

We really should cancel spring break this year

by Demitri Kanellopoulos

This morning I read an article called “Colleges Are Already Moving to Cancel Spring break to ‘Mitigate the Possible Risks’ During the Pandemic” written by Claudia Harmata for Yahoo News. As I finished the article, I found myself hoping that Michigan State University, the school that I currently attend, puts the safety of its students and staff first by canceling spring break this year.

When the coronavirus pandemic first struck, it caught the country off guard. Spring breakers enjoyed their trips but brought home the disease to friends, family and neighbors. Universities—large and small alike—are hoping to prevent this mistake from happening again. For example, 70 University of Texas students flew to Mexico for spring break last year and over half of them tested positive for the virus upon return. The University of Texas has since learned from that mistake and canceled spring break for this year.

Many nearby schools have already decided to cancel spring break, one of which being the University of Michigan Dearborn. The chancellor, Domenico Grasso, said, “The move would mitigate the possible risks associated with campus community members who may have traveled during the middle of the semester.” I think that Grasso makes a great point. People from all over the country will be traveling and be at potential risk around spring break time. Keeping students and staff in class prevents them from traveling and putting themselves or the people they interact with at risk.

As a compensation to students, many universities—such as the University of Kentucky—are condensing the spring semester as a whole. That way, students are in class the same amount of time, but finish the semester earlier because they are working through what would’ve been spring break. Other schools, such as Carnegie Mellon University and Purdue University, are instead giving students “break days” and “reading days” to give the students some breathing room in a busy spring semester.

The general consensus among university officials is to try and reduce the number of days and weeks classes are in session during flu season. With that being said, all universities are solving this problem of what to do with the spring semester differently. Left and right schools are announcing a late start to the semester, ultimately lengthening winter break. Other schools are integrating two short midweek breaks in March and April.

As a college senior, of course I want to enjoy my spring break. However, I want to put the safety of my family, my friends and myself before that. These are tough and scary times we are going through, something like this might never happen again in our lives. I’m able to put my personal enjoyment on hold for the greater good, and if you’re a student, I hope you can too.

Stay home this spring break and keep your loved ones healthy.

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