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Wed. March 18, 2020

At the invitation of Adam Kuykendall of *UMaine Today*, I am keeping a journal of my experiences and observations as a professor during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Already, it's hard to keep track of the days of the week.

Seeing anyone on the street, I instinctively veer toward them, eager for human contact, then stop myself and take a step back. Is six feet of distance enough? Eight? Ten? Anything more than two or three feet feels stand-offish. Passing within a body-width of someone in the grocery store aisle feels slightly dangerous. How different proximity felt last week, when students and faculty were still milling about in the main hall of Center Stevens, only an elbow away.

Three trips to grocery stores last weekend showed the irrationality of panic. A university professor should be able to maintain calm, right? I nobly walked past the aisle of bathroom supplies and bought only the food my family will need . . . for the next three weeks. But really, eight cans of tuna, when we usually have it once every other week? The commodity I wish I could hoard is *coffee*, the lifeblood of the intellectual life. I'm conserving by filling the scoop only 2/3 full, as you might be able to see in this photo. The lockdown will get really serious when my fresh-ground supply runs out and I have to break open the Medaglia d'Oro Instant Espresso Powder.

