada where many students think it isn't useful. If you do well in the IB, you essentially have 1/4 of your university credits already completed if you then come to UBC. This is such an asset because it allows you more time to explore classes you find fascinating, do co-op and study abroad (two experiences that, together, would extend almost everyone else's degree by an extra year), and so many other things and still finish on time.

For me, my IB transfer credits have allowed me to take one course less than everyone else for each term of my undergrad experience and still graduate on time with everyone else in my program. As a result, I'm better able to soak up the content from the classes I am taking, as well as balance it with other things I care about outside the classroom.

How were you able to stay physically active while balancing university life and quarantine?

The team kept me going. It got really difficult especially during the second wave here and during finals season, but it's always important to prioritize physical health. Getting out once a day is a must, no matter how busy you are. With the team, we'd run 6-8x/week (80-100km) and lift 1-3x/week.

Is there anything else you would like to add?



I miss UCC! I can't imagine how tough it has been for students, teachers, faculty, and everyone else that is a part of this community this year. Soon this will all be over even though, at present, it may be hard to see.

In the meantime, here's my advice to every UCC student:

1. Control what you can control.
2. Check in on your friends, but make the greatest effort to check in on people you don't know.
3. Do something. Start a club. Learn a life skill. Do that thing you've always wanted to do but never had the time.

If there's one thing you take away from me, please let it be that there is no time like the present to start doing something incredible. You may not have the money to change the world at this point in your young career, but you do have the time. Make it count!

INTERVIEW WITH A FORMER UCC BOARDER

JACK EDELIST

STAFF REPORTER

Earlier this year, I interviewed a few former boarders who just graduated from UCC, and Jeremy Iacobacci was one of them. Jeremy now studies finance at Concordia University. He was a former Seaton's Head of House and head of the Italian Club. At UCC, he was also heavily involved with the soccer and hockey programs. Below is my interview with him, from which you can see his reflection of his boarding life at UCC and his advice to the current boarders.

JEREMY IACOBACCI - CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, QC

What's one thing you miss most about being a boarder at UCC?

What I miss the most is the accessibility to various activities and services. The opportunities to grab a soccer ball or pick up a pair of skates and walk out the front door and step almost directly onto the pitch or the ice were truly one of a kind. Spending time with my new UCC friends is also something I wish I could still do. The hours we spent studying for exams in basements or empty classrooms are moments I will never forget. They were the roots of friendships I would never have made if I didn't choose to go to UCC.

What's one thing you don't miss?

The one thing I don't miss is the food in both the Upper and Lower Dining Halls. I struggled with that throughout my time at the school and devoted several hours a week working with the school in various capacities to improve the situation. Hopefully that department has seen some improvements since I passed

on the torch to the current Year 12s!

What's the first thing you'd do if you visited?

The first thing I would do if I visited would be to reconnect with my teachers and boarding adults. I truly appreciate their efforts and I learned a lot from them, not only of course content, but life lessons as well! I will never forget them. I hope they are all doing well and getting the hang of online teaching! I envy current students who are building strong relationships with them; I would give up more than you think to sit in on one of their classes right now!

What are you studying and what's the dream after college?

I am currently studying Finance at Concordia University in Montreal through their Institute of Cooperative Education. I don't have an explicit "dream" yet, but what I have determined so far is that I would like to have a job that allows me to move around the city or the

world and interact with different people rather than sitting at a desk and working on a computer all day long.

What's been keeping you busy?

I have been spending a lot of my time reading books that have been sitting on my shelves for a long time. I have also been watching movies and updating a detailed list with films I wish to watch and those I have watched already. Some of my friends and family are able to consult it when they are in need of something to watch, whatever their mood.

What advice would you give current students?

As an Old Boy, I would definitely advise current boarders to cherish every moment and try to take the time and appreciate what you've witnessed so far because it will end rather quickly, especially as it did for the boys in my graduating class. Not having UCC around you will truly create a void because there is nothing quite like it.

*Convergence would like to sincerely thank **Mr. Borden, Michael, Billy, Christopher, Phillip, Shaan, and Jeremy** for sharing their valuable experiences and advice.*