

Impact of COVID-19 Distanced Learning Policies on College Students Qualitative Pilot Study



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Introduction

COVID-19 distance learning policies have moved college classes to a primarily online modality, which has shown to decrease student performance, focus, and motivation.¹ Moreover, student mental health has been worsening in recent years with COVID-19 further impacting young adults and essential workers at a disproportionate rate.^{2,4} Premedical experiences have also been reduced due to COVID-19.³ **Objective of this study is to look at the holistic impact of distance learning on student life.**

Methods

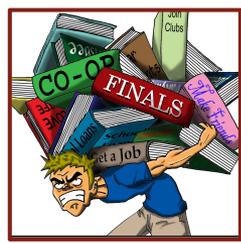
Four students from the Public Health 3531 class were selected for 20-30 minute photovoice interviews. Informed consent was given by all participants. Interviewees were asked to bring four photos to the interview, signifying how distanced learning impacted their life. Interviews were audio recorded, and verbatim transcripts were created. Emergent codes were created from transcriptions for data analysis, and recurring themes were generated.

Selected Interview

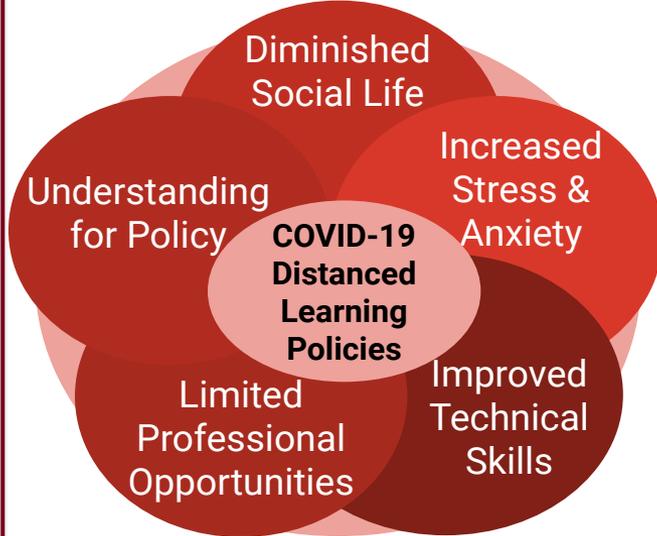
Quotes

"...doing just ask online, I am less likely to go because I prefer talking to the professors one on one."

"I think COVID and being a pre med student is really hard to...get those opportunities that are pretty essential."



THEMES



The Career Search Journey

Students understand need for health precautions and show concern for others safety. This student has a mask, handwipes, and sanitizer.

Students have limited professional opportunities, shown by a student through this confusing path.

Students are facing increased stress and anxiety due to distanced learning, previewed here through the clutter on a students desk.

Students improved their skills with technology, such as an Ipad, as a learning tool and form of communication.

HEALTH POLICY PILOT STUDY THEMES

Discussion

- Distanced learning has created a multitude problems in student lives
- May indicate trends around campuses nationwide
- Increased communication between student body and university leadership needed
- Further research looking at larger diverse populations is needed

References

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- [3] Ios, D., & Gallicchio, V. (2020). Effects of COVID-19 on healthcare practice, medical education, and pre-medical educational experiences. *Journal of Public Health and Epidemiology*, 12(3), 186-192. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5897/JPHE2020.1237>
- [4] Lipson S Ph.D., Lattie E Ph.D, Eisenberg D Ph.D. (2018, November 5) Increased rates of mental health service utilization by U.S. college students: 10-Year population-level trends (2007–2017). *Psychiatric Services*, 70(1), 60-63. DOI: <https://doi-org.ezp2.lib.umn.edu/10.1176/appi.ps.201800332>