Hazel: I’m going to read this and ask for your consent.

Hazel: You're invited to be in a class project investigating the implementation of course review interface, we ask that you read this form and ask any questions you might have.

Hazel: Before agreed to take part, this class project is being conducted by Nicole Pupp, Hazel Dunn, Kimney Nguyen, Matthew Chandra, and Seraphina Yong in CSCI 5115, University of Minnesota.

Hazel: You will be participating in a 30 to 45 minute interview, the researcher will be taking notes with no identifying information being recorded.

Hazel: We would like to record our conversation audio only.

Hazel: If you are not comfortable with audio being recorded, please inform us.

Allison: I am comfortable.

Hazel: There are minimal risks associated with this study. The benefits of the study their responses being used to create a better interface for student peers to share information about course selection.

Hazel: there's no compensation for participating in this study.

Hazel: We will not collect any information that will make it possible to trace your participation back to you and will not share your participation with anybody outside of the student project team.

Hazel: Unless you consent otherwise. We will keep your participation private, to the extent allowable by law.

Allison: OK.

Hazel: Participation in this project is voluntary, your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota.

Hazel K Dunn: If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time, without affecting those relationships

Allison: Okay.

Hazel: Consent given?

Allison: Yes.

Hazel: All right, we’re going to start the interview questions now.

Hazel: What year of school are you in?

Allison: Senior, 4th.

Hazel: Graduate or undergrad?

Allison: Undergrad.

Hazel: What’s your major?

Allison: Applied Econ and Environmental Science Policy.

Hazel: Okay um how many classes, on average, do you usually take in a semester?

Allison: Five.

Hazel: How many credits is that usually?

Allison: 15-18.

Hazel: Ok. Does this number vary depending on the year you are in?

Allison: I mean kinda, I guess it has varied, it doesn’t stay the same.

Hazel: Does it vary a lot?

Allison: It’s always between like 15 and 18. Usually 17 or 18. But now I’m older so I can take less. But it doesn’t depend on the year

Hazel: What GPA do you aim to achieve during the course of the Semester?

Allison: This semester I’m aiming for 3.8.

Hazel: Is that every semester?

Allison: Yeah.

Hazel: Okay um when selecting classes, what sort of information do you find helpful to know about the class before registering? What process do you go through when looking to register for classes?

Allison: Yikes. Well, requirements. Rate my professor, schedule builder, convenience.

Hazel: How about like what things do you look for or research when you're looking at classes?

Allison: Professors and when they are. I very rarely get to stray away from my requirements. I’ve had an Excel since freshman year of what I need to do. It has changed a little bit based on study abroad, but for the most part it’s just like “oh that’s a required class” not like “that’s interesting”.

Hazel: Ok yes that makes sense.

Hazel: Do you care about workload factors when you're registering?

Allison: Yeah mostly just because I don’t like to go above 18 credits. And to take those 18 credits, it’s usually like I know that 3 of those credits aren’t going to be that big of a deal. Like I don’t want to take 18 only Econ or 18 only Arts and Sciences.

Hazel: Do you care about time commitment during the week?

Allison: Yeah. Like I look at it because I mean I have my classes that I need to take, and I try to schedule them to like all work best in a schedule. I wouldn’t not take a class because it’s inconvenient, because most of the time like I have to.

Hazel: How do you choose classes to plan out in like completing your program like do you do more classes in the beginning, or like to you harder classes sophomore.

Allison: Freshman year I got all my lib eds out of the way, except for 1. I did all that freshman year. Um, because I didn’t know what I wanted to major in. And then, after that, I’d say that I definitely took more in the beginning because I was stressed about getting it done. And I wasn’t sure. Like I knew that if I was chillin I probably wouldn’t be able to finish it. And so I went hard once I figured out what I wanted to do. Like freshman year I would take a lot because I was stressed about lib eds. And then after freshman year I’m stressed out about lib eds. After that I’m stressed out about figuring out what I wanted to do and like finishing it. Once I figured out what I wanted to do, I was stressed about finishing it. So I like went hard.

And then junior year, I was like well I’m gonna hate my life, might as well make it worse. So I took all my hardest classes junior year, like the most difficult ones. Because I knew that after Covid I’d wanna have a fun time and so I suffered junior year.

And now, senior year, I knew that I’d wanting to spend time having fun and also looking for post grad opportunities and stuff.

Hazel: Would that have happened even if it wasn’t Covid?

Allison: Probably. I probably would’ve just like over junior and senior year had it a bit more balanced. Because it’s a very big difference. Like last year I took a lot, and now I’m like chillin.

Hazel: Okay. What course based information would you find helpful, like apart from the syllabus, before taking it?

Allison: I would like to see, well that’s probably in the syllabus, I don’t know what else.

Hazel: What were you going to say?

Allison: Well I was just gonna say like a lot of classes have the same big projects or assignments every year. So sometimes those are on the syllabus, like big projects. Like the same every year.

Hazel: So you’d wanna know about that?

Allison: Yeah. So I can read about it. What else?

Hazel: Does it make a difference In your decision, if something is like super project based, or discussion post based?

Allison: Like probably not, if it weren’t a requirement then yes. And if it was like if I could choose between two, if they were different in that aspect, it would probably make a difference if I could see that. Just what the assignments would look like and stuff.

Hazel: Do you care about the student composition of a class? Which is like ratio of students in a program or like students in your age group.

Hazel: Like do you care if it's like a lot of freshmen are or a lot of seniors or everyone's in your major or most people aren't in your major.

Allison: No.

Hazel: What if it’s like a core requirement for your major, do you want to do it with people that are like at your level, like for group work? Or does it not really matter.

Allison: I mean yeah, I’d probably prefer it.

Hazel: What makes you like or dislike a class? Do you want examples?

Allison: Sure.

Hazel: The nature of the discussion in the class like if it's just it's kind of dull or it's more engaging?

Allison: I like I like more engaging but I like having group work. I don’t like engaging where they just like call on people and they just like speak because there are never actual discussions.

So I like being engaged in group discussion, I like when you’re just sitting at tables, just like sitting at a circle table and being like “oh let’s talk about that for a sec”, and just discuss. Where it’s not a forced type of thing.

Hazel: Makes sense.

Allison: So in lecture style classes, I kind of prefer them to just like do their thing and I can do my thing and then we leave.

Hazel: Okay, what makes you like or dislike a class? Do you prefer like discussion based or lecture based project based lab based like does that part of the class effect if you like, or dislike.

Allison: I don't like labs.

Hazel: Why?

Allison: Because I don’t like science.

Hazel: Ok. But like is that important when you wanna know about a class? Like do you wanna know?

Allison: Yeah. This actually just happened. In my forest class, like we didn’t know this but apparently the grad students have to do a lab with it. And she says literally on our first day. “Ok so right after this at lab” and I was like, there’s a lab? Like no, not a chance I’m doing lab. So yes, it would’ve made a difference.

Hazel: That would matter?

Allison: Yes that would matter to me. So like yeah if this would have been a lab that would not have been good.

Hazel K Dunn: And discussion versus lecture does that make a difference?

Allison: Um, I like a mix.

Hazel: Like if the class is advertised as discussion based like group engaging stuff versus not.

Allison: Yeah I like both.

Hazel: Okay, what about how much you're expected to learn on your own does that make you like or dislike a class?

Allison: Hm, probably makes me dislike it more. I don’t know, I’ve never really thought about it.

Hazel: Like flipped classroom kind of thing?

Allison: I don’t like flipped classroom. Just because I don’t like watching videos. Like I’m totally fine with doing homework. Obviously, I’m better at figuring out some stuff in my own home. Like let me work through it. But I don’t like watching videos and then having to still go to class.

Hazel K Dunn: Do care about like textbook involvement, like if the class is all about the textbook?

Allison: Yeah, f\*\*\* that. Like I literally don’t remember the last time I bought a textbook. I don’t even have to find them online, I get by without them.

Hazel K Dunn: Which would you find more effective in getting information about a class: A sentence based review by students who have taken the course or a number rating that rates the course from zero to five.

Allison: Sentence based.

Hazel: Ok, why?

Allison: Because they say why they thought that. Like just a number – everybody has different preferences, some people could be like “I loved this it was super hard”. Or like some people are like…

Hazel: Like I liked this so much it related so much to my internship, but no one knew anything about it.

Allison: Right, exactly. Or somebody’s like “f\*\* this professor, blah blah blah.” Then I can get a better view on what they’re and how I would relate it to my situation.

Hazel: Do other people’s opinions of a class effect your choice to take a class or not?

Allison: No.

Hazel: Not at all?

Allison: Absolutely not.

Hazel: What if your friend said to you like “that class sucks”. Or like if you looked up on reddit and people just said “terrible class don’t take it”.

Allison: Well yeah then I probably wouldn’t take it.

Hazel: Ok, so do other peoples opinions of a class effect your choice?

Allison: Yes, I guess yeah.

Hazel: Does it matter if you do or don’t know them?

Allison: Mmm I don’t know. Maybe a little? Cause I trust them? But I’d also probably trust people on reddit. Except sometimes I don’t.

Hazel: Maybe just like read more into it?

Allison: Well I don’t know. If somebody on reddit was just like “f\*\*\* this class”, I would need more to trust them.

Hazel: So you would need more from someone you don’t know?

Allison: Yes yes.

Hazel: You’re a tough person for this because so many of your classes are requirements.

Allison: I never get to choose, I just do it. So even if I see that a professor sucks, it’s more just mental preparation for me.

Hazel: Would you, or have you had to take a class outside of your comfort zone?

Allison: Yes. Like all of them.

Hazel: Was it a choice?

Allison: No. Well I guess I have taken classes out of my comfort zone by chocie, but most of them, no.

Hazel: Ok, so for the ones that you have, why, and what factors have you considered? Like why would you take some class out of your comfort zone, but not a different one?

Allison: Well, the one that I thought of that was out of my comfort zone was my study abroad when I was a little freshman. Cause like I just did that for fun, and I knew that it was gonna be scary and it was, cause I walked into a room full of strangers. I’d never been out of the country before, I’d never even traveled at all. But I took it because I knew that I’d probably like it. And, I knew I’d grow. And if there’s time to grow it’s right now I guess. I forced myself to do something that I wouldn’t normally do.

Hazel: What about the one you’re taking right now? The grand challenge one?

Allison: Oh, that is a challenge. Yeah, that one was intimidating too. Because you have to do like this big research presentation to a board of people. But, I wanted to do it because a lot of the time I feel like my classes are just mundane, and I wanted to kind of kick it up a notch for me, and see how I’d do.

Hazel: Can you describe a situation when a class you signed up for was much different than expected when you signed up for it?

Allison: Well this one ESPM class I took, it said it was going to be really hard, and it was like the easiest class I’ve ever taken. And the professor barely even taught anything, so I was just bored the whole time. And I thought it would be cool.

Hazel: Was that because you looked up the professor on rate my professor?

Allison: The professor wasn’t on rate my professor, and it’s a requirement that all ESPM students take it, so I took it. But the description made it sound really like interesting and engaging, and then it just was like not.

I took this one class called “plants get sick too”, and I thought it was gonna be fun, cause of the name. It was not fun.

Hazel: it was just the name?

Allison: I had to take a biological sciences requirement, and I was looking through them. It was my first semester of college and I didn’t really know what I was doing. I didn’t know that I would have to take real bio yet, so I was like “Oh, let’s take fun bio”. Not fun. Worse than regular bio actually. It was the most boring topic ever, like I don’t think I could tell you one thing that I learned.

Hazel: Would you have found any additional information helpful before signing up for those classes?

Allison: Yes! What plant pathology entails, anything. Because it’s like, “you’re gonna learn about plants!”

Hazel: Like they kind of give you a weird summary?

Allison: Yeah, it’s like “you’re gonna learn about plants, it’s gonna be fun! And you can help plants.” And as a person that cares about anything, you’re like, ok, I’d like to learn how to help plants. And that’s it. And then you get there, and it’s like, “this is what a spore looks like, this is insemination of a pathogen that you infect plants with”. We had to infect them! I was like, this is not helping! I don’t know. It didn’t talk about any of what you’d be learning at all, it was almost like an advertisement. It was actually weird! Because most classes I feel like say at least a little bit of what you’re going to be learning, but this was like an advertisement for the class basically. It’s basically didn’t give you any of the actual info, it was just like “come take this class! Plants get sick too. Like help the environment, save the plants!”

Allison: It was like really vague and had an overly positive spin. Instead of just being like “this is the information that you’re going to be exposed to in this class”. Cause it was hard topics, and I was like, why? Most classes aren’t like that, but that one was.

Hazel: Have you dropped a class before?

Allison: Yes.

Hazel: Ok, can you explain why you dropped it?

Allison: Mhmm. It was the first day of college and I walked into my first ever class. I took the biological science that looked interesting to me, I talked to my advisor about it at orientation. I didn’t know anything about anything. But he was like “take this, you might be interested”. So I took anthropology 1001. Cause it was a bio requirement, but it’s a discipline you haven’t learned about before. So I went. And it was Wiley, big auditorium, filled to the brim, there were no seats. I had to sit on the stairs because there were like 600 kids in there.

Maybe even more. And then the professor was like: “So, a lot of people take this class because it’s a requirement and they think it will be interesting or fun than bio 1001. I’m here to tell you I take pride in my class being really hard and I hate when people take this class cause they think it’ll be interesting.” And I was like what? He said that all the first day. And he was like “I’m gonna make this really hard”.

Hazel: Like he was threatening people?

Allison: He was literally threatening people. He was like “It’s 5 times harder than Bio 1001, I pride myself in this class being difficult”. And so I dropped. I was like I don’t care about it that much, like why would I put myself through that.

Hazel: So it was related to your expectations of the class right? You thought anthropology would be cool and fun?

Allison: I thought it would be interesting. I think it’s supposed to be, and I think a better professor could’ve made it interesting.

Hazel: Have you ever heard about or used external websites that review class instructors like rate my professor?

Allison: Yes. Only that one though.

Hazel: Do you find such websites useful?

Allison: Yes.

Hazel: Why?

Allison: I think they’re useful because sometimes it effects when I take a class based on which professor is teaching it at the time. Because they’re requirements they’re offered at a bunch of different times and they have different professors. So that helps me choose like if I could do either, then I would choose the class that has the better professor.

Hazel: Do you use it otherwise? Or not really.

Allison: I use it all the time. I check all of my professors cause I wanna sus them out. But most of the time I can’t change it so it’s kinda. My major is relatively small, so a lot of classes just have a professor and I have to take the class. It’s just more for me to read it. When I was doing lib eds and doing my communications class and it was offered 7 different times with 7 professors, like I would choose the best one.

Hazel: Have you ever reviewed a course or a professor?

Allison: No.

Hazel: Ok. What prevents you from writing course reviews?

Allison: I just don’t feel like it. I just don’t take the time.

Hazel: But you read other people’s reviews.

Allison: I know. I’ve had that thought process dilemma before I’m like man, maybe I should contribute to the betterment of society. And then I don’t feel like it. I like actually have thought that before. And I don’t because I’m lazy.

Hazel: In what situation do you think you would write a course review?

Allison: I haven’t hated or loved that many of my professors. I think if I had super super strong feelings about a professor, maybe I’d go out of my way. I never feel like going out of my way to talk about a professor because most of the time my review would be like “yeah it was pretty chill” or like “kind of annoying”. And I feel like the reviews that are like important are the ones where people actually give information. If I had super strong feelings about a professor, maybe I’d write one.

Hazel: What kind of information would you share?

Allison: I think if they’re like messed up, like if they treat people badly.

Hazel: Like if you feel strongly about them?

Allison: Yes. Like if I feel extremely, either love them or hate them, I’d share that information. For the most part, I would say for like 90% of my courses, they’re ok, sometimes annoying, sometimes cool.

Hazel: What if you were reviewing a class and not the professor?

Allison: Same thing. For most of my classes I’m “yeah it was required, kind of annoying”.

Hazel: So it would be the same reason? You’d write a review if you were feeling extreme about it?

Allison: Yeah. And even classes like GIS, like I personally hated that class, but that’s it, it’s a personal thing. Cause some people are into that. The only reason I hated that class was because I didn’t like the material. So I didn’t like the material. But that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t take the class.

Hazel: Ok that’s fair. Have you ever publicly shared information or material from a course?

Allison: Yes. I send people my notes all the time.

Hazel: Have you ever posted a syllabus somewhere?

Allison: No.

Hazel: Would you ever send someone a syllabus?

Allison: Yeah I do that every time. Any time people ask me for anything I give it to them.

Hazel: Why did you share that information? Cause you wanted to? Cause people asked for it?

Allison: Yeah. And sometimes I’ve been in a pinch and I asked a friend. Cause like you never know. If people do need it, then I’m helping them out. Cause sometimes I have needed it. I’ve been so stressed and just like I need help can you please send me it? So I always appreciate that.

Hazel: Would you like to go over any of the questions we asked?

Allison: No.

Hazel: Okay, are there any other experiences, opinions, or thoughts that you would like to share about your course reviewing experience.

Allison: No.

Hazel: Okay, this is my closing statement.

Hazel: At the close of this interview, I want to thank you for your participation, I would like to reconfirm your consent and ask if you're comfortable with letting us use what we talked about today in our research.

Hazel: As a reminder, your data will be anonymous, and you can withdraw your participation at any time by emailing me.

Allison: Okay.