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Fall 2020

Cleidiane Perez LL.M. '21: Reflections on the Fall 2020 Semester

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Cleidiane Perez LL.M. '21

Reflections on the Fall 2020 Semester

This past semester I reflected that our plans were able to change abruptly, and how incredibly we could perform and build our strength under adverse circumstances. This uncommon semester guided us into uncertainty. But here we are. Bravely well done.

What were some of the obstacles you faced in classes and other law activities? Do you feel you got past them satisfactorily?

W&M Law School has a high standard of educational methods. The cold-call and Socratic method at the beginning of the semester was quite intimidating, not just in understanding the questions directed to me, but thinking critically in another language is very hard. Taking classes through Zoom is quite challenging; keeping the enthusiasm and pace requires self-discipline and organization, and it is not easy to improve such skills in a short period of time. So, everything I have done this semester was accomplished by hard work.

Do you feel you were connected with the school and your instructors?

This is my favorite part in saying how W&M has a sense of cooperation between students, school, and instructors. I had some difficulties during the semester in balancing my duties as a mother and a military wife, and to attend to all of the assignments as a law student. Some days, I could not handle all the multitasking, but my teachers were emphatically and solidly with me. The connection between me and my teachers was very efficient at this difficult time. Also, Dean Spencer promoted important virtual meetings to encourage us and keep our enthusiasm during pandemic restriction.

As an LL.M. student, were you able to build a sense of community with your class?

Absolutely. At the beginning of the semester, some American students helped me with advice on how to understand the American educational system and find support on how to improve some abilities. Even the Zoom classes were exceptional; we were able to go into a break room with another student and share legal thoughts. The students are very supportive and impressive in how the LL.M. students are able to seek a law degree in another language.

How did you keep yourself healthy and grounded?

It is very important to keep our minds and bodies healthy. I find my strength with family and friends. When I am out of class, I like to play with my two-year-old daughter, drink a coffee with my friend, play flute, cook new recipes with my family and watch something funny with them.

What are your hopes for the spring semester and beyond?

I hope that we can maintain our resiliency over this difficult time, believing in ourselves, adapting our manners, and never giving up our perspective and educational achievement. We are all together. Be strong.