

Connecting as a Teacher and a Fellow Student

Florida Atlantic University's Viviana Pezzullo balances her role as PhD candidate and graduate teaching assistant during the transition to virtual instruction. Her story is part of ACUE's #ResilientFaculty series. To learn more, visit acue.org/stories.

[00:00:02] I'm from Italy. I was born and raised in Italy and I graduated from the University of Naples. But I always wanted to pursue a PhD. One year and a half after my graduation. I decided to move to the United States and I became a teaching assistant in Italian and in French.

[00:00:23] And I also TA'ing to Intro to World Lit.

[00:00:28] This is the survey I gave to my students and through the questions about their mood and also more practical questions. As a student myself, I know that right now the most important thing is not to feel alone. When I received one of my students answers saying she was having extreme difficulties with the readings, I contacted her and asked her what I could do to help. And she told me that now online classes are so heavily text based that all students with learning or reading disabilities or just reading difficulties are finding even more challenging to keep up with good work.

[00:01:04] This is why I decided to record audio of myself reading the first chapter of *Create Dangerously*. A big shout out all the other teaching assistants across the country who are dealing with this transition. Because it's hard, it's very hard to find the balance between female students and then being an educator. Many of my colleagues are working very hard right now. I'm very grateful and very supportive of my of my colleagues.