

Student Testimonials

This page is View Only, to honor the testimonials, protect the privacy of those individuals, and the courage it takes to share your voice. Please be respectful of the personal experiences that students face, that one may never know or hear about.

"My biggest concern is either that if I fly back, I'll be locked in Bangkok and not be able to return to Georgetown for the fall, or vice versa, that if I do not fly back, I'll be locked in at Georgetown and not be able to return to Bangkok. I'm also concerned that the time-zone difference and the self-quarantine that is to follow my travel will disrupt my ability to be active academically."

- Anna Naiyapatana, SFS '21

"Morally, I don't know how I can continue my courses knowing that many of my peers will be unable to participate due to various barriers they face. We are all entitled to our education from this institution. If not all of us can access it, I don't want to access it."

- Kendall Bryant, MSB '23

"I think we can all agree that, in the two months that we've spent on campus, students have done the necessary work that will earn them a passing grade. I support a universal pass because I believe students need a break from the emotional stress that this pandemic has caused us. Needless to say, we don't have the same access to the resources needed to do as well as we would have on campus. We live in different parts of the world and while faculty have done a great job in utilizing online resources to meet with students, regardless of time differences, arranging the time and means to do so remains a difficulty for both parties involved. A universal pass assures students that they will receive credit for their work despite not having the same circumstances of an in-person learning."

- Rowlie John Flores, COL '22

"I live in a small house that is in between a suburban and a rural area. I live with two parents and two sisters, all of whom are working from home. Due to this strain on the WiFi, it is nearly impossible for me to get a clear picture or audio on Zoom. This morning, I was unable to take an oral midterm worth an eighth of my grade due to connectivity issues."

- Anonymous, SFS '22

[content warning: mention of sexual assault, abuse, homophobia, depression, homelessness]

"I am a full time freshman at Georgetown University. I also work four jobs. I was recently raped at Georgetown by a Georgetown student. I was in the process of reporting the rape, getting a no contact order, and receiving support from sexual assault resources on campus when the rug was completely pulled out from under me. I spent weeks reliving the worst night of my life to be left alone. I've lost my jobs due to

business closures due to COVID-19, so I can not afford to continue going to therapy. I'm alone. Since such a closure is unprecedented for the university, the sexual assault resources have been utterly useless to me. I'm dealing with medical repercussions from the rape, only to be left traumatized and constantly triggered, and utterly alone and helpless. I come from a horrifically abusive home, and so I cannot go home. I was homeless for a few days and had no residence to reside in for a period of permanence, until a friend in Arlington, VA, agreed to take me in. I'm financially poor, physically abused at my home by my homophobic father, victimized on campus and was raped, my mental health has gone to Hell considering I have no one to listen, help, or just give me a break, and on top of all this I have to keep up my grades? I have to find the motivation to do work and teach myself? I can barely function due to the ramifications of COVID-19, but the quarantine is a good idea ultimately. I'm immunocompromised anyways, and the likelihood of my contracting coronavirus is exponentially higher than those with regular immune function, and the risks of COVID-19 are highly fatal to me."

- Anonymous, COL '23

[content warning: mention of anxiety and depression]

"Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, I have lost much more than a physical residence within a prestigious institution; I have lost my community, and consequently, I have lost my sense of self.

No longer am I able to be in communion with my closest friends and Christ during weekly Bible study meetings. No longer do I have access to the intelligent, passionate educators who have taken me under their wings - academically and otherwise. No longer do I have my off campus job caring for young children, whose smiles would brighten my day. No longer am I able to consult with my CAPS therapist, and just when I finally felt like I had my mental health in balance. No longer am I able to conduct research within the College. All of these components made up my day-to-day life, but now they're all gone. Without them, I feel just like any other person and not my actual self.

Georgetown has become more than just a place of higher learning to me; it is my safe haven and refuge. Having to separate from it (and all of the amazing people within it) has been more emotionally and psychologically traumatizing than I could have possibly imagined. Yet, I consider myself to be one of the more fortunate students, for I know that I have a family to which I can come home, reliable technology for instructional continuity, a place to worship, food to eat, and so much more. This is not the case for all of my peers, and for that, I cannot help but worry about them.

After almost two weeks, I am able to finally sleep at night without having anxiety attacks or waves of depression washing over me; but again, my troubles are minute compared to those of other Hoyas who have far less to work with and much more to worry about. For all that they have done for Georgetown, it is only right that Georgetown does something for them."

- Anonymous, COL '21

[content warning: mention of depression, self-harm, and alcoholism]

"I have bipolar disorder and my home situation has always significantly contributed to my struggle to mitigate my symptoms and be healthy and productive.

My home environment has proven extremely unhealthy for me. The last time I lived at home for a significant period, I was excessively drinking, often beginning in the morning with my coffee throughout the entire day. I was driving over 90 mph on a two-lane highway, often conjointly with drinking. I was in disciplinary trouble and threatened with not graduating high school because I completed none of my schoolwork on time. I was consistently self-harming with razor blades and lighters, both of which are still stocked in my nightstand at home. I was overmedicating and constantly planned and once attempted suicide.

My health and wellbeing have improved since then but I have only come so far. I broke down in front of my roommates out of dread before visiting home for the holiday break even this past new year. "Whenever I return home I feel unsafe, awful memories and habits rearise, and I end up depressed and unproductive. While home for those 3 weeks I relapsed on several months of being self-harm free.

Many of the reasons that I am doing well for the first time in my life stem from the routine and home I have established at Georgetown and from having space from my family. Moving back in with my family will result in the loss of my health and productivity, if not worse. As I deal with this transition and try to prevent my life reverting to how unpredictable, unproductive, and unhealthy it was the last time I lived at home, it's impossible for me to maintain the grades I've earned so far, and it's difficult to keep up with my schoolwork at all. "

- Anonymous, COL '21

"Having to come home during this epidemic with a working full-time mother has put me in a position where I'm not only have to continue as a student at Georgetown with my normal five classes and stem course load but it has also put me in a place where I have to help with my brothers schooling which has also been moved online. As well as continue my normal Georgetown job and find a new job as a part-time worker somewhere where my health can be compromised to be able to pay for expenses now that I am living at home again. When I combined my coursework plus the extra coursework I have to do because I just cannot learn from videos, Plus cooking and cleaning, and teaching/facilitating my brothers schoolwork I am unable to do my best in my classes therefore putting me in a compromising position where I may not be able to do my best."

- Marlene Mora, COL '23

"Transitioning home has been incredibly difficult for me. Not only am I getting used to the online learning environment (which I've found frustrating and much less engaging than in-person classes), but I am also getting used to living at home again with my two siblings (each of whom is also trying to take online

classes). I've had difficulty staying focused and motivating myself to get school work done. This is in large part due to the fact that my dad has Stage 4 kidney cancer. My dad is in near-constant pain at all times, and the rest of my family is responsible for stepping in to care for him and do work around the house. It's hard enough being at Georgetown and trying to compartmentalize school and home life, but it's even harder living at home and seeing the harsh reality of his disease day in and day out. Furthermore, I recently came out as gay to my family. This has been a difficult process for me and for them. Some of my family members have responded with love and care; others have not. Over the course of this semester, Georgetown had become the place where I felt most at home. At Georgetown, I could be my authentic self and know that I would be unconditionally loved and respected. Having that space taken away from me with such short notice, without being able to say goodbye to people I care about, has been incredibly difficult. I know that I am not alone in struggling with these changes. Many other Georgetown students face similar challenges and difficulties transitioning back to home life, while still trying to fulfill the requirements of being a full-time college student. All I ask is that the administration listen to the students and go above and beyond to accommodate our needs. One place to start might be instituting universal pass-fail for all classes, or allowing students to keep their pre-spring break grades. Please listen to us."

- Anonymous, SFS '22

[content warning: mentions of anxiety]

"My state is currently under lockdown meaning that I cannot leave the house other than for essentials. This is very detrimental to my mental health because I have clinical anxiety which is triggered by my permanent residence which I now cannot leave. I have struggled with a panic disorder since I was in high school. Since the disorder developed while I was living at home, unfortunately being at home now elevates my anxiety levels to the point where I can barely sleep and have panic attacks several times a day. In conjunction, I do not have the financial ability to afford private therapy sessions at home because now all therapy must be remote calls due to the lockdown. When combined with the concern that the pandemic instills, I am in a very poor mental place to be completing academic assignments to the best of my ability. I would very much appreciate a double A system, or one that prevents students from getting below a 3.0 for the semester. In regards to pass/fail, I would like to apply to graduate school so I cannot utilize the optional pass/fail unless it is required across the board for all classes by the university. Times like these are unprecedented, and I think students need an academic safety net. Several friends have also shared how their mental health worsens at home due to toxic family dynamics or pre-existing disorders. I urge you to consider changing the grading policy to support students who are now living in suboptimal conditions; you never know what someone is dealing with at home."

- Anonymous, COL '22

[content warning: mentions of anxiety, homelessness]

"Due to COVID-19 my parents and I lost all of our jobs and now have no source of income, because of this my time lately has been spent trying to find a way for my family to earn money but unfortunately, we cannot find any other form of employment due to our immigration status and our housing situation. On top of this, my family is currently living with a friend in a new state, and the situation is not going well but they cannot move anywhere due to our current lack of income. Because of our immigration status, we cannot afford to contract the virus as my parents do not have health insurance, and also, we are immunocompromised, which only worsens my worry for my family while being far away from them. I cannot go "home" at the moment mainly because I cannot travel across the country at this moment due to a traumatic situation I experienced the week of spring break at an airport, and because there is nowhere for me to stay where my parents live. All of these factors have caused me to have to stay on campus, and I am immensely grateful for this opportunity, however, I must admit that the loneliness and separation from everyone is truly taking a toll on my wellbeing. Due to the tremendous instability and uncertainty that I am experiencing, I have constant anxiety and my mental health is not doing well; I am experiencing a lot of issues to remain focused on academic work, as I barely have energy to get out of bed everyday. I am truly concerned for my academic performance this semester, as I know it will be highly impacted by everything I am having to manage. I always work really hard to succeed in school, but I must recognize that it is impossible for me to handle family concerns and my college courses at the same time. Everyone is experiencing something different, and disadvantaged students will (and are) facing the impact of COVID-19 to a much greater extent, which leaves us vulnerable to negative consequences for our future careers, and aspirations.

A pass/fail system is not enough, as Grad schools, Law Schools, and Med schools will still look at those who chose pass fail negatively, and our GPA will remain the same, while the GPAs of more privileged students will continue to rise. It is not fair that our success in academics this semester will be determined by the level of impact that COVID-19 has on our lives."

- Anonymous, COL '23

[content warning: mentions of death, illness]

"We were about halfway down to D.C. when we heard the news. Our neighbor had died suddenly and without warning after being admitted to the hospital with a fever. We didn't know yet if it was the virus, the virus that can't seem to leave anybody's lips. My dad and I were shell shocked. Suddenly driving to Georgetown to clean out my dorm seemed like the worst idea in the world; it seemed like we were driving exactly the wrong direction. Sure, I missed class to go down to Georgetown that day, but that's not what made it so hard. I had to clean out my room knowing I would never live there again, knowing every second I was outside my house I could somehow pick up the virus. That I could somehow bring it home.

The original plan was to spend the night, but we knew we needed to get back to my mom, and lower our risk of contracting the virus as much as possible. We drove through the night, seven hours back to my tiny town in upstate NY. That was Friday. That whole day, I barely felt a thing. The rest of the weekend was spent processing my grief, staring at the pile of boxes waiting to be unpacked. We waved to our neighbor who had just lost her husband, who now had to be in isolation for fear she had the virus. We cried and we prayed for that woman, who was forced to grieve alone.

Sunday we found out it was the virus that killed our neighbor. We found out his wife had it now too, and had been taken to the hospital with a fever. We found out there are more cases here. This is probably more information than you wanted to know, but I love my village so much, and people are dying. Someone important to me has already died. But I'm still expected to make it to every lecture online, and turn in every assignment. I already had to miss class for that drive down to Georgetown. I can't afford to miss more. I'm a studious and disciplined person. I pride myself on good grades. But lately I haven't been able to work. I can't focus, I can't think. I'm so worried about everyone I love that it gives me migraines. And the work is piling up. I don't really have suggestions for the administration at this time, but I want to give you some idea of what students are going through. It's more than connectivity issues. It's grief and isolation and fear for our communities. All we ask for is empathy and support. "

- Lin Henke, COL '23

[content warning: mentions of mental health, illness]

"Since this outbreak, I have been forced to move home to an unstable, sometimes hostile environment. It is one that weakens my mental health every single day. Some days I have to text the crisis line because it is so bad. Georgetown was my safe haven away from this. I know it is not their fault that we had to go home, but it is their responsibility to understand that I cannot be expected to produce the same work here that I do at Georgetown. I live in a home that degrades my mental health, laughs at my mental illness, and does not respect the seriousness of my work. I need a double A system to be given a fighting chance of succeeding this semester, and later on the chance to move up from my situation, and go to law school. I am asking the university to think about students like me when they make this decision. I hope you put mental health above grades."

- Anonymous, '22

"I live in a more rural area, and our wifi is spotty on a normal day and virtually nonexistent when it rains. The wifi is pretty much only consistent in our kitchen/living room, and I can't ask my family to stay quiet and out of the common spaces for hours at a time, especially during meal times. Participation in my classes is graded, and I can't always participate because my computer frequently disconnects and the audio often cuts out so I can't hear the questions."

- Anonymous, SFS '22

[content warning: mentions of anxiety, domestic violence]

"I am a first generation, low income student who decided to come to Georgetown specifically to get away from my home and join a community through GSP. With the university closure, I have chosen to move home and stay with my family, for their safety and comfort as well as my own; in case one of my family members got sick or the country went into lockdown, I wanted to be nearby. At home, I live in a one bedroom apartment with my brother and my mother, and sometimes my older sister. In this small apartment, all three of us are trying to attend class, as my mom is an art teacher and my brother is a senior in high school. We only have my laptop to share. At school, I provide financial support to my brother, paying for his SATs, different sporting fees, and other things to make his life in high school feel easier and take the burden off my mom. When I am at home, that family and financial responsibility is ten fold, as I am living with them and their needs become unavoidable and much more important. On top of this, we have an abusive father, who comes in and out of the picture, and heightens anxiety and tension in the house at all times. We never know when he will be around, or what damage he will cause, but it is always on our minds.

Some might say that "if you showed resilience in high school, then you can show resilience again this semester" (actual verbatim quote from an advisor). Although I understand this logic, the world is not in the same moment as it was in high school. I can't go to my school library and use a school computer to complete assignments, I can't go walk down the street to a local Starbucks to escape the chaos and violence at home. I can only leave the chaos of my home to more chaos outside. The world is different now, having a resilient spirit might not be enough, and that is largely out of everyone's control.

I don't share these things to gain pity. They are facts of my life which I have grown to know, family dynamics and circumstances I have come to live with and learn from. I share them to demonstrate to you plainly that academics (at the Georgetown level) become incongruous and unimportant to this way of life, this "survival mode" that a lot of us are running on right now. As a student, the moveout and financial stress has already put me a week behind in my classes, something that never would have occurred in a normal semester. As a pre-med student, an optional pass-fail is to no avail. If me and another Georgetown applicant are looked at by the same committee, I would still have to explain why my life situation was more uprooted than theirs during coronavirus, why academics were incongruous with me and not them, why I picked the pass option and they didn't. I would still have to "pimp out my trauma", as Tony Jack would say (The Privileged Poor, 2019).

Now is not the time for an educational arms race. Georgetown should set a precedent, to a double A/A-system, and acknowledge that university closures are prying open the preexisting gap that exists between privileged and underprivileged students in education. Georgetown can make a choice to actively address that gap, especially in this pivotal and historical moment in time."

- Caitlind Love, NHS '21

[content warning: mentions of depression]

"travelled 37 hours to go home; unable to attend class during the first week; 12 hr time difference; still adjusting to jet lag and the new environment (isolation for 14 days); cannot attend any but one of my classes, have 4 midterms next week; one class with no recordings for the past two weeks (and I have this midterm tomorrow); very poor support from teachers who do not respond to emails, even the time difference makes it difficult to communicate; since I have to wait minimum 1 day for a response (hence the anxiety about deadlines, tests, unfamiliarity with content); home isolation is draining, depressing, lonely, despite having 12 hours in a day, it is mentally challenging to be doing work all the time - not able to process thoughts properly; no history of mental health issues but current experience seems very similar to one; tests were postponed by one week but are continuing this week, even though I don't feel prepared to work"

- Anonymous, SFS '23

"I am currently taking 21 credits, 17 of which are necessary to graduate and also require a high final grade in order to be admitted to my dream program next semester. I knew this was going to be a challenge coming into the semester, but with the help of my professors, office hours, and the desire to partake in the same fun activities that many of my other friends were participating in (most of whom are taking far fewer credits, or were even part-time), I was able to motivate myself and survive.

Now, I am finding it harder than ever to not only keep up with my schoolwork but also to find the motivation to do so in the first place, now that I have lost the final two months of my senior year (which has extensively demoralized most students in the Class of 2020, as far as I have seen).

A Double-A system would greatly assist me as I do not have the option to take any of my courses pass-fail. The only way I can get a break during these tough times is if the entire university decides to follow a universal system, so that future grad/med/law programs have no choice but to accept them. I do not believe that this system will make me stop working hard. Rather, I think that it will give me the break I need to go back to focusing on truly learning while also managing all of the family and move-out struggles that this pandemic has created. I am beyond stressed and getting behind every day, and trying to organize extensions with all my professors is almost more difficult than just attempting to do the work in the first place. Columbia and other schools have already switched to a similar program, and I would be beyond proud of Georgetown if it decided to do so as well."

- Anonymous, SFS '20

[content warning: mentions of chronic mental illnesses]

"Covid-19 has had an unimaginable impact on Georgetown's community, but there is a group of students that are currently being overlooked in the conversation. Students with severe, chronic mental illnesses such as Bipolar Disorder or Schizophrenia face immense challenges with this change in routine. As someone with Bipolar 1 Disorder, I am now receiving a quarter of the medical support I have been receiving for the last 18 years, due to the shutdown of large group gatherings and businesses. My medication is carefully adjusted to balance the chemicals in my brain for a normal day to day life, and with these environmental changes, my stabilizers can no longer function as my doctors intended. Furthermore, the impact of spending all day in one room, managing my work from my bed and having no outside contact has worsened my symptoms to unmanageable levels.

I strongly believe we need to address this with a change in the grading system, as there is a large, silent population of sufferers on our campus who secretly deal with severe mental illnesses and are being disproportionately affected by these conditions. I had my reservations about the Double A System for a while, as I didn't want to "unfairly" earn grades. But any other system is so absolutely "unfair" that the Double A System truly emerges as our best, most equitable option. Students with severe mental illnesses struggled especially in the first semester, so making all grades pass/fail as an alternative equitable solution means I walk away from my freshman year with a GPA only reflecting my first semester. With my bipolar, I had to deal with medication changes and serious adjustments last semester due to the transition to college, and many of us experienced hospitalizations. The administration would be making a grave mistake to allow the first semester to represent our entire first year in terms of grades. Now that I am on stable medication, I have been able to thrive this semester and do extremely well. I won't let that be taken from me, and replaced with a "pass" that simply places further focus on the awful mental health transition of my first semester, which says nothing of the sacrifices and accomplishments of the last few months."

- Gwyneth Murphy, SFS '23

"Due to COVID-19 I had to move home and now live with three siblings and two parents. All my siblings and I are using Zoom for online classes while my parents both try to work from home. We don't have the internet bandwidth to sustain six people trying to work full time from home which has led to difficulty for all of us to access online materials and attend virtual classes. No regular household wifi system is equipped to handle the demands of six people working full time from home. The quick closure of Georgetown and transition to online classes has made it difficult if not impossible for my family to adequately prepare for the technology needs for such a change in instruction. Additionally, due to the state-wide stay at home order, we won't be able to have someone come and fix/expand our wifi for several weeks."

- Anonymous, COL '21

"My family has moved to the United States within the last six months. Since January, my mother has been managing a home and a job alone. My brother and my father moved here just a week ago - job markets that held promised offers for them have suddenly shut down in the wake of the virus' outbreak. Had I been at Georgetown, I would've been supported by the infrastructure of the university, but now, we are a four-people family surviving on one person's income. Our possessions are still slowly being shipped here. We have no semblance of a normal life or the ability to build one soon, because of the way the virus is impacting us. For me to then be expected to perform at the academic standards that got me admission into this school is an expectation that is simply impossible to meet. Given that we are still filing taxes in two different countries with two different taxation calendars which makes access to federal aid difficult, I know that my university life for the next year, if not my attendance itself, will depend on scholarships. A double A system would not only ensure that I am able to apply for those scholarships despite my disadvantaged situation, but reassure my immigrant parents who have put so much of their hopes on my college education that my experience is not being hampered, or lessened, by the tough circumstances that we find ourselves in."

- Anonymous, SFS '23

[content warning: mentions of domestic abuse]

"As a low-income and first generation student I already have a battle to face on campus, being forced back home was a whole other war-zone. I was unable to move back to campus even though I was approved because I could not afford to make the trip back to campus and my family would not be able to continue to support me financially. Therefore I was left with the toxic and abusive environment that I am currently in. It is hard enough to take online classes, but when you share a room with 3 other people and have not a single desk or surface to study or do work on it becomes increasingly more difficult. The possibility of finding study spaces is taken away from me when NYC went into a full shutdown. My avenues for success or even a good passing grade were stripped away from me this semester. It is going to be nearly impossible to get any work done in an abusive home, where I not only have to fend for myself but for my younger siblings as well. Where the bread winner has their job and food is scarce. This double A policy will help relieve so much of the stress in my life. I have not been able to attend class this whole week when I've been struggling to even have a safe place to lay my head at and reliable WiFi. To not have to worry about my grades, where I can truly spend my time learning and trying to survive this current environment would be amazing. Students should not have their grades/GPA suffer immensely for an act of god. This was an unforeseen circumstance that has placed so many students in danger in various ways. Please consider those who suffer them most. While many may believe it will be unfair to those who truly did deserve an A, the current situation that so many students like me are facing is truly unfair and we should not be punished for it."

- Anonymous, SFS '21

"In the matter of hours, I had to pack up my entire dorm room and hop on a plane back home. Because of the great confusion and hecticness of the situation, I accidentally left some of my school books in storage in DC—forcing me to either re-purchase the book or try to continue without it. I have family responsibilities at home that I did not have at college."

- Anonymous, COL '23

[content warning: mentions of grief, homelessness]

"Last term, Georgetown alums Maya Robinson (COL '19) and Mark Keffer (COL'19) passed away. They were some of my closest friends during their time at Georgetown, and Maya I had known since high school. Their deaths were heartbreaking, and I found it difficult to get out of bed in the morning, much less do a good job on my homework and worry about grad school admission. Dealing with grief while worrying about my grades and grad school was unequivocally one of the hardest things I've ever done, and I wouldn't wish this experience upon anyone. Unfortunately, this experience is about to happen for lots and lots of Hoyas. The models show that things are about to get really bad in the US. Statistically, many Hoyas are about to deal with loss and grief on a scale that none of us have experienced before. Because of this, I think that if we as a university and community don't seriously consider the double A proposal, we are gravely underestimating their situation we are in as a nation right now. By the end of this, every person at Georgetown will have gone through grief. Hoyas are going to lose their friends and family members. Many will do so while feeling the effects of a pandemic-spurred global recession, going through job loss and even homelessness.

This term is unlike any other we have ever seen, and because of this, we need a solution that will prioritize the equitability and health of what will soon be a completely grief-stricken student body. I believe the double-a system is the best solution to do so."

- Emily Green, SFS '22

[content warning: mentions of chronic mental illness]

"I have bipolar disorder type 2, and just had a severe manic episode as a result of being stuck on lock down as a result of the coronavirus. It eliminated the finite structures/schedule I had put into place to help protect me from falling into a manic episode, which consists of being extremely mentally, emotionally, and physically overwhelmed to the point where I cannot function or sustain myself in any way. Last night was when it happened and I could barely see or think. I have at least 10+ friends at Georgetown with this same mental illness and many others have it as well (about 1 in every 100 people so at least 70 Hoyas). These episodes can last for months regardless of treatment. I was simply lucky enough to be able to pull myself back because of help from my family, friends, my dog, and having previous experiences that have better prepared me for last night. If it happens again and I can't control it, I won't be able to do any work.

Doing simple grade school level work is quite literally impossible when experiencing an episode like this, and I am lucky enough to have the "milder" version of this illness, for others with type 1, they experience hallucinations and entirely altered reality. Arguing that those with circumstances like that can ask for individual attention is naive because we've done that in the past and it hasn't worked. Even if the double A results in people not working hard, that's entirely a choice they decided to make and they will suffer any consequences of that when they face a class that was compounding on the one they took this semester. It weeds out those trying from those who aren't, and allows those who literally are restricted from doing anything the ability to not face failing, or even "passing" which is looked down upon. Please understand that there are many like me who are giving it all, but when your all is restricted by a situation entirely out of your control, there is nothing left that we can do. If you aren't for every single one of us, you aren't for us at all."

- Ace Frazier, MSB '23

"With the pressure of being forced to move out of my on campus apartment, it has been incredibly hard to keep up with my academic work. Although, I am incredibly appreciative for the university's choice to give students the option to take classes pass/fail, electing to do so would not be looked upon favorably by the graduate programs that I am interested in. So I am either faced with the choice of submitting grades that do not reflect my academic abilities or to take a route that would seemingly demonstrate an inability on my side to keep up with my current workload. In both cases, my academic record does not reflect my own achievements and hard work, and this falls on the actions of the university, rather than those of myself"

- Anonymous, COL '21

"For two years, I have volunteered as an EMT providing emergency medical treatment and care to the people of my community, both in my hometown and more recently at Georgetown. Whenever I am home, I am proud to serve as an active member of New Canaan EMS. The COVID-19 crisis, which prompted us to have to leave Georgetown and return to our homes to ride out the most dangerous part of the pandemic, also asks of EMTs and other frontline medical personnel to do just the opposite: we must step towards the needs of the many people facing this disease in it's most dangerous expression. COVID-19 is already putting strain on our health care system and we are still in early days of the epidemic. I have, and will continue to, transported the sickest patients by ambulance. I will soon provide auxiliary care at overwhelmed emergency departments, and will volunteer at drive through testing sites. The Connecticut State Health Department has made it clear that it will leverage licensed EMTs to help in this emergency. I plan to answer that call, both as someone who practices prehospital medical care, but also as someone studying to enter the medical profession. My grades are incredibly important to me, especially as I consider applying to medical school, but this is a unique event and truly asks me to respond in any way I

can. By adopting the Double "A" Grading System, Georgetown would give me security in knowing that my academic track record will not be jeopardized by choosing to answer the call of the moment. I am not alone in feeling this tension. There are dozens of licensed EMTs at Georgetown who will be doing the same. The Double "A" Grading System would allow us to commit a more meaningful allocation of our time to helping those in need and upholding the Georgetown value of "Hoya's for others" without fear of jeopardizing our academic future."

- Dylan Antonioli, NHS '23

"I've been sick for two weeks and had a hard time getting care because my local healthcare services are focused on COVID-19. Aside from often feeling too ill to focus on schoolwork, I'm scared for my own health and for my family's wellbeing. Worrying about my grades adds another level of stress, because I cannot get a doctors note saying that I am ill and yet am too sick to attend class or do homework. The Double-A system would alleviate a lot of my academic fears and recognize the burden that COVID-19 has placed on all students."

- Anonymous, SFS '22

[content warning: mentions of illness, death]

"I rushed a pulse oximeter to my aunt right before a zoom class on Wednesday and within five minutes of my driving back home (to attend class) my mother informed me they'd called 911 and were rushing my aunt to the ER because her oxygen saturation was only at 60%. While I was in class and taking a quiz that day I was getting updates from the family telling me that she'd been intubated, is in the ICU on the ventilator, and has been diagnosed with covid. Since then it's just been waiting for more news, praying for her survival, and feeling powerless to help in any way. Thursday they didn't know if she was going to make it. Friday she did a little better, yesterday she did a little worse. We have no idea how she's doing today. None of us are allowed to visit her and be there with her.

Both of my parents are physicians and are putting their own lives at risk to care for others. They haven't seen my grandmother in a month. Every time I visit her to bring her food or water, I think about how I could be the one who infects her by accident, and yet no one else can bring her these supplies, and she can't walk well or drive anymore. Four of my other family members are sick, presumably with covid. My parents had to sit me down and tell me it's inevitable they'll get infected at work, and that we just need to plan for when it happens. Every day now I am praying my aunt will survive this virus against which we have no cure. Any day now my parents could develop symptoms of covid and need me to take care of them. At every moment I am waiting for the other shoe to drop, for my aunt to suddenly deteriorate or my parents to fall ill or for another one of my loved ones to be rushed to the ER, because that's the world I live in now. I live in the epicenter of New Jersey's outbreak. This is my new normal. The idea of looking at a

syllabus or opening a textbook feels incredibly selfish and pointless in the face of what's really going on. All I can think about is my family and how I can't do anything to help them.

This should be a time when we come together and care about each other, rather than fighting for the old dog-eat-dog, competitive world. This is not the time for competing with each other for higher grades. We should be reaching out to each other with compassion and empathy. This is why we cannot choose a "Current Grades or Higher" policy, or any policy that isn't universal. Why are people fighting for division and competition? Now? During this awful, awful pandemic that is killing people, dividing the consequences along class lines (because let's stop pretending the pandemic affects rich and poor equally), and tearing families apart? My aunt could die at any moment, and none of us can be there with her. Do you understand that? This is not a time to leave every student for themselves in any way. This should be the time when we see each other with compassion, and leave petty, selfish competition in the past. "

- Anonymous, SFS '22

[content warning: mentions of illness, death]

"As a GSP student, I am extremely afraid and angry. The way this University has been handling this situation has felt like a slap in the face as a very rural, low income, first generation student.

Firstly, I have NO INTERNET ACCESS where I live, save for one bar of cell-service. The comcast deal's nice, but their service doesn't reach me. That, mixed with the trauma my area has suffered with 7 deadly tornadoes (middle Tennessee), and that we have an exponentially growing amount of corona cases, has been enough anxiety and mental grief. How, as a junior history student, am I supposed to finish my research papers, or attend classes? It took a kindness from my dad's boss, an hour away from my house, to give me internet access at his office so I can continue coming to classes during weekdays. But that still doesn't allow me to complete assignments or work at the same capacity I was on campus. I felt like Georgetown left me stranded when I needed them most, so I've been trying to pull myself out of the water. I'm not sure how I am going to finish the year as strongly as I started. Administration has frustrated me further as I was told to consider withdrawing. The day after the tuition refund deadline is when y'all announced this online plan, and it was an utter betrayal and a sucker punch to the face to be told to consider wasting an entire year and my family's hard earned money simply because I'm not privileged enough to be able to fulfill Georgetown's demands on a whim. I am extremely depressed. Academics are the least of my worries right now, however, and they absolutely should be the LAST thing on anyone's minds.

My parents could die and I would be left with NO family assets or resources whatsoever. My father suffers from COPD, Chronic Bronchitis, Emphysema, diabetes, AND heart conditions, and I have enough to worry about with his future as he is forced to work his minimum wage construction job at being 61 years old and a major part of my family's income. I sit in a panic all day worried that the rented houses he is forced to clean out as an essential worker, home to drug addicts and extremely unclean conditions, will get him

infected or even more, that my mother, an essential auto parts worker, will accidentally get us both infected. I have to worry about caring for him, my mother, and myself. I have to think about **"What if my parents are dead in a month?** How will I pay taxes? How will I pay bills? the funerals?" My 15 page paper on Ottoman Espionage should be the LAST thing on my mind, and it is. That grade will mean nothing if I'm 6 feet under the dirt."

- Cheyenne Martin, COL '21

I have had to not simply help my 9-year old sister with her homework, but TEACH her as well. She is dyslexic and a non-English speaker so the process gets to be quite intensive for me both in terms of time and mental capacity. For example, one small long division word-problem takes me about 1hr to get through with her as I have to translate English words, explain conceptually what those words mean if she doesn't know them after translation, explain what the problem is asking, and how to do the problem. If those things aren't the problem, then there is usually some technical hump that I have to walk her through since we communicate via Google Hangouts. I am trying to do this while completing my senior year assignments, trying to study for the MCAT, and hunting down opportunities for my gap year. So far, I have been trying to make all of this work, but there just isn't enough time in a day for me to do everything. Quite frankly, it is also getting overwhelming, and I have had a couple of breakdowns. I am the only one that has the ability to properly help her as my father works during the day and also does not speak English. Our mother lives in Haiti. I could theoretically decide she's not worth it and let her elementary education suffer to focus on myself. But, I could not possibly live with myself if I did that. My higher education is not as important as the foundational education she is still in the process of acquiring since I could technically. I find it extremely disheartening and apathetic of the administration for instituting a grading policy where I could possibly fail for choosing to care about my sister. If that were to happen, that would mean another semester at the Hilltop, and another semester away from my sister during which I could have a more hands-on impact on her schooling.

- Armelle Déjoie, COL '20