**Victor Hao Interview**

**Date**: January 6th, 2021

**Interviewer**: First question, what is your program of study?

**Victor**: So I'm a second year.

**Victor**: And going into UTM, I went into life sciences, but for Post, I'm actually in the bio chemistry, bio biological chemistry specialist.

**Interviewer**: Okay, cool.

**Interviewer:** And I guess I just answered my second question. So, you're in a second year?

**Victor**: Yep.

**Interviewer**: Okay.

**Interviewer**: And are you international or domestic student? and

**Victor**: Domestic.

**Interviewer**: And so what are some of like the format's of your current classes? So are they synchronous or asynchronous? And both? Did you have any in person at all?

**Victor**: So, it's safe to say that all of my classes operated the same way where it's synchronous, but lectured or recorded for the most part

**Victor**: If it weren't for the pandemic, I would really rather have synchronous classes, but with recorded lectures, I think that's my preference.

**Interviewer**: So how many courses are you currently taking?

**Victor**: I'm taking five half year courses, right at the moment.

**Interviewer**: So last semester, you took five and this semester can be taking five as well?

**Victor**: Yep.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Interviewer**: And would you have taken the same if classes were in person?

**Victor**: Yeah, for the most part.

**Interviewer**: Okay. And so this is more of a broader question. But since the move to remote living, how would you say your overall academic experience has been? So this is in terms of like your GPA, your focus, the workload, you've experienced with your classes? So how has it all been?

**Victor**: In terms of performance? I think I performed almost the same as pre pandemic learning. But in terms of the workload, and, and that type of stuff? I'm not sure if it's because I'm in second year, and the difficulty has increased. So, I can't really pinpoint whether it's due to the pandemic, or due to the nature of my programme. But for the most part, this definitely the online component did make it more stressful in terms of moving to a new system, and essentially, you are learning differently.

**Interviewer**: Okay. And so, if classes were in person would have your experience would have been like better? Or would you think it would have mattered?

**Victor**: I think if classes stayed in person, my enjoyment for me would be better than online. However, however, I think, my performance with a taking a hit like it would have not improved.

**Interviewer:** All right. And next question, if you feel comfortable sharing, has this transition to remote learning had an effect on your mental health and you know, positively or negatively?

**Victor:** Yeah, for sure. Certain events during the fall semester did negatively impact my mental health in terms of added stress and anxiety due to technical technological problems and trying to integrate into a new way of learning even though I did take online courses in the summer prior to the fall semester. It was still kind of a challenge.

**Interviewer**: So, since the pandemic like start in general, you moved online classes. Have you felt that your motivation to do well academically has changed at all?

**Victor:** My motivation to do to perform well, academically hasn't changed. But my motivation to put into work to get the result definitely decreased due to online learning.

**Interviewer**: Okay. So the next section is about like your personal background. So, the first question is, what is your ethnic background?

**Victor**: Yeah, I am of Asian descent, specifically Chinese descent.

**Interviewer**: Okay. And your gender identity?

**Victor**: Male

**Interviewer**: And how would you classify your socio economic background?

**Victor**: Um, I guess within the past four months, it would be middle class, upper middle class.

**Interviewer**: Okay.

**Interviewer**: And are you currently employed?

**Victor**: No, no, no.

**Interviewer**: Okay. And so did you receive any type of like government financial assistance this year? And this includes like, OSAP, CERB, the student benefit?

**Victor**: I received both OSAP and emergency student benefit.

**Interviewer**: Okay, and, um, what is your current living situation? So who do you live with?

**Victor**: So I live with both my parents, my mom and my dad, as well as an older brother and his girlfriend.

**Interviewer**: And so in your house, where you live, Do you have access to like a quiet learning space? So this can be like your own? Or like, or a shared space where you do your classes and you study?

**Victor**: Yes, I do have my own room where I could study in. In a mostly quiet area. Yeah.

**Interviewer**: And do you have access to like, adequate technological resources? So this includes like, high speed unlimited Wi-Fi, a laptop, a webcam? Stuff like that?

**Victor**: Yeah, I never had any problems with the technology I have.

**Interviewer**: Okay. And, and like being a member of your household, so what are you required to do? So this is like household duties, errands like babysitting and giving rides stuff like that?

**Victor**: Well, because I am a student, my parents wanted me to focus on studying however, I did have to take care of my own personal laundry, cleaning my own room.

**Interviewer**: All right. And Has anyone Okay, have you or someone like close to you, like in your immediate family? been diagnosed with COVID-19?

**Victor**: No, no, fortunately.

**Interviewer**: Yeah, that's really good.

**Interviewer**: And, again, this is another like, broader question. But are there any circumstances any at all, whether it be your family, any financial or any personal circumstances that you've experienced that have had an effect? On your experience with online learning? This can be a negative effect.

**Victor**: Shall I describe it?

**Interviewer**: Yeah. Yeah.

**Victor**: So um, but then the past five, six months, my dad did get laid off from his job. So he has been having a tough time coping with it, because also, this is pre pandemic, but in January of this year, my grandfather, his father also passed away. So it was hard on him because of that. So it did affect the family quite a bit. Yeah. And also my brother did just Graduate University the April of last year, and he's been jumping in between contract job, so that was kind of stressful finding a permanent position.

**Interviewer**: Okay. I hope your brother finds a position.

**Victor**: And he’s actually getting an interview on Friday. So fingers crossed.

**Interviewer:** Oh, that's good.

**Interviewer**: Okay, so these are pre pandemic questions. And so before school shut down, so what mode of transportation did you use to get to campus? And how long?

**Victor**: So use a combination of local busing as well as my own personal car

**Interviewer**: And how long did it take you to get there?

**Victor**: So car took me around 20 minutes one way, And you think the bus, took The better half of an hour one way?

**Interviewer**: Okay. And how many hours did you spend on campus each week?

**Victor**: Let's say 40.

**Interviewer**: And how did you utilise the campus resources for your academics? So did you use things like the Library Help, academic resources, study spaces, laptop rentals, stuff like that?

**Victor**: Oh, yeah. So besides, you think the study spaces, I did reach out to the RGASC, the academic skill Centre for some writing help as well, as I, I also attended some FSGs as well.

**Interviewer**: so were you employed before the pandemic?

**Victor:** No, no.

**Interviewer:** And okay, so the last section is about UTM as a whole

**Interviewer**: So have you used any of the available resources from for UTM? for support? So this includes things like financial resources, academic support, the Career Centre, IEC, anything like that?

**Victor**: Not that I'm aware of.

**Interviewer**: Okay. And is there a reason why you haven't used them?

**Victor**: so I'm assuming this is a pre pandemic, correct? on like, pre pandemic, and like now as well? Well, regarding pre pandemic, that's because like, it was kind of out of the way, and it should be for this fall semester, as well as summer semester. I didn't really see how they could help my particular situation. And so I'm really busy in general.

**Interviewer**: Yeah. Okay.

**Interviewer**: So do you think, in your personal experience, do you think that your professors are doing enough to be accommodating for you and other students?

**Victor**: Um, for the most part, the professor's transition online relatively well, with an exception, where there was just one professor that did not have every single, every single like, platform set up effectively to deal with a bit of dirt, a lot of hiccups with that. That's another issue that I would say most of the professor's handled as well. But there were a few that were not flexible in terms of technical technological issues or issues that pertain to online learning specifically, or using online resources to film at work or to do work. But for the most part, the professor's have been accommodating in terms of providing extra time if someone had internet issues, or allowing send in their work to the TA via email instead of the paper submission box in case of any technological issue. So for the most part, they handled it pretty well.

**Interviewer**: Okay, that's really good, too. And the final question is, do you think that UTM overall is doing enough to accommodate its students?

**Victor**: Um, that's kind of hard to say, because, in my experience, I didn't really have enough problems for me to warrant any help from the school. However, I do have other people that were struggling either financially, or in terms of like, their current living situation did not accommodate productive learning. So, and the school didn't do enough in terms of providing that space for those students, especially when they paid for those resources in their tuition. So I guess the school could do more and providing an environment for students to learn productively. Yeah.

**Interviewer**: Okay. Yeah, that kind of comes to the end of the interview actually. Alright.

**Interviewer**: I'm gonna stop recording now.

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