

An Open Letter to Teaching Candidates, Residents, Student Teachers, and Interns

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So, this is not how you thought this semester/year was going to go, right? The work you started with students (real honest-to-goodness students in honest-to-goodness classes that YOU were a part of) was suddenly interrupted. The lessons you had planned left undelivered. The questions you have about successfully completing this semester growing as the days drag on. It is unimaginably hard. I get it....and I am sorry. However, we should not despair. In the words of Cesar Chavez, a famous Latino American civil rights activist, "We draw our strength from the very despair in which we have been forced to live. We shall endure." That is what I am asking you to do- to endure. But I would ask you to take that a step further... to endure WITH HOPE. Let's look at the reasons to hope and to endure:

1. The pandemic WILL end. This lonely period of isolation will one day soon come to a close, and you will be able to stand shoulder to shoulder with your friends, family, and peers. There is light at the end of this tunnel. Cling to that hope and endure.
2. All is not lost, and this semester is NOT a wash. You are still taking part in virtual experiences that, while not ideal, are giving you valuable knowledge that will benefit you in your career as a teacher. Who else in the teaching profession can say they were trained to be a teacher during a pandemic? You are gaining insight into the world of online learning that none of your predecessors can claim. Learn and endure.
3. This period of uncertainty is a time when things that are important have become abundantly clear. It has given us all the chance to reevaluate and to learn to not sweat the small stuff. You WILL finish your degree. You WILL become a teacher. You WILL have learned and grown during one of the craziest periods in history. Stand tall and endure.
4. This crisis has given many of you a chance to be a helper. You have helped your instructors figure out all this online stuff. You have helped your peers by commiserating on how difficult these times are, but also about how tough they are and how this too shall pass. Many of you have taken on additional familial responsibilities. Others of you are essential workers, trying to attend virtual courses while bolstering the entire community. Be a helper and endure.

So, to all of you, thank you. Thank you for your understanding of how difficult this is for all of us, university faculty and administrators included. Thank you for showing up, showing out, and proving what it means to be a Demon and a part of the School of Education at NSU. Thank you for showing your professors, your friends, and your families what you are made of. Keep working, keep hoping, and endure.

And as always... Fork 'Em Demons.

Dr. Jordan

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