



The Student Perspective: Panel 2

00:08–00:32

Andrew Coletti: Hello and welcome to this episode of The T in Teaching. This episode is a continuation of a series of podcasts focused on the student’s perspective and education. It is no secret that higher education is undergoing drastic changes, so we feel it makes sense to hear from the students actually paying for and experiencing it. This episode marks the second panel of Temple students sharing their experiences and thoughts on college.

00:32–01:01

Andrew Coletti: Stay tuned because after this episode there will be an episode where professors from Temple respond to the students in a separate episode and offer advice and support for both students and faculty alike. Thanks for listening. Please enjoy. Hello and welcome back to this episode of The T in Teaching. With me to discuss the student experience are three undergraduate students in Temple University.

01:02–01:09

Andrew Coletti: Together, they're going to share their expectations and experiences in college, and we're going to see how everything plays out. So, with me, I have

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Nicholas Salerno I'm a legal studies major here at the Fox School of Business.

01:12–01:16

Julia Mckenna: I'm Julia. I am a second year transfer student of STHM.

01:17–01:22

Maya Smith: I'm Maya Smith. I am a junior Major Information Systems major. I have a minor in Spanish.

01:23–01:40

Andrew Coletti: Well, thank you, guys. We have a really, really broad range of majors and programs, and we're going to discuss everything about how you guys got to where you're at. So let's just start with that. Let's just jump right in. Coming into college, I'm sure you had an expectation of what things would be like socially and academically. Let's talk about how that actually lined up.

01:40–01:51

Andrew Coletti: So it sounds like a lot of you towards the end of your college career, that meant that you experienced the effects of COVID. You guys were all from out of state. Tell me a little bit about how that went in forcing informing you to come to Temple University?

01:51–02:09

Nicholas Salerno: Yeah, I like to start off first, I'll say during the high school process, you know, senior year, applying to colleges, speaking to a lot of different, you know, admissions directors coming in. You know, you kind of had a just an idea of what the expectations are. Always a little bit more challenging than high school. You're furthering yourself academically.

02:09–02:30

Nicholas Salerno: You try to fulfill more of a professional route. However, you know, the pandemic came in the swing and, you know, there was a lot of uncertainty during that time and everything. Like, you know, we know the expectations academically. We knew what the expectations were socially. I felt like it. But being a first-generation college student, you know, you kind of have those challenges of, okay, my parents never went to college, okay?

02:30–02:57

Nicholas Salerno: You're kind of almost testing the waters out almost with that transition from high school to college. But then with a pandemic thrown in, moving, made things even more, harder with more undue hardships, but kind of just had to, like, you know, figure things out through the rest. Time was just like with the rest of society and everything, you know, really harped on the resources that were available, either like the academic advisors or some of the admissions director or some of the faculty and everything to try to navigate through that transition and everything.

02:57–03:21

Nicholas Salerno: And after that, I'll say after getting through the pandemic, I'll say the expectation of college kind of went to where it was prior, because at first our first fall semester was totally virtual in the dining halls. Couldn't even leave your dorm rooms practically. And that's like, whoa, this is what the college experience is. So I think it definitely made things a lot more difficult for some students, including myself.

03:21–03:31

Nicholas Salerno: But, you know, just take it one day at a time, being optimistic and everything and eventually in the grip of the pandemic. You know, those expectations of college kind of came into reality and everything.

03:31–03:40

Andrew Coletti: Yeah, I mean, I'm sure that's really confusing, not having family members who've gone to college being the first one, and now there's a pandemic. That's weird. Maya see you nodding along. What about you? Was it similar for you?

03:41–04:10

Maya Smith: Yeah, it was similar for me, like in high school. And the pandemic hit when I was a junior. So that was a little bit different. So I finished up my junior year and they were supposed to have prom and everything that got canceled. So senior year, everything was okay. Like I took online school and I worked mostly during the school program in my high school, and it was really hard to like tour schools and like, really see where exactly where exactly I wanted to go.

04:10–04:28

Maya Smith: But I always knew in the back of my head that I went to choose Temple because I did this architecture program. When I was a freshman. It was like two weeks in the summer and I figured out I didn't like architecture, but I, I found out that I love the campus, I love the diversity, the food options and like just the culture on campus.

04:28–04:30

Maya Smith: And that's what really led me to come here.

04:31–04:42

Andrew Coletti: Yeah, well, that's great to hear. It's like addition by subtraction. You found out you didn't like the one. Maybe you're coming here for, Like everything else, you decided to stay. Julia, how about you? You transferred into temple. That's got to be a little different than what they talked about.

04:43–05:02

Julia Mckenna: Sure. My experience in high school is definitely different. I took a program through my local community college where I got my associate's degree while I was in high school. So basically I was taking

college classes since I was a freshman in high school. I at this point, I feel like school is second nature to me, especially college. It's like a second job almost.

05:03–05:24

Julia Mckenna: But going through community college in high school, it definitely was different socially. I had all the same people in all my classes, even though there would be a few people added. Always of the 13 same kids that I always had and every class when the pandemic struck, everything went online for colleges. So I was basically all online. And I really only got to see those 13 people.

05:24–05:48

Julia Mckenna: Definitely took a toll on my social experience of high school and coming into college. I guess it prepared me for being a little bit more alone. Not to say that that's a bad thing, but it definitely made the transition of being a transfer student harder, considering that I'm coming in. Coming in as a sophomore with junior credits. So I'm taking classes with juniors and upperclassmen who aren't necessarily looking for friends.

05:48–06:08

Julia Mckenna: They're not necessarily looking for people to add to their friend groups. So it definitely made me have to take the first step in most of my social relationships to the point where, you know, I was the one who had to start conversations. And thankfully I'm a social person and I love chatting. So that was fine for me. But, you know, ultimately it didn't hold me back.

06:08–06:24

Andrew Coletti: Well, clearly, none of you have been held back by all the different things that you guys have had to experience the start of college. You guys are all involved in a variety of different things, whether it's student organizations, jobs you guys have held on campus, or just internships and volunteer opportunities. So let's talk about that because that's a big social thing.

06:24–06:40

Andrew Coletti: It's about talking to people, knowing the right people and getting involved. And even though you guys have all had your own difficulties at the start of college, you still managed to get involved. So what was that like, especially maybe as a transfer student coming in, not knowing anybody, being in these upper level classes and kind of having to start the conversation yourself?

06:40–06:41

Andrew Coletti: Julia, you want to start with that?

06:41–07:04

Julia Mckenna: Absolutely. I actually became part of the Spartan Governance Association saga. I found them through a career fair expo, fair where they were looking for an event manager for the club and being an event and entertainment management major. What a great opportunity. So I jumped on that and applied and that's where I am now, my avenue.

07:04–07:40

Maya Smith: So I've been able to join the multiple programs on campus like the Association for Information System, the Fox African-American Business Association, and I'm currently the fund raising community service chair. And it's really interesting to see how people come together when we have like things in common, like your major or like our ethnicity. And yeah, it really helped me like find my footing in in college because sometimes it's hard to find people with like that that look like you and are interested in the same things.

07:40–07:59

Maya Smith: So yeah, it was really hard for me in high school because I felt like I was like the only black student that were like in my classes. So I definitely wanted to come here for the diversity and being a part of

those organizations that they helped me to branch out and meet other people that were also interested in the same thing.

08:00–08:04

Andrew Coletti: Yeah, it sounds like it wasn't terribly hard for you to get involved with those organizations once you found them, is that right?

08:04–08:27

Maya Smith: No. Yeah, I joined the I think I joined AIS. I was like hearing a bunch of stuff, like in my classes. Once I switched my major from engineering technology, I was hearing in my first and my AIS class that I should join areas because it was like a great opportunity to grow your professional development skills. So that's what I was really interested in.

08:27–08:39

Maya Smith: And in the career fair, I met the FAABA table and I was like, Oh, this is really interesting. I love their mission and I really want to be a part of the board and like, continue their success.

08:40–08:51

Andrew Coletti: I think it's interesting that you pointed out the career fair on one end, but you also just referred to a professor or a class getting you involved. Nick, was the case for you as well where you found yourself getting involved from the classes that you were in and the professors?

08:51–09:24

Nicholas Salerno: I have a very similar experience to the other two on the panel here. I'll say like in regards of like organizations on campus, I found Phi Alpha Delta through a mixture of some of my virtual introduction legal course my freshman year. But also I remember coming in to college during the pandemic. There was an overabundance of virtual career fairs and also virtual SPO and Temple Fast for first to kind of sound a little corny and cheesy like, okay, organization, it's different departments on campus collaborating virtually, I would say, okay.

09:24–09:42

Nicholas Salerno: But you know, during a pandemic it was really just sit in your dorm room, watch TV, or really take advantage of what to do versus trying to adapt to the new normalcy. So yeah, so I went to the virtual Fox SPO and I went to the virtual temple fast and career fair, and that's where I learn about Phi Alpha Delta.

09:42–10:08

Nicholas Salerno: And I heard it again. Then I became an active member. Then first, the being online was a little annoying a little bit, but as spring came around 2021, when you know, the university got the green light for going back in the in-person, you know, everybody was slowly trickling back then in person and I had been committed to the organization ever since my freshman year went from be a member Professor Devour mature to now vice president and the experience is also very similar.

10:08–10:29

Nicholas Salerno: Some other organizations I became involved in, such as the Temple Veterans Association, I found out about them also through the career and still in Temple Fest and everything. Then ROTC. I joined prior that since I was prior serves in the Connecticut Guard. And you know, I want to take my military career was set further by ROTC.

10:29–10:44

Andrew Coletti: Okay. Yeah. And you guys have obviously all been involved in a lot of different things outside of school. Let's bring it back to the actual school and the program that you guys are in. And I think it's really interesting what we've already heard. Maya, you were talking about how you came here for a little expo on the architecture program, realized you didn't like architecture.

10:45–11:08

Andrew Coletti: Julia. You were talking about how you got your associate's degree before and now came in with all those credits. So you, we have a bunch of different backgrounds on our approach to the different program. One, talk about how your actual program aligns with what you want to do going forward. This is it the case that you feel like the classes and the professors or whatever your career path that you are going into individually, you feel like it pushes you towards that or is there a little bit of a discrepancy?

11:08–11:29

Nicholas Salerno: I definitely agree it pushes you towards it. Prior to coming to Temple from a lower age, I always had an ambition for politics and law. Law school was something that was always in my head from from a young age. And when I was kind of exploring opportunities, you'll also get a diverse set of schools, you know, with good legal policy programs and everything.

11:29–12:03

Nicholas Salerno: But my cousin, who currently works there, he brought to my attention about the fact school business, you know, being ranked number one with the online MBA program, being frankly highly for their other programs. I'm like, okay, this is definitely a place to be, especially in the very big city with such a very domestic international footprint. So that was some of the main reasons that maybe decided to come to Temple was, you know, the ability to grow and expand internationally in here as well and really learn a lot from the world class professors that we have in, you know, jumping into the legal studies program, I found that, you know, the legal studies program is so

12:03–12:27

Nicholas Salerno: much more unique compared just being a pre law or poli sci because, you know, you learn the business aspect of it. You really learn a lot about business, the umbrella as a whole with legal tied into it and all the professors you know there are all bar credit associate they're all full time attorneys. You know you're getting the up to date best legal knowledge and expertise from these professors which you know the professors are fully dedicated, determined and being a student.

12:27–12:54

Nicholas Salerno: And many of my other legal study students can speak out, know having professors that are driven and teaching and education and driven and what they do in a particular expertise of the law. So it really gets you more motivated, pushing the path. And also, you know, the faculty a very transparent in the fact school business, not just legal still legal studies professor all them where they really, you know, take their time to really build, you know, a road map for students to really succeed.

12:54–13:12

Nicholas Salerno: And also with SPOs too, like some of my other colleagues there spoke about that, you know, the speakers and Fox and other organizations at Temple, they're very passionate and very driven and trying to build that like mentorship mentee program with upperclassmen and also alumni, which helps you to push one step further into that career.

13:12–13:26

Andrew Coletti: Yeah, well, I like everything you said. It sounds like there's a lot of options inside of studies and it sounds like you have a lot of interactions that you might be interested in. But I want to switch to Maya now. You're talking about you came here again just to look at this program and then you don't want the program, but you stay for the school.

13:26–13:30

Andrew Coletti: So now you're at a school, you like everything about it, but now you've got to figure out your major. What was that like?

13:31–13:53

Maya Smith: Yeah. So I mean, into school, I always knew I liked technology and like some type of I was thinking engineering at first after like my freshman year of high school, when I went to Temple for the architecture program, I knew I had to like, pivot. So I was like, okay, maybe I could be a software engineer. And I knew in the back of my head like, I don't really like math or science.

13:53–14:18

Maya Smith: So I started out as an engineering technology major freshman year, and I just wanted to see like how I liked it. And I figured out like really quickly that it wasn't that particular major, wasn't for me. I didn't. I think I really enjoy like a smaller and more intimate class size. And those lecture halls were like super big and it was really hard to like catch up in real time trying to learn all these like coding things.

14:18–14:42

Maya Smith: That's just like, not the way that I learned for me specifically, but so I was asking around my spring semester of sophomore year, I was asking around my friends and my family members. I was like, I don't know, like I really want to switch majors, but like, what would you guys suggest I do? And my friend Stephanie actually told me like she was in the MIS major.

14:42–15:04

Maya Smith: She came in the most major, and she told me that, like, I should try it out. It's it's a lot like software engineering. You do you have a lot of the I.T. background, but you also, like, tie in the business resources with it. And yeah, since like the fall of my sophomore year, I've been at my major and I declared my minor in Spanish.

15:04–15:35

Maya Smith: And I really, enjoy, like, what I'm learning. And I think the professors are really they're really good at helping you figure out what exactly you want to do in the field and pushing you towards like getting those internships and those professional development opportunities. Like even in my first in my class in the spring semester, when I first gotten to like the curriculum, my professor saw me like I would sit in like the first or second row with my friend and she saw me.

15:35–16:00

Maya Smith: She's like, Oh, you're in math, major. How would you feel about being an information technology assistant for one of my classes next month? And I was like, Oh, wow. Like, that was I really wasn't expecting that because I didn't really say anything to her. I didn't like mention that I was interested in that. And she like, saw that I had potential and that really like pushed me to want to learn more about the major and actually be dedicated.

16:00–16:17

Andrew Coletti: Well, I think it's great to hear that you kind of found your way, even though it started architecture that maybe engineering that I asked. And I think you're also not alone to see that faculty took an interest and saw your interest and helped bring it out of you, whether it was just in your studies or in your actual internships.

16:17–16:35

Andrew Coletti: So that that's really awesome to hear. Julia, you mentioned earlier that you would consider yourself kind of like a lifelong learner, a student by trade at this point because you've been in school for so long. How was it coming from a community college and then switching at a temple already with some of these degrees? Did you feel like Temple met the kind of model of learning that you are already adjusted to?

16:35–16:43

Andrew Coletti: Maya talked about how she knew her style of learning. Did Temple feel like they provided that for you? Because at that point you must have already kind of figured out how you learn best, right?

16:44–17:16

Julia Mckenna: I think that Temple has a lot of benefits that obviously Nick and Maya both touched on the learning style here. It does emulate a lot of what I learned in the liberal arts college, the community college that I went to very forward progressive thinking, looking to innovate in every industry that the temple touches, especially for me. I'm in a state, I'm the sport tourism Hospitality Management Program, which is an extension of the Fox School of Business.

17:16–17:41

Julia Mckenna: And I also to speak to the same point that Maya just made of a faculty member reaching out and really pushing her to be the best version of herself. I was also asked to be part of Ada Sigma Delta, which is the Honor Society, basically a student run organization, also honor Society, extension of SAHM. And so that's another way.

17:41–18:13

Julia Mckenna: I think one of my favorite things to think about sometimes when I get down is that great people push you to be great also because they make you feel that you too can achieve greatness, right? That that idea of self-efficacy, that what you believe you can accomplish, you can do. That is something that I love about Temple. The fact that they are constantly encouraging their students to take that next step, to push themselves a little bit further when it comes to whether the school helps me with what I really want to do with my life, I would say absolutely.

18:13–18:41

Julia Mckenna: I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. When I graduated with my liberal arts degree, I wasn't sure. So I was asking my parents similarly to my I was like, I have no idea what I want to do, but I have so much background in entertainment. My sister actually went to the University of the Arts in Center City for her bachelor's in musical theater, and she loved Philadelphia because there's so much art here, there's so much culture here, there's so much self-expression done in the city.

18:41–19:07

Julia Mckenna: And for me, as somebody who wants to go into entertainment management, that's completely beautiful, completely great. I want to be part of that culture. I want to be part of that innovation, bringing people's real life stories to the forefront of people's minds and basically just helping people achieve that flow where you really feel like everything that you're doing is at the perfect level that you're at.

19:08–19:23

Julia Mckenna: You want to feel like you can succeed always, and creating that in entertainment and an experience. I'm exclusively trying to enter the tourism and hospitality industry, and so seeing how people come to Philadelphia to experience something that I really appreciate.

19:23–19:39

Andrew Coletti: I think it's really interesting that you were all able to find something at Temple or just Philadelphia at large that really interest you, interest your career path and really let you kind of lay down your roots and grow a lot. So we've talked about it a little bit before at this point about what people and professors do well in classes.

19:39–19:52

Andrew Coletti: What makes a class better than other ones. Say that to you. But let's talk a little bit more specifically. What do you see a professor or a class or in your program in general that really clicks for you, really works and brings the best out of you?

19:53–20:15

Nicholas Salerno: I would say personally, for me, it's definitely the energy and their character. Like most of the professors that I have throughout my legal studies curriculum and even just some of the professors in the Fox School businesses, when they come to class early and they're very open, a lot of energy of brightens up the room and you see other students who may might have be potentially having a bad day, you know, their faces automatically light up.

20:15–20:52

Nicholas Salerno: And and that's what keeps me motivated and continue going through the curriculum and going through the courses because, you know, as a business student you have to take some hard courses like supply chain. A lot of my fellow foxes will talk about or you know, the statistics 2103 or even risk management and so on, and you're like, Oh, I got to take this course it is in the material, it sounds so bad, but you know, the professors who come in who enjoy teaching their teaching style, then being very transparent, like I harped on earlier, having a great communication, a work ethic, and truly, you know, given their all to what they do with, you know,

20:52–21:05

Nicholas Salerno: what really, I think motivation really keeps everyone's desires going for, you know, with their major and taking those courses and everything. And that's what has been very transformative here for my experience here at Temple and everything.

21:06–21:27

Julia Mckenna: My professors at Temple have been completely wonderful. I feel like I'm swimming in a pool of knowledge and I'm just hoping that I don't drown in deadlines, basically. I mean, of course there's a lot of work. There's a high workload that comes with college courses. Again, for me, that doesn't bother me, but that's because I have experience in it.

21:27–22:02

Julia Mckenna: I think the best teachers that I've had at Temple are the ones who really want to hear from their students and who encourage dialog and encourage conversation between students as well as with the professor. I'm taking two classes with Dr. Lindsay Lee right now and she's completely wonderful. She encourages students to think a little bit, a little bit deeper every single time to sort of question what it would be like as a manager and to put themselves in those shoes, to look at things from a different point of view.

22:02–22:35

Julia Mckenna: And that's something that is so important because ultimately, we're trying to enter the industry. So not only are there teachers that have experience and who have lived the life that you are trying to get to, but they also are giving their advice on things that they themselves haven't even experienced because the world is constantly changing, especially today, as we've talked about with COVID, things change rapidly and you know, here at Temple, we're just so grateful to have those experiences, to have those opportunities, because without the professors to connect us with those, it would be impossible.

22:35–22:56

Julia Mckenna: Or as I already said, it was Professor Lindsay Lee who invited me to the Honor Society of Entertainment Management. And you know that opportunity I'm so grateful for. It's going to set me up to be a manager and to focus on things like job performance and motivation. Two of the things that are hardest to get from students as well.

22:56–23:31

Julia Mckenna: And somehow she manages to do it. So what strategies just to use, just emulating the role models that we that we see at Temple? There are so many ways to be involved here on this campus. Just like Maya said, there's so much diversity. There's somewhere for everybody. And me. I'm Yvette in entertainment

management. I'm not necessarily looking to get into sport business, but I'm the event manager of the Sport Governance Association, so I'm tapping into a part of my skill set that I normally wouldn't have even thought to engage with.

23:31–23:58

Julia Mckenna: I'm so grateful and I want to plug right here that the saga Sport Business Temple Sport Business Conference this year the annual event is on April 5th, 2024, and there will be a bunch of sport professionals in things like WNBA, sports, entrepreneurship, sports media and more. There will be networking opportunities for anybody who's interested in sport business, and it's open to everyone.

23:58–24:13

Andrew Coletti: Great. And that's April 5th saga. Everybody go check it out. But Maya, let's jump to you now. It's thought you've already mentioned that you had a lot of interest in direction from classes and everything like that. What were the professors doing those classes that really gave that big impact?

24:13–24:47

Maya Smith: Yeah, I think professors really like having the energy and the motivation to actually come to class everyday and like tell you something interesting that you've never known before. Their experience in the field, both in the field and in teaching, is what is really interesting to me because a lot of them either still work in the field or work in the field part time and teach part time, or they completely are out of the field and they're just teaching full time.

24:47–25:12

Maya Smith: And I think it's interesting to hear their perspective because they've been in our shoes for a lot of them. A lot of my immediate professors graduated from Temple and they were in Air Force and some of the organizations that I've been, and it really gives me like a roadmap for success. So I know that it's possible to make it to where they are now.

25:12–25:58

Maya Smith: And yeah, what's really inspiring is the fact the way that they tie in current events with like what we're learning now, because it's easy to like really get caught up in, wrapped up in the technicalities and the theoretical things that we'll be experiencing in the workforce. But like really experiencing like for example, like I develop as re like speaking like in this, in this day and age is like so interesting to me and the way I would see my professors like get excited about it and really they like tell us like a new current event that's happening every week.

25:59–26:15

Maya Smith: It it's like super exciting for me and yeah, what else. Yeah I think they, they really, they really champion us like all coming together and, and like, being better for the world.

26:15–26:40

Julie Mckenna: Yeah. I really love the point that you just made. You know, the type of person that comes into the classroom to teach you and how their experience, their role model abilities. When you look up to a professor, I feel like it's so easy to get lost in that professionalism where you want to divulge as much knowledge onto your student as you possibly can, because, of course, that's what they're paying for, right?

26:40–27:09

Julia Mckenna: Mm hmm. But it's so beautiful, I think, here at Temple that there's more to it than that. I mean, when you're looking up to a professor, there is professionalism. There is, you know, understanding, because they've been where you've been and they there's encouragement because they want you to succeed. But they also really keep that part of themselves that's truly human. And that's something that at Temple that is really amazing because everybody here is so different and so bringing themselves into the classroom and showing

how, you know, they're living this life, but your career doesn't make you and they have all these other things going on. All these other interests. You know, there are so many things in our world today and they all kind of collide. And yeah, that's really all I have to say. Andrew Coletti Well, I love to hear it and I like the way you said it. There's more to it, there's more. It's professionalism and responsibility. But it sounds like from everything we've said, there's more to it. It's community and community. You guys are a part of it. You're living it, you seem in it and it seems like everybody's bringing the best. We're trying to bring the best out of each other, and that's just amazing to hear. So, thank you guys so much for joining us on this episode and good luck with everything else you guys have done. Thank you. Thank you for coming to us.

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