

comm·unity

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Jaspers are Back!



by Jana Clark

Welcome back, Jaspers! After a year of remote and hybrid learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Manhattan College has welcomed students, staff and faculty back to campus for the 2021-22 school year. With the return to campus, life has slowly been going back to normal. Freshmen who never got to experience their first year on campus now are able to participate in in-person events, meet their professors face-to-face and get the true college experience that they deserve. Upperclassmen are also excited to be back.



Senior Jennifer Conte enjoys being back on campus, although she feels it's an adjustment.

"Being back on campus has been overall really great," Conte said. "I really missed the social environment that comes with being on campus. While it is weird to be face-to-face with people I haven't seen in over a year, along with lots of new faces of students who started during the height of the pandemic, it's good to be back in the campus environment."

However, for Conte, the biggest difficulty of being back on campus was participating in in-person classes again. This type of participation actually works better for students like Colette Barron.

"Personally, I believe that being in person has allowed for exposure as well as genuine class interactions," Barron said.

Maeve Kirk, a media production concentration student, is particularly glad to be back in the television studio for both class and for her position as social media manager of Manhattan College TV.

Senior Olivia McPhee commented that she felt mixed emotions about moving back to in-person learning.

"I would say that being back in person has its pros and cons," McPhee said. "I definitely feel like I'm more of a student being on campus again, like using the library more often, mingling with other students and things like that. But at the same time, it's been quite frustrating because of how much we cut hybrid out of our system. I felt as though it was a simple, positive way to keep everyone safe and still on track during the pandemic."

Students are happy to be back on campus, but getting rid of the hybrid or on-line model in favor of the in-person model of learning seems to have impacted quite a few students, not just McPhee.

“I definitely feel like I’m more of a student being on campus again – Olivia McPhee

“For Studio Television Production and MCTV, it’s been really great to finally have a hands-on experience. I really enjoy being in the studio and the overall atmosphere and being alongside with my classmates,” Kirk said. “I was remote all of sophomore year, so I waited to take this class to be in person, and same with MCTV. I was still able to participate in the club through Google Meet but it just wasn’t the same.”

The majority of the community is thrilled to be back, but the transition to ‘normalcy’ definitely does not come without its challenges. After speaking with some faculty members from the Manhattan College Communication Department, the response to being back in person was also overwhelmingly positive.

Dr. Arshia Anwer, assistant professor, said that one thing she loves about being back in person is simply being able to see her students again.

“I love the student experience that teaching gives me,” Anwer said.

However, the one negative she mentioned about being back in the classroom is that she can’t see her students’ smiles behind their masks. “I don’t get to see the way my students respond to my cheesy jokes!” she said.

Being in-person and being able to interact with peers and professors is such a vital part of the college experience. No matter how nice it was to be able to hop on a Zoom call two minutes before class started, it feels great to have some sense of normalcy back and to be immersed in the comfort of the Manhattan College community once again. ★