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## UMA COVID-19\_News\_Adapting to Change in the College Experience

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# Adapting to Change in the College Experience



When COVID-19 shut down in-person instruction across the University of Maine System this spring, instructors and students quickly adapted. Fortunately, most students and faculty at UMA Rockland had experience with various remote learning options. For the seventh year in a row, U.S. News & World Report selected the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA) in its national ranking of universities offering top online degree programs.

One such local student and business owner who quickly adapted was Ryan Flanders. The switch from in-person to "online in real-time" via Zoom was "not a big issue" said Flanders. He was able to use his basic internet service and his laptop. He had taken a course previously with one of his faculty members, Garrett Vail, and knew his teaching style and had a good relationship with him.

In a recent chat, Flanders was highly complimentary of Vail's ability to generate great discussions over the Zoom technology. "Garrett Vail, in fact all of my faculty, embraced the change with grace," added Flanders. "They put a lot of work into changing their courses."

Flanders, a Social Science major, falls into the non-traditional student category. He is a single parent, and co-owner of Rock City Café, an employee-owned cooperative. While Flanders was adapting to changes in his college courses, he was also homeschooling his daughter and trying to adapt his business model to one that makes sense during a pandemic.

"The tight floor plan at Rock City does not make sense for indoor seating, so we are doing just curbside takeout," added Flanders. "It is the best way to prevent any risk to ourselves or to the general public."

Flanders also noted the important and high level of outreach support he received from the staff at UMA Rockland over the spring who frequently called to check-in, and referred him to other technology and financial resources.

Every fall, spring, and summer the UMA Rockland schedule includes hundreds of course options in four different instructional modalities: in-person, interactive television, videoconference, and fully online. Therefore, the switch this spring for UMA Rockland students was not as jarring as it was for some students at colleges which had never offered such remote options.

UMA Rockland will open its fall term on August 31. Courses will run in all four instructional modalities, giving students choices that can offer the best flexibility to fit into other aspects of life.

For more information and a free academic planning appointment contact them at [umarockland@maine.edu](mailto:umarockland@maine.edu) or call 596-6906. Staff will return to work at the Center next week Monday – Thursday 8:30am – 4:30pm. Calling ahead is encouraged.

SOCIAL SCIENCES UMA ROCKLAND CENTER

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Photo by: UMA Rockland  
Ryan Flanders, college student, parent and business co-owner was among local UMA students who had to adapt to remote learning in the pandemic.



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