

EXTRA CREDIT

A SUMMER & WINTER SESSIONS PODCAST

Episode 3 Transcript

00:00:02 Introduction

Welcome to Extra Credit, hosted by the Rutgers University Office of Summer and Winter Sessions. Listen to hear from students as they share their experiences at Rutgers and some tips on how to navigate a condensed semester. Also gain the perspective of professors and learn more about the courses they teach.

00:00:18 Kylie

So, thanks for joining us, Ansha.

00:00:21 Kylie

Can you tell the audience a little bit about yourself, like your major, the year you graduate, stuff like that?

00:00:27 Ansha Kazi

Yeah, sure. So, my name is Ansha Kazi. I'm a double major in history and economics and just this past semester I took on a business administration minor. I graduate this May of 2021. So really looking forward to that.

00:00:48 Kylie

Awesome, so why did you choose your major? Was it like something that you were just good at you went into?

00:00:54 Kylie

Did you, do you have a passion for it, and if so, like how did you discover said passion?

00:01:00 Ansha Kazi

So, it started off as I was very interested in both subjects, so I just sort of decided to study them.

00:01:08 Ansha Kazi

But the two subjects sort of went hand in hand for me in many instances. So in learning about economic theory and models, I was able to apply them to historical events.

00:01:19 Ansha Kazi

So both majors allowed me to make connections with one another in order to better understand certain economic concepts or historical events better.

00:01:29 Ansha Kazi

I also appreciated the varied forms and methods of research and analysis that both majors had helped me learn.

00:01:37 Kylie

Awesome, good for you.

00:01:40 Kylie

So not everyone knows this, but Ansha actually works in the office of Summer-Winter sessions with Rosie and I.

00:01:49 Kylie

Uhm, we haven't been in said office in a while, but she still is affiliated so she's still work for us remotely? Um, so can you tell me a little bit about what you do? And I mean, obviously we know, but tell the audience what you do for us in the office.

00:02:04 Ansha Kazi

Yeah, of course. I'm a student worker for the Summer-Winter office.

00:02:09 Ansha Kazi

So, in the office, what I primarily did was work on a lot of special projects and I was sort of like the first person to talk to other students and faculty members to try to help them and navigate them through whatever their issues was, especially with a lot of like questions and issues concerning summer-winter classes themselves, especially leading up to the sessions.

00:02:31 Ansha Kazi

So once we transition to working remotely, we tried our best to maintain that level of like customer service basically. So, while we're not answering phones and we're not able to get, like, that face to face interactions.

00:02:47 Ansha Kazi

We've tried very hard to be consistently respond- respondent to the students through emails.

00:02:54 Ansha Kazi

I'm trying to get back to them as soon as possible on any like questions they have on like billing or registration or just the classes themselves or just advice on scheduling, so that's been great.

00:03:10 Kylie

I know that you do a lot more because I've asked you to do a lot more for me. I know you guys do like one off projects for people in the office too.

00:03:17 Kylie

I mean, you do handle - I'm so thankful for it too - the customer service because we do get a lot of calls and emails and stuff, and you handle it beautifully.

00:03:27 Kylie

So now that we know all that about what you do, um- What are some useful things that you've learned while working with us and helping us out that you think that you could apply to your internship or that has helped you apply to internships that you've had?

00:03:42 Ansha Kazi

So, the biggest thing is office etiquette, which was the thing that I was probably missing, working virtually for my internship like I really lacked that corporate experience. Get a chance to really experience that work environment...

00:03:59 Ansha Kazi

But I'd already gotten some of that through working with the Office of Summer and Winter, uhm, and just like the daily interactions I had with everybody there and especially like talking to students and everything just like email etiquette as well, being able to get back to everyone in time, being able to multitask.

00:04:19 Ansha Kazi

Uhm, just, I just feel like those are very reliable skills to have already sort of developed through my work as like a student worker and I was able to sort of apply that to my internship and so the transition I feel wasn't as hard as it might have been for other students who had no prior experience at all.

00:04:39 Kylie

Right, well, we're glad we could help you, and that's great that you were able to learn that, especially going to a virtual internship, you know so, glad we could help you.

00:04:51 Kylie

So, speaking of virtual, just, you know, in general, how do you take into virtual learning at Rutgers? Do you like it? Do you not like it? Are you OK with it?

00:05:01 Ansha Kazi

I'll be honest in the beginning it was- it was tough.

00:05:05 Ansha Kazi

It was a very tough transition, uhm, especially because like I mean, I understand like professors tried very hard to maintain like a sense of normality even in this situation, and so they would sort of, uhm, really encourage class discussions more so than in-person classes to try for students, like to get students to engage with one another...

00:05:35 Ansha Kazi

A lot more group projects and breakout rooms and stuff, which can get a bit awkward, especially if everyone is meeting each other for the first time. A lot of people kind of have their cameras off, their mics off, so you kind of have to find ways to break that initial barrier of, like awkwardness for like every class.

00:05:50 Ansha Kazi

But I found that like a good way to work through that is sort of encourage people to slowly at least unmute their mics.

00:05:57 Ansha Kazi

So if someone throws a comment out there in like a group project, you can kind of like hold on to that and be like, "Hey, that was a really good idea. Can you kind of elaborate on it?" or like "hey, I see where we're going with that."

00:06:07 Ansha Kazi

And sort of expand on it or add onto it and then you see that people will naturally start, you know, talking more and more you know. Or you can just sort of forgo going straight to the project and spend a couple minutes just asking them about themselves. Be like, hey, what do you think of this class?

00:06:24 Ansha Kazi

It's kind of weird, you know, sitting like this and just to relate to them and you know, we're all students here, so I feel like it's a little easier to get along with them for sure.

00:06:37 Kylie

Yeah, I feel like when you have face to face interactions, it's like hard to hide. You know, like you had- you're forced in a sense to like smile and talk and you know, like engage.

00:06:48 Kylie

But then you know you have that mute button, you have that camera off button. And I mean I've used it too like in meetings and stuff, 'cause sometimes there's just like too much going on.

00:06:57 Kylie

Like my dog barking, my sister is doing something in the kitchen, but you know, like sometimes there's just like so much going on that, that's like needed, or else I'm distracting. I'm like causing a ruckus. You know, in the meeting or wherever.

00:07:10 Kylie

But I think, um, you know when you can, it's always good to at least at minimum, like show your face. Just show that there's you know, like a person behind the computer.

00:07:22 Kylie

Not a robot. We need that like "I'm not a robot" button, just for like everything you know.

00:07:28 Ansha Kazi

I mean, it's tough. Definitely with like dogs barking around, my mom serving me fruit right in the middle of class or something so.

00:07:34 Ansha Kazi

But like I always try to make a point of just be like comfortable about it. Like if I see someone dog in the background, I'd be like "hey, bring your dog over here right now." Like it's great that we can actually have our pets be part of like meetings and classes like I think that's a great thing so.

00:07:48 Ansha Kazi

Like I always try to make people feel comfortable, unlike a call.

00:07:53 Kylie

I think that's a good strategy. Yeah, yeah. So, what are some- that's how you communicate right with your fellow classmates- but what about communicating with professors?

00:08:00 Kylie

Do you find like they're more open to email or there, you know- Or is it- Is there any like best strategies, best practices that you use just to keep that communication open?

00:08:11 Ansha Kazi

I try to sort of maintain what I did in like a regular semester to get myself introduced to professors and that I would always show up to class a little earlier or stay back like couple minutes at the end of class.

00:08:24 Ansha Kazi

That always kind of gives the professor a couple minutes to talk to the students without having the entire class there without having to worry about, you know getting through lesson itself.

00:08:33 Ansha Kazi

And I found it was kind of easier to talk to them when I logged on to like a Zoom call a couple minutes earlier 'cause no one's really there yet.

00:08:40 Ansha Kazi

So it's just kind of us and we kind of get the opportunity to make some small talk. And because my face is literally like right there, he knows who I am.

00:08:50 Ansha Kazi

Or one thing I noticed was a really good strategy is that you would notice obviously that a lot of students tend to keep their cameras off during live class, which I'm sure is a little difficult for the professor 'cause like it's their camera on versus like a class of like 50 kids, none of whom have their mics or cameras on.

00:09:11 Ansha Kazi

So, being like one of the few people that do turn it on, I find that my face is a lot more familiar. So even if I do email them sometimes or come to office hours, they'll be like, "hey, I know you."

00:09:23 Ansha Kazi

And so, I feel like it's a better way to get them familiar with you.

00:09:28 Kylie

That's true, yeah. I even think too, like I've noticed in meetings and stuff, even if I have like a picture instead of just like that faceless icon that you're just defaulted with.

00:09:39 Kylie

If I put just, you know, like a picture in there whatever, like from my LinkedIn or just you know, like a cute- really like cute Facebook pic or whatever you know like an appropriate, professional headshot.

00:09:49 Kylie

Uhm, I still think that's like better, you know, 'cause it's- it's because sometimes you know like you can't like, sometimes there's too much going on, so I-

00:09:56 Kylie

I think it's less of a distraction, just in general, if my camera is off, but you know, at least I can have, like you know, put a like a face to the blob, you know. So like just nothing. So I think it's hard, but there's definitely some work arounds too.

00:10:14 Ansha Kazi

Just log in a little early once in a while and be like hey, about that last lesson we were talking about.

00:10:19 Ansha Kazi

Just ask him a couple questions. Make him feel like you know, no one's just like dazing off with their cameras off. I feel like really makes a big difference, at least for the professors.

00:10:29 Kylie

Yeah, I mean I think it's hard in the professors too, you know, like no one prepped them for this, you know, and no one prepped the students for it.

00:10:36 Kylie

It just like kind of fell that way, but I mean even a year into it, I think people just need to have that understanding.

00:10:47 Kylie

You know so, but we'll see what happens. We'll see where 2021 takes us. So thanks for hanging out with us. We really appreciate you coming on and, you know, chatting with us about your experience.

00:10:59 Kylie

Uhm, just to tell everyone Ansha accepted a full time offer from her internship and we are so proud and so happy of her.

00:11:09 Ansha Kazi

Yeah, no thank you for having me on. I do miss you guys. You know I miss being in the office like I miss seeing everybody so, I was glad to be able to partake in this.

00:11:21 Kylie

Yeah we missed you and we hope to see you soon. But you know who knows? Uhm, so if not best of luck with your internship, I'm sure you'll be forwarding me emails from the main account.

00:11:34 Kylie

So I'll look forward to those. Yeah, thanks again for coming on.

00:11:40 Outro

Thanks for listening and we'll catch you next time on Extra Credit.