

I attended the ISG from 2009 to 2012. I currently live near Orlando, Florida in the United States. I am attending graduate school at the University of Central Florida studying Speech-Language Pathology.

On March 4th, we had our last class before spring break, not knowing that this would be our last face-to-face class for a long time. While we were on spring break, UCF notified us that campus would be closed for 2 weeks. The professors were told that they had to transition all classes online. It was then announced that all classes would be held online for the remainder of the spring semester, and then all of summer as well. Florida universities are currently discussing the possibility of opening up for the fall semester with extra health precautions put in place.

All of my classes are now held on Zoom. We meet virtually as a class and are able to have the lecture and class discussions. This semester, we were supposed to start working with clients in the UCF Communication Disorders clinic and conducting our first speech and language therapy sessions. However, we are now using a platform called SimuCase where we work through and make decisions on fictional simulated cases.

My whole family is now working from home, and we have had to figure out how to keep from interrupting each other on our various Zoom meetings. My mother is a special education teacher and meets online with individual students. My brother is also a college student and has returned from the University of Florida in Gainesville to continue his classes online. My father works for a company that builds theme parks and cruise ships around the world. Although many of those businesses are currently closed to guests, they are continuing to work on construction projects.

My family had been planning on eventually getting a puppy to train as a therapy dog to work at my mother's school. Once we realized we were going to have so much time at home as a family, we realized that this would be a great time to begin this project. As it turns out, many people have also decided that this is the perfect time to devote time to a new puppy, so we had some difficulty finding one! Gracie is a silver labrador retriever, and she is making wonderful progress with learning puppy manners and commands. We have had to seek out online options for training, as face to face training classes are not currently being held.

We are currently allowed to go to grocery stores, but are asked to wear masks, and we try to go as infrequently as possible. Some stores have one-way arrows on the aisles to encourage people to maintain social distance. Many restaurants are only available for pickup or limited outdoor seating. As a family, we have found that we enjoy the opportunity to have more time together. We find that we take more walks and participate in other activities that allow us to enjoy the outdoors. Although this has been an uncertain time, I have seen positive aspects that have emerged, such as more quality time with family and innovation for ways that everyone can connect together.

