

# College Life in the Era of Coronavirus



“Today, we are interviewing college students to talk about how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed their lives. First, let me ask you, Ms. Kim, I heard that you are now taking online lectures due to COVID-19. Can you tell us about some of the main changes you’ve experienced?”

“This may sound surprising, but not much has changed when it comes to taking classes. Thanks to the real-time video communication app Zoom, we can ask professors questions and get instant feedback. I think the biggest difference is that students tend to buy a tablet now instead of textbooks. With a tablet, you can take online classes and take notes without printing out the study materials. And you can even record sections that you don’t understand. Tablets PCs are not just for classes. I use them to make promotional videos for student council, and my friends also use tablet PCs to make posters for their academic societies and post them on the school’s online community. Recently, I read an article that sales of tablet PCs grew for the first time in four years due to COVID-19.”



“You just mentioned videos for student council. So, would you say that activities inside and outside of school, like student council and academic societies, are ongoing even as students take classes virtually?”

“Yes. For instance, the student council that I participate in publishes “card news” to provide useful tips for freshmen, and post them on social media and groups chats. We’ve also organized online gatherings with apps like Zoom and Wave so that new and current students can get to know each other. As for our regular project on offering refreshments to students during exams, we sent “gifticons” (mobile coupons) using Google Forms rather than having students line up for snacks. People said this was much better way to do this, so we plan to stick to it.”



“Thank you for your detailed answer. Next, I have questions for Mr. Park. You enrolled this year as a freshman, only to find that college life is nothing like you’ve imagined due to COVID-19.”

“At first, I was really depressed. I had expected to make new friends and enjoy all the fun that college life can offer, but I didn’t even get to see the school building. Yet, I was able to use a school community app called Everytime to learn about school life and classes. The app was really useful, especially in the beginning of the semester, as I could join group chats with other incoming students in my department and get information about student activities. Even though we can’t physically be at school, we are trying our best to enjoy college life, using apps and sites like ones I just mentioned. Also, I hung out with friends on Wave rather than going outside and physically meeting them. We can meet via a group video call and play games like hidden pictures and escape room. You can also take part in cultural experiences online. Famous Korean boybands like BTS and EXO now have online concerts and fan meetings. I’m very interested in art, so I visited a virtual art exhibition and enjoyed artwork online.”



“Sounds like you are making the most of college life in unconventional ways. How do you think the younger generation is coping with the COVID-19 crisis?”

“First, we try not to meet in big groups or go to crowded places like bars and amusement parks. On Instagram, which is the most-used social media platform by young people, we use “staying at home” filters to show others that we are enjoying a safe time at home instead of going out, or join the “thank you challenge” to express our gratitude to the hardworking medical staff. I’ve also seen friends taking it to the next level and running a fundraiser on the Everytime app to donate to medical centers and the Korea Medical Association. Overall, I think we are very aware of the gravity of COVID-19, and we try to be as careful as we can.”



“Though today’s interview, we had the chance to meet students who were spending their time in a fun yet safe way despite the changes brought by COVID-19. I hope the virus is put to an end quickly, so that students can take classes at school, meet friends, and enjoy cultural activities.”

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\*Note: This article is an imaginary interview based on real-life events.