



"One Day in May"

(May 15, 2021)

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Class Year:

Connection to the College (student? faculty? alum? friend of the College?): Faculty/staff

Describe your day on May 15, 2021. Tell us whatever you'd like at whatever length you'd like. We think future students will especially appreciate hearing about concrete details -- What can you see and hear from where you are right now? What did you do for fun today? Did you cook or eat anything special? Did you work or do chores? Who did you spend time with? What did you learn?

Just one day, May 15 2021, and this one isn't very representative of my year so far, but here goes... I woke up in my childhood friend's guest bedroom. 7:15 am, same time as every day. This isn't my bed. It's too comfortable. This isn't my room. It's brighter. The kids aren't up yet. It's quiet. I am at my friend Maria's house, sleeping in her guestroom. I can sleep in! And so I do. For the first time in what feels like a year, I slept until almost 9 am. We were celebrating our birthdays in NuLu last night. Dining indoors at a new restaurant, visiting outdoor patios for beers. It felt blissfully normal, which means abnormal during what we hope is the end of a pandemic year of no restaurants, no bars, nothing indoors that was fun, basically. We woke up and I got ready to help a bunch of new Hanover students preference their fall classes at a virtual zoom LEAP session. This is the new norm, and it's not bad. We've gotten better at realizing which things are okay to be virtual, and soon we will add in things that are better in person. LEAP is okay virtually. Students get lots of support without the stress. They will hopefully visit campus, see it in all of the glory of spring term. But for now, they get Zoom LEAP with the four of us: Drs Ken Prince, Uschi Appear, Nick Baechle, and me. We have fun chatting and managing about 40 or so students. After about two hours, we are done and signing off. I can work from my friend's office in Louisville, and then go to brunch after at the Silver Dollar! It's like the best of both worlds! At brunch we have a round of grapefruit mimosas (yum) and I order chilaquilles, a Mexican dish with chips, roja caliente, and una huevo on top. Glorious.

After brunch, I depart my friend's beautiful home in Louisville, stop at Trader Joe's for some melon and my kids' favorite banana yogurt. Everyone wears masks and disenfracts carts. Funny how different it is right across the river in Indiana where we lifted our mask mandate in early May. Once I get home, it's afternoon and my family is happy to see me, though I've only been away one night, that's rare these days. Since getting vaccinated, I am much more open to travel and I hope we can go on some fun trips this summer to make up for a very low-key summer 2020.

Tonight is Hiep's prom night. He has stayed with us for almost two years now, an international student from Vietnam. He is a senior and we learned through the newspaper that he was nominated for prom royalty court. And he was voted King of prom! We are kind of surprised because he is very reserved and tells us as little as possible. I suppose that's like a lot of teens, but especially teens who have been been immersed in a locked down pandemic with not much to do.

After a night out yesterday, we settle for dinner in and a tv show, Schitt's Creek, before bed. We are on season four of six, our pandemic show watching is super limited. We aren't really tv people, I guess. That's my Saturday!

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What do you think you'll remember most about surviving the pandemic? Tell us what whatever you'd like at whatever length you'd like. We think future students will especially appreciate memories that help them picture your life and relationships -- Have you taken up any new leisure activities in the last year, or have you changed how you eat, or cook? If you're on campus, what was it like in classrooms or dining spaces or locker rooms or offices? Have you been able to stay in touch with family or friends (including classmates and other Hanoverians)? How? What have you missed the most in the past year?

I have missed traveling! I haven't met my friend's baby, Charlie, yet. I had tickets to visit her on March 13, 2020, the day the US closed down. Her son is immuno-compromised so we have to wait longer, even though us adults are vaccinated.

Off campus, my quarantine cooking and eating habits, combined with stress eating and drinking, means that I easily gained 10 lbs. UGH! And grey hairs that students may not see from 6 ft away!

My students get unprecedented access into my personal life. Video office hours, recorded microlectures that include me with my kids, in my house or yard, my cell phone is now out in the hands of students.

Why? Because I want to help them with certainty in an uncertain time. Schedules and routines are important. Technology is vital. We use it and abuse it but we still need it to survive like food water and shelter.

Hand sanitizer is everywhere.

I thought I would sanitize student tables and chairs before class but that only lasted like a week. Bottles of perispray remain unused in my office.

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