

INTRODUCTION: Welcome to another edition of Let's Talk Ed with Professor Chris.

You are requesting it; today we're talking to the students. Stay tuned.

CHRIS O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Welcome to another edition of Let's Talk Ed with Professor Chris.

Today's edition is meet the students, AKA the surface, students trying to find or maintain their balance.

I'm excited today to have two great and amazing students with me, Miss Amy and Miss Elyse of this very beautiful college that we are in today. Beautiful day.

And by the way, this has been by popular demand for Let's Talk Ed With Professor Chris, with people saying you need to talk to students who wanna know what the students are going through, how they feel?

So, first question to you amazing ladies, is... Are you all experiencing, or do you feel like you're experiencing college, or do you feel like you're surviving college?

Amy, what do you think?

AMY: If I had to choose, I think I would say surviving college. Umm, just in the aspect I feel the transition from high school to college is very different than I expected, so I definitely feel that it was way harder than what I was thinking it was going to be.

So, as soon as I came in, just had to learn how to manage a lot of things, and...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Elyse, what do you think?

ELYSE: I would say It's probably like a mix of surviving and experiencing.

Umm, I know towards the beginning when it's when assignments are as demanding, it's more like experiencing because you have more time with your friends and things. But then it becomes more surviving when assignment start to build up.

And I feel like more expected of you. And then also like other things not that aren't school like I might need you outside of school. Umm, just more expectations and that can be...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: That's great. So, I like... I like the fact that we're starting with surviving college because that's the whole idea is, I want to make sure that you all experience college, right?

So, this discussion is really gonna be focused on how do we make sure that everybody inclusive.

I said before that you all kind of representing every student, right? I would think so.

So, as we go through this here, even if it's experiences that your friends are having that you want to share, then we'll do that.

So, the goal is let's see how to make this a college experience.

Amy, If you have to pick five things, I mean you take it one at a time. You have to pick five things that could change your survival skills or mode of college to an experience, what would it be?

AMY: I guess one to begin with... Just do like things that I enjoy.

So, for example, I like to play soccer, but I don't make the time to play soccer because I instead go to the library and just spend the rest of the day at the library.

So, that would be one and another one would be food. I definitely think coming in the food was not what I was hoping like compared to home food, that's a big difference.

And so each time I come I always notice that I eat less and then when I go back home I start eating more and then I can return and eat less. And then I think that's like help me maintain my weight.

So, I I kinda am thankful for that, but at the same time the food.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: So, I'm I'm gonna take... you mentioned two things; One is the food and the reason I paused for food is because the last episode we just did there was student money management. And I was, are you surprised that the what you spend money on the most is food?

AMY: I'm not surprised.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Are you? Do you all eat out a lot?

ELYSE: Umm, it depends.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Okay.

ELYSE: I feel like for me, but I don't Amy, I don't know.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Okay.

AMY: Even back home, we've never been people to eat out a lot, so coming here I don't tend to eat out a lot.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Okay, alright.

So, that's good because that was one of the area that I primarily students spend the most money on eating outside. So, I can see how that could be a challenge, right?

But I'm gonna hold that thought there. Elyse let's let's pick some of your your top two challenges.

ELYSE: Okay. Top two challenges...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Or what can make your college experience better?

ELYSE: I think working out and finding time for that. I'm like, walking to your classes like that helps.

So, you get to do that. Umm. Like, that's the way to work out, but I feel like I don't really have time to intentionally work out.

Umm... However, when it comes to food like Amy was saying, you kind of eat less.

So, that's kind of like anyway, but I'm not just trying to like maintaining weight, I kinda wanna gain muscle. So, it's kind of hard to like balance on like the to be at your prime health, if that makes sense?

That's kind of like a little hard to figure out a schedule for that.

I would say for me too, working on my own personal creative projects like having time for that is kind of hard.

So, then I sort of lose interest in doing that and I might have some like, some freelance projects that some people might want me do, but it's kind of hard to manage...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Okay.

ELYSE: ...the time.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: So, I think I think you're all being a little bit nice or holding back on because really if these are the challenges you are having then you are experiencing college. You're really not surviving.

I'm not trying to put words in your mouth, but if these are what you are going through and again maybe you'll be nice. So, let me open things up a little bit.

Okay, you all already?

Okay, so my goal again, I even wanted to do this here is because of students who usually will come to me and they feel comfortable trusting me and I've had 20-plus years, you know, in college, college experience, and I'm very, very grateful. I'm very, very honored because students do trust that if you come talk to Professor Chris and I will be able to kind of help them out.

So, I'm gonna take the some of their challenges one at the time to see if you all related to them.

The first one is with their professors and their faculty. Do you all think your professors care about you?

AMY: I do. Umm, just for the major that I'm in, I feel like they are come from that caring field, so they tend to really be laid back or, you know, extensions, they'll give it in that aspect.

So, I have mostly had professors who I do feel like they care for me.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Elyse, what do you think?

ELYSE: Umm, I do to a certain extent because umm I do have a new professor.

So, he's he's a little new to the whole like the whole community, the design community.

So, I kind of called him out.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Right. Right. Right. Right. Right.

We're no gonna call out anyone, so yeah.

ELYSE: He's a good professor. It's just we haven't had the time to, like, go over the years because there's professor should be seen and they've been around and you know of them, they know of you. But it's kind of like kind of have to introduce your work and like, he's getting to know everyone's work and relating their face to their work and their work ethic.

And so I feel like with that it's a little bit different, but I feel like there's never been a super close relationship with any of my professors.

But they are very gracious and it comes to life extensions and especially they know that you're, you know, you work hard though. Make sure that you get an extension and all that.

So, I do. That's like they are very good with that.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: How easy is it to get in touch with your professors If you need them?

AMY: Pretty easy. Yeah, I'll send an email, and probably get a reply in like two days.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: I think you all you're doing pretty good, unless you've been very honest with me. Because that's the number challenge for most of the students is they would tell me outright... I don't think my professors care because I can't find it him when I need him, right?

So, you know, if you all have that, that is, that is pretty good. Okay.

Any other challenges before I I put I pull one out of my my hat here?

Let's talk about relationships real quick. Who do you think should be your best friend and who is your best friend?

Is it your professors, is it your roommates, is in your friends? How are you are picking your your friends to build relationships?

AMY: Yeah, to me has been friends and you know to begin with as a person of color and a primarily white institution, it does get hard to create friendships at first or to feel you know that you are a part of the campus.

So, I definitely think you just seek out people who look like you. And then from there you make those friendships and yeah, I think those are... I've never been like close to my roommates to the past or to professors like that. I just think the friends are the ones who kind of stick out with me.

ELYSE: I would say the same thing. Yeah.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Okay.

ELYSE: How she would say how being in primarily white institution you do feel not as connected a lot of times. So, when you do find people of color that you know that are like you and you have similar interests, I feel like then yeah, friends.

Yes, but I have had some good relationships with my roommates.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: So, when we're talking about peer pressure, there's three areas that I look at. There's peer pressure usually comes with drugs, sex and alcohol, right?

And I know you all very good students. Do you have friends or are you pressured into those things?

ELYSE: I feel like personally I have not experienced peer pressure, I mean but you will get invited to a party here to here and there. But, I feel like you kind of know what you do and that and

you're like most of the time they know that... okay, Elyse doesn't do this or that so they're respectful of that, umm but yeah.

AMY: For me, I think it's been there's been a good amount of pressure in the aspect that umm like sometimes it's like you can come almost like the mom of the group and you like kind of wanna take care of them. But as time goes on, it's kind of like, well, why don't you try it with me? Or why don't you do this?

Umm, but there are some aspects of you mentioned like you do know your boundaries too. And, I feel like I know my boundaries too, where I will get to with the peer pressure.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Alright. So, the peer pressure, I know one of the big areas is again relationships, either boyfriends, you know guys, girlfriends... is there peer pressure that you is... are things a little different now or do you feel like you have to be in a relationship.

You know, but what's what's what's, what's the situation like these days in college?

AMY: Umm, like I've... you know, you would want to be in a relationship, but I've never felt like the need to be in one because I feel like ever since I've been little with my parents have always instilled, like ohh it's first your studies and then that like don't ever prioritize like being in a relationship before things that are will get you successful in a way.

So, that was always ingrained and I was just like, I'm good by myself.

And so I've felt in that aspect I've been good.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Elyse?

ELYSE: And I've been like that too.

I recently got into a relationship though, so it's it's, It's interesting, like balancing that.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Right.

ELYSE: Like having that mindset, then also like being in a relationship but then balancing that. So, prioritizing like two different things, I think it's been good. Umm, no peer pressure with that.

Okay, so I feel like it's the main thing is always boundaries with friends and in relationships. You really have to set boundaries or like at least have some.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah. That's good.

I feel like you all are really, honestly very, very good. One, not falling into peer pressure, like I

said, with those three things. When it comes to relationship, though, you don't feel like you have to be in one to kind of go through your college. I think that's good.

Alright, so recently and I just mentioned this in the hallway as we were walking in here and I'm gonna get into stress and depression, and of course, the worst-case scenario, right? Since we have to do that.

You all mentioned that if there's any reason why you feel like you're gonna survive, or you surviving college is because of the workload and stress. Okay. Are you all stressing out? Yeah, to some extent?

AMY: Yeah.

ELYSE: Yeah.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Okay. What do you think will cause that, or at what level do you think stress sets in?

ELYSE: I feel like it's off and on for me bending on like how much is expected for me and the certain time. Kind of like what I was saying in the beginning. How the beginning of the semester or things that are chill.

I'm I'm good, but then when stuff starts piling up and you're trying to figure out, like, how you're gonna do this, but then you also wanna hang out and like, that was actually one of my points was like, managing your your time with school and your time with friends and family. And it's just like you kind of being pulled in all these different ways.

And I think that's just life, you know, but just we're at the point where we have to figure out how to deal with that and manage that.

Umm, being on our own so so it's like the beginning of adulthood.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Right.

ELYSE: So, I feel like it's just learning how to manage everything so you're not stressed all the time because you could let it stress.

Like if you really want to see, you could let that stress you all the time. You could find something to stress about so um, I feel like it's at the point of... 'cause I was listening to someone and they were talking about how it's important to join the journ... enjoy the journey, not just the result, but enjoying the journey. So, I feel like that's where I'm trying to get to... is not stressing while I know I have a lot to do, but just being able to relax in that and not stress, while I know that I have something.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: So, I am guessing Amy for you it's along the same lines of what causes stress?

AMY: So so sort of.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Sort of? Okay, what would cause stress?

AMY: Well, I mean umm I definitely think my second semester like I got like really bad anxiety and it was like just anything with like set me off and it's like kinda wanted to close myself in places or that kind of like that lack of confidence in being or beginning to adult, really set in.

And so, I did deal with like or it's kind of still do... with some anxiety. And then with the stress part, I feel like there's always this like expectation to, you know, wanna do good for your family or as is the first one to be getting this college degree. I feel like I need to do it at the best that I can, so I won't technically fail the whole purpose of coming.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Okay. So, you do raise a good point, Amy... and you do raise a good point that just clicked right now... is with parents, right?

Do you know why you're in college?

AMY: Uh huh.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Why are you college?

AMY: I I think umm. Oh, yeah. I mean like I've...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: And the reason I'm asking that is because, did it get to a point where you feel like I need to go to college because that's the best opportunity that I have. Or are your parents saying you have to go to college?

And again, I'm kind of reflecting back on the very first episode here, where we're trying to justify college or no college and I want to be very, very clear that there was a point in time where you felt college is the next best thing for me to do in my career as the next opportunity or did mom and dad say you're going to college, right? And you didn't have any, any any choice, so.

AMY: Yeah, I think for me I think as soon as my freshman year in high school I was set in with that like I'm gonna go because I need to go.

Umm, my parents, you know, they didn't get their degrees. They're working really hard out here in their jobs. I can see that they're doing the best they can to provide for me.

And then my older siblings, they weren't citizens, so they couldn't umm like, come to college without it being like in-state. So, you know, they didn't do college as well.

And so I was like, Okay, I'm the citizen of the family. I can do this. I see everybody working hard. If I go to college, I could be earning money but earning it in a way that might not be as difficult or as you know... that's....

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Right.

AMY: And so from a like early on, I just had that idea that I need to come to college.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Okay, and umm, I didn't mean to kind of switch off topic, but you know, that was a point that was hit.

But we still talking about stress. Do you all know... well, let's start with how you deal with stress.

Let's start with that very quickly. How do you deal with stress? Like when things pile on, what do you do? Amy.

AMY: Umm, I tend to like to watch a lot of shows, so sometimes I might just need to watch a whole season of a show and act like nothing exists around me. Umm, and then music and just taking a walk or two.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Okay. Elyse?

ELYSE: Yeah, some of those things help too.

But it's like music and all that, but also as a person of faith, though, I feel like definitely praying and like, worshiping. Umm, I know Amy, like in our case, we're roommates, so, we tend to blast worship music and stuff like that. Which helps out a lot and and just like praying a lot, so.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: So, that's good because I didn't hear from anyone of you saying I call my parents when I'm stressed out.

AMY: Oh, I do do that.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Ohh, I go to this person when I'm stressed out.

Well, here on the campus, do you even know who you're supposed to go to when you're stressing out?

ELYSE: Yeah. They always mention the counseling center to me. I feel like, oh, I always know the counseling services are available.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah, anywhere else that you all know you can go to,?

AMY: I mean, I call my parents typically, but on campus, yeah.

We can go to each other. I feel like, but...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Right, right.

AMY: I'll probably go there before anyone else...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah. So, do you all know about a man or a woman called the ombudsman? Have you heard the term, ombuds?

Okay. He's uh. Well, at my campus, there's a guy that I'm hoping to interview, but this is the person that handles conflicts.