



Corey Union, Room 217
Office: (607)753-4816
Fax: (607)753-2807
sga@cortland.edu

SUNY Cortland Student Testimonials on Fall 2020

“My name is Domenic Zito. I am a junior at SUNY Cortland and I wanted to express my concerns about this upcoming spring semester. I am concerned that there are no breaks for the entire fifteen weeks and I think it will negatively affect my mental health and well-being. The fall semester was extremely difficult for me as a student and as an RA. The switch to online classes has caused me to be put under much more stress than usual and it has negatively affected my mood as well as my mental health. I noticed a similar outcome with my residents as well. Many of them were freshman, but I did have some returning students as well. A few of them were suffering from anxiety and felt extremely overwhelmed with the new restrictions and lack of time off. On top of this there were minimal activities to participate in to help relieve the added stress. Obviously this pandemic is very serious and we need to try our best to stop the spread. However, I think it is important to evaluate the mental and physical health of our students and try our best to accommodate them and help them get through the semester. This past semester was most certainly a semester like no other, and this change has caused much additional stress to the students of our school.”

-Dom, Class of 2022

“It wasn’t until this October that I realized how much I rely on breaks within a semester. In the weeks that would traditionally have led up to fall break the gusto that I start every semester off with had worn out, I was slowly falling more behind each week, and I had no break coming. In a traditional semester, having a break not only allowed me to catch up but it was also, importantly, a brief period of real rest. Even if it took me a couple of days to get my work in order, I always had at least one day off. While it may sound simple, this reprieve puts a bit of extra fuel in the tank with which to take on the next stretch of the semester. Lacking this break, both the ability to look forward to it and the results of it, made my semester vastly more difficult. By the time we were creeping through November I felt as if I was dragging myself along and barely completing my duties, despite the typically high standard I have for my work. I don’t feel that I got as much out of this semester so far as I normally would, and I do believe that fatigue plays a notable part in this.”

-Melissa, Class of 2022

“Over the past fall semester, my mental health has been tried to the furthest extent in my life. Having no breaks throughout this semester has put a toll on my academic ability through the end of the semester. I feel like I’m not even here to learn or how to better myself and prepare myself for my future profession, I’m here to get things done by the due date. It’s beyond frustrating to be so passionate for my future but I can’t seem to excel because I have no energy left to give. To put it simply I’m tired, we’re all tired, and we feel alone like no one cares. I know the pandemic has been hard on everyone. We all need support (students, faculty, & staff). Give us mental

breaks, days off, no work submitted on weekends. Something to allow us all to have a breath and take a moment for ourselves.”

-Jessica, Class of 2022

“This semester was hard. Professors put on much more work this semester so keeping up with an already rigorous schedule on top of having no breaks was extremely difficult. I spent at least part of everyday, including Saturdays and Sundays doing school work. School work took over my life. I am a varsity athlete. I did not have time to work out or take a break because if I did, I would not finish my work or I would be up to two a.m. everyday and we were only in class for twelve weeks. I was an emotional mess the last few weeks from being physically and mentally exhausted. Coming into Thanksgiving, I burned out. I am going to struggle the last few weeks from home since it will be the same thing as during the semester at school, but now without my friends and any in-person socialization.”

-Liz, Class of 2022

“I understand the whole taking away breaks was for the purpose of our safety, but it has definitely caused burnout and I know many students have not been satisfied with the way things are being handled this semester. It was difficult to go from the end of August to Thanksgiving without a break and I already know it will be difficult to go from February to the middle of May without a break. In my opinion I think a successful way to approach the spring semester was to delay spring break to the end of April and just do remote learning after spring break. I have no hard feelings towards anything, but it was definitely a struggle not having any days off this semester and my grades have suffered because of it.”

-Gabby, Class of 2023

“I am a transfer student this semester to the SUNY Cortland communications department. I have attended several other colleges in the past, but this semester was the most stressful by far. I understand there are certain aspects of this which cannot be avoided, but considering the fact that I was raped last fall semester and I thought more about dropping out this year, I think says something. I have struggled with mental health issues all my life, and I’m finally on a depression medication that works well for me. However, the sheer mass of work I have been assigned this semester has made me exhausted. I don’t eat until like 5pm when my classes are done for the day (which I’ve been told by my friends is common this semester). A close mentor of mine died in the beginning of November and I still felt like I couldn’t take time to grieve properly because my professors were focused on the assignments, they had given me and me showing up to lectures (which often don’t parallel the assignments being given). It has gotten to the point that I will compulsively itch and scratch myself, which my psychiatrist says is due to stress. One day, when I had 2 exams and a paper due, I actually broke out into hives. The quality of my work has decreased immensely due to the amount and frequency of the work I’m assigned with no breaks. In short, I am overwhelmed, depressed, and incredibly stressed.”

-Anna, Class of 2022

“As a student athlete who had their season cancelled and nothing really to do on campus, this fall semester was quite lack luster. Everyday was the same routine, and it got really boring really quick. Although the weeks might have gone fast, it wasn’t without stressful nights knowing we don’t have a break coming up. I felt often overwhelmed by my classes and it was frustrating

to know that we were only allocated a week off for Thanksgiving. This semester is quite literally dragging on and there are still two weeks left. Mentally we as students need more understanding from our professors... Do better SUNY Cortland.”

-Kitty, Class of 2022

“This year was horrible. I definitely am not mentally stable with COVID and quarantine. Then being at school without having a break was also mentally draining. We definitely need to have some type of mental health week next semester where we don’t have any classes or work to do. It’s crazy because we have break now but it doesn’t feel like it because I still have assignments due tonight. I would love to have some type of break next semester.”

-Nicole, Class of 2022

“Well, I am going to keep it short and simple, I think it’s insane that students had zero breaks all semester and when we get our Thanksgiving break, we still get assigned an insane amount of work. I am currently working on three projects and will not have any time to relax or spend time with friends or family for this “week off”.”

-Felipe, Class of 2023

“This semester was stressful for multiple reasons. The main stressor for me this semester was the amount of course work. Every professor is giving maximum amounts of coursework. Being home disinclined us from continuing to work and with the prevention of breaks there was no stress relief. There was stress stacked on stress which ultimately led to coursework neglect.”

-Ramona, Class of 2023