

11-20-2022

Kasey Deschler, Oral History Interview, 2022



Eastern Michigan University, Oral Histories

Interview with [REDACTED] conducted via Zoom by EMU undergraduate student Kasey Deschler on November 20, 2022 for You Li's Journalism 313 course.

Transcribed by Kasey Deschler

KD: All right. Today is November 20th, 2022, and I am interviewing [REDACTED]. Would you like to say your first and last name?

[REDACTED] Yeah. I'm [REDACTED] and I'll be interviewing Kasey.

KD: Are we doing this on the same recording?

[REDACTED] I think. I think it's just, yeah, just the one recording.

KD: Okay. Um, so to start on, when did you, I just wanted to get some background information. So what year did you graduate high school from?

[REDACTED] I graduated high school in 2019.

KD: Okay. And then when was your first semester of college?

[REDACTED] My first semester. Um, well, so I did dual enrollment in my senior year of high school, which would have been in, like, the fall of 2018. Mm hmm. But I didn't, technically, if we're talking, like, right out of high school, it would have been fall 2019.

KD: Okay. Did you do any online classes in high school or just those dual enrollment classes?

■ Yeah. So every class that I took for dual enrollment was online. Okay. I took all I think I want to say I took a total of four online classes throughout my senior year.

KD: And that was through a community college?

■: So that was through Eastern.

KD: Oh, okay. Okay. So you live locally here or do they just, I just didn't realize that was an opportunity. So how did you find out about that?

■ So I guess, I'm trying to remember. I think we reached out to Eastern to see if that was an option. And I think I was able to do it because I qualified through my S.A.T..

KD: Was we like your school counselors?

■: Yeah. My counselor, she had helped reach out, and I can't remember who we got in contact with, but we were able to figure it out. And I was able to do two classes per semester at Eastern, and I forgot I did also do two classes at Lansing Community College.

KD: Well, what made you go? What made you find out about that?

■ So that had been an option for everyone at my high school to do this dual enrollment through LCC.

KD: LCC?

Yeah. So that was kind of, like, everyone kind of knew about that being an option. But in terms of Eastern specifically, we had to reach out to Eastern to see if that was a possibility.

KD: Were you the only one in your grade that did that that year that other students joined with you in the plea?

Um.

KD: That you know.

As far as I know, I don't know anyone else who did dual enrollment through Eastern. I know that there were people who did dual enrollment at LCC or another college. But as far as Eastern, as far as I know, I was the only person. But it's possible there were other people.

KD: Right. What high school did you go to?

I went to [REDACTED].

KD: Okay. I drive by the exit on my drive home sometimes. Um, so, um, let me think. What kind drew you to online classes? Did you like, do you go into those dual enrollments, knowing that they were online, like, purposefully?

Yeah, yeah, for sure. I think with dual enrollment it was just convenient to do it online, especially because I live 45 minutes away from Eastern, so to have the opportunity to do it online definitely made it easier, at least during senior year and then after senior year. Doing

online is just, I enjoy online classes. I guess that's the main pull, I guess, to do them. I don't know, I like them. I don't mind them.

KD: What, what makes them, I guess we're kind of stepping forward, it, I was going to start with more background information already going into it. What is, what makes them different from in-person classes? I guess not, no, not what makes them different, but what's more attractive for you?

■ I definitely like the fact that I can work at my own pace. That stuff.

KD: What does that mean for you?

■ So, like, if I have a busy schedule and I have things going on, I can plan ahead, think, okay, I have this to do this day and then that's due and then it's just easier, I guess, that way to kind of manage my time, my schedule with an online class. I do like in-person. I do like interacting with other people. But I think with online, it just makes it simpler, I guess. So I guess if I had a preference, I'd probably choose online over in person, but I don't mind doing both.

KD: And then do you have a preference between asynchronous and synchronous? Like, do you like meeting on Zoom over, Google Meet, whatever it is?

■ I probably would go more for asynchronous. Asynchronous. Is it asynchronous or asynchronous.

KD: I always say it asynchronous. But not everybody.

■: Works. Yeah.

KD; I know what you mean.

■ Yeah. Yeah. I would say probably asynchronous is my most preferred option. I don't mind synchronous, but I would like if I had to pick, I choose asynchronous.

KD; Yeah. What? So going back to your freshman year, that year was when COVID happened in winter semester. Was there any note? Was there a transition? I know that you were primarily in online classes. How many online versus in-person classes were you taking that semester?

■ That semester I was completely online. I had all online classes.

KD: Right. So was there any transition in your classwork at all?

■ The only class I had maybe a transition with was, I was taking a speech class that semester and we were doing, we would do speeches with an audience, but we would record it like, like screen recording with like a PowerPoint and then show, like, we have an audience or whatever. When the pandemic happened, that stuff kind of stopped with having an audience. So we would just have to do something like the PowerPoint. And then it's like, don't worry about an audience because that might not be an option. But that was really the only main transition that I experienced in that, there was basically no major difference.

KD; Right the same. So after that year of your sophomore and junior year, you're a senior now?

■ Mm hmm. Yeah.

KD: How, what percentage of in-person versus online classes do you take a semester or does it vary a lot? Have you been able to find a lot of online classes?

■: Yeah. Yeah, I've been 100% online since the pandemic started. I haven't had any in-person yet.

KD: Wow. Even your higher levels?

■ Yeah. Yeah, it's crazy. I didn't expect that at all, but I've definitely been fortunate to have that option. But yeah. Yeah, pretty much online.

KD: That's, that's really, that's crazy. Like, that's what you want. I'm so happy that you got that opportunity through a public university. Not to sell out the private university cash. Do you think you have noticed a difference between like your 101 classes versus your higher level classes? Like they're both online, but is there a difference? Um, I don't have. Yeah, a general difference that you notice, like in terms of the kind of assignments that are done or practices or are they all different?

■ I would, I would say, I wouldn't say I have noticed a big difference. Um, not anything that sticking out to me anyway. Maybe just more, maybe, if maybe if I had to pick a difference, I'd say, less maybe project based stuff with other people. I've only had a few of those throughout all of my online classes. And if there were ever going to be any you know, I

don't know if they changed that because of the pandemic. Yeah, that's probably the only major difference that I've noticed.

KD: It's like your lower, like the lower level classes would try to do more like collaborative things and the higher level ones or just like be all individual.

■ Yeah. Yeah.

KD: How do you think that you interact with other students? And in your online classes, do you form like, do you talk to them outside of classes, form many friendships?

■ I, I wouldn't say, like, in a class like it's asynchronous where you're just doing like the discussions, those, like those classes, you just have less of an opportunity to form a connection with other people, like a synchronous class. I've talked to other people and I've connected with them, but I wouldn't say form friendships with them in class.

KD: For sure, the connections here, those peer connections are so nice. Yeah. Did you notice a difference between your winter semester of freshman year and then fall 2020 semester? Any difference of confidence in your professors with online teaching? Could you notice maybe which ones were new to it and which ones were seasoned?

■ Yeah, for sure. I think with Fall 2020 there was definitely still some, like, trying to figure out how Canvas worked, how to do certain assignments in a certain way that maybe they weren't used to. So for sure. I think having professors that hadn't done it before, you could definitely see, okay, they're not super experienced with that, but they have an idea of how things work a little bit from the previous semester for sure.

KD: So let me think. Oh. Do you think that your online professors know their students better or worse or kind of the same as for in-person professors?

■ I would argue, I would argue the same. I guess just based off of my in-person experiences before the pandemic, I, like, I hadn't seen a lot of, like, professor-student connection. So I guess I didn't necessarily notice the difference once it switched to online.

KD: Mm hmm.

■ So I would say it's relatively the same.

KD: Yeah. Do you feel that you've developed any skills that in-person learners may not have or any opportunities that they may not have? You've talked a little bit just about the flexible scheduling, but anything besides that?

■ Yeah. I mean, I think being able to navigate different technology, I mean, like Zoom, I had never used Zoom before the pandemic. I think being able to navigate different ways of doing assignments like Zoom or Canvas or anything else, I think that's been really helpful because maybe I wouldn't have done that before. And now having those skills, you can kind of use them maybe in the future. Mm hmm. Yeah, I would say that's probably the major skill that I learned.

KD: For sure. This is just a personal question to you and of your intentions going into college, but do you, like care about you, not care? But let me think of a better word. Hmm. The question I wrote was, Do you care about your relationships with your professors? Are you

really just focused on the content and not care in a negative or positive way either way? But like, you know, some students really go into college wanting to form relationships with professors. Did you have that desire at all? And do you think that it's fulfilled with online classes?

■ I personally didn't have the desire to, like, form a connection with my professors.

KD: As long as they teach good content?

■ Yeah. Yeah, exactly. I think with online, it would be more difficult to do that. Because you're not, I think, especially when it's asynchronous and you don't have that interaction with them like you would if it was synchronous. And you're doing it on Zoom. Mm hmm. But yeah, I definitely am just focused more on, like, doing the work, getting it done.

KD: For sure.

■ Yeah.

KD: And then kind of going off of that. What are some traits for you of a good online professor and then a bad online professor? Like, what are things that I like, I love when classes do this or so annoying when classes do this.

■ Yeah. Um, so some good traits, I would say definitely being able to respond quickly to people. I know a lot of my professors were diligent in making sure that they're responding. I think just because people are kind of, especially in the beginning, trying to figure things out was really nice that they were able to be available to us. Mm hmm. So then on like the

flip-side of that, when they're not available, it gets really complicated. Like, I know I've had experiences with so where they're, like, super available, and somewhere it's like radio silence.

KD: Mm hmm.

■ Oh. What else? Oh. What was the question again?

KD: Yeah. Just traits of a good class, a good course, good professor. And then traits of some that like negative ones. Ones that are not a very good learning experience.

■ Yeah. So. Yeah. So available professors, available, and then a good trait. Yeah, I mean, flex, like I said, flexibility definitely is a good trait I think with an online class just because of, I mean, and really because with anyone who can, you can adjust your schedule however you need to. Yeah. And there maybe a negative, I would say is maybe how, at least for me, I know I've had some difficulty retaining information through an online class that maybe I wouldn't have struggled with in person. I would say that's maybe a negative trait. Mm hmm. Kind of. Sort of seen or realized.

KD: Yeah.

■ Yeah. Those are the ones that kind of come to the top of my head.

KD: Mm hmm. Sounds good. Great answer. Then. Then I just want to talk about, like, support

from both the university and your professors. So, first, with the university, do you feel that as an online student, you are supported with the university? Or is it just kind of you're taking classes? How do you feel?

■ I think it's a little bit of both. I think they definitely were very supportive of, you know, being online and that experience and the difficulties that kind of came with it initially. But at the same time, it's like, I'm just doing the classes, you know? And, like, it wasn't like, oh man, I need to know that they're supporting us, you know, just kind of like, okay, you know, we just do the class. It's okay.

KD: As long as Canvas still works the world around.

■ Yeah, exactly.

KD: And then your professors, especially during the peak times of the pandemic. How are some ways that they supported you guys or did you feel support from them more than than now? Has that changed?

■ Well, definitely in the beginning it was definitely they were a little more lenient with the work. And when you turn things in and if you're having difficulties with whatever, definitely in the beginning. More lenient, I would say. In the last, yeah they probably have gone back to like okay you know, those assignments are due when it's due. So a little more rigid, I guess. If you, if that's the right word, I'd say that's probably fair. I guess. Not as lenient as they were in the beginning, for sure.

KD: First you're going to like, just talk about like a typical, I guess what? Let me restart the

question. What does like a successful Zoom class or work for you? Like a lecture, a group thing. Discussion rooms are what? What are your preferences? How do you like to learn?

■ I do like when we do the, the, the separate discussion rooms. I think it's a nice way for us to interact with each other. I think when we're in the big group, you know, you can interact with everyone, the big group. But when you're in the discussion rooms, it's nice to be able to interact with each other on our own without, like, just, just being able to dig into the material a little bit with each other, but also to get to know each other.

KD: Yeah. What do you guys, like, when you're sent out to breakout rooms? Like what? Like, do you get a question that you're supposed to answer? Like, what does that usually look like?

■ Yeah, it's usually, it will be a question or I had a class where we did a project and we worked through the breakout rooms and then or they'll pose a question. We'll talk for 50 minutes, come back and then talk about it as a big group.

KD: I always like those Zoom classes too. I really haven't had that many online ones, but I like the breakout rooms too. I know that some people complained about them because it's like, Oh, I got to do work. But it's like, I like to talk to you guys. Have you noticed or could you provide EMU with any tips to creating a more successful online curriculum? Or have you been pretty satisfied with what's been offered so far?

■ I feel like I am pretty satisfied. I don't think that there is anything that I've had, like there's nothing I can say I've had major issues with. I would say overall, they have a really good set up in terms of online classes and how they go.

KD: So what do you mean by that?

█ I guess it goes back to like flexibility. I think even like the Canvas set-up. I think Canvas is a really great way to have online classes. I think it really works with the modules, everything.

KD: I like those too.

█ Yeah, yeah.

█ [REDACTED]

█ [REDACTED]

KD: Wow. Wow. Do you have any, any fun hobbies, do you watch YouTube, Twitch?

█ Yeah, I really, I am a big movie watcher. Big TV watcher. I love to read. I haven't done as much reading as much as I would like, but I love to read, listen to music. That's kind of what I preoccupy my time with the most.

KD: For sure, for sure. And then just with that, because it's such an open schedule for you and

your days are, like, you're home a lot. How would you have the self-discipline to okay, I'm going to do this at this time or, describe your self-discipline. How do you get your work done?

■ So I definitely have to, it's, it's a little tricky because I do tend to procrastinate a little bit-

KD: I was going to say, what are your improvements or what are your goals for?

■ Yeah. I would like to find a way to, I think, like in the beginning, I wasn't as bad with procrastination, but it has just kind of steadily gotten worse. So I would like to get better with that because I hate leaving it for last minute, but it just kind of happens that way. But yeah, for sure. Definitely. I think just once I do it, I'm just able to kind of work on it really fast and get it done and then move on and then get the assignment done right.

KD: Yeah, me too, especially seeing deadlines. And, my final question was, I think we've touched on quite a few times, but online school is commonly passed as being really good for flexible, flexible schedules. Like that's like one of its main appeals. Would you agree with that sentiment, with that generalization?

■ Yeah, absolutely, for sure.

KD: In your experience?

■ Yeah, because, I know not everyone feels that way about online classes, but in my experience it's been a positive experience with online for sure.

KD: All right. That is the end of my interview. Thank you very much. Let's get into it.

■ All right. So and for my questions, it's kind of similar, mine's mainly the transition between in-person and online. So when, when did you start at Eastern? When was your first semester?

KD: I started at Eastern in fall of 2020. So we were there, was like half a semester into the pandemic since winter 2020. I was still in high school.

■ did you, before the pandemic, did you have any in-person classes at all that then switched to online? And what were your experiences like with those?

KD: Yeah, so I was all in-person and like I said, I was in high school. I was not taking any online classes. I don't, I had never taken an online class to my memory. Our high school offered quite a few, a lot of like foreign languages. But I just took a lot of AP classes, so everything I needed was in-person. I also dual enrolled. That was all in-person and then some I dual enrollment ended up switching then, I did do, like, a local community college. I'm from Lapeer, Lapeer High School. They switched to online and Zoom and it was a pretty typical Zoom meeting they did. There was one-on-one classes and just general and so they did a lot of just lectures that we would listen to anyways. I remember it being a little bit silly at first because they didn't know how to, like, turn off some things. So we would like to take control of the screen and like just pictures of, like, macaroni that's been in my mind. So it was kind of goofy at first, but it was pretty easy. They were already easy courses, so they were pretty, pretty easy to finish. And then we just took the exam online through campus, so that's how that ended. But then for my high school, I think I was only taking AP classes anyways, but my entire high school decided to maintain or improve for the rest of the semester. So if you

decided to not do any more work, then you would maintain the grade that you already had. And if you were really struggling, then you can continue to do the work and like to attend classes and you would like to do your grade would improve like normal. So I couldn't go down, which was really nice, I'm sure for anyone that needed that. I, like I said, I was taking all AP classes. I did go and they were just switched online. They were just my teachers and then do lectures online. I don't know, super, remember, I mean, I think I wanted to most of them maybe towards like when the AP tests were starting to come, I didn't really go to them anymore. So I'm like, well, I'm going to study on my own. And now I did take all of the exams that year except for one I think I remember. Yeah, I think I checked most. Yeah. So that was that transition. We just went right to improve and maintain for our high school then.

■ Cool. So what, what would you say your experience was like during the transition? Like, would you describe it as an easy transition to online or was it difficult?

KD: For me, being an AP student, I was already pretty checked out. And so I was like, oh, two weeks of school. All right, that's cool. I mean, oh, that's, that's nicer. All right. That's cool. It was not, it wasn't sad. It was just more sad than anything else because I'm like, oh, well, I didn't realize that that last random Thursday was going to be my last day or my last day of high school. And I saw all these people. So then my graduation was all weird and it was just all weird after that. So it was more sad. So I don't know. Yeah, yeah. I didn't really care about that. I didn't care about school, but it just wasn't it. I was already kind of moving on. So it being online and kind of weird, I was like, Wow, I got to sleep in.

■ Yeah. Yeah.

KD: It wasn't a rush because I already had senioritis.

■ Yeah, yeah, that makes sense.

KD: Yeah. I think a lot of people had that same.

■ Yeah.

KD: Yeah. Okay.

■ So how long did you do online schooling for that?

KD: That first semester? Oh, I guess I've done, I've done at least one online class ever since. Just, oh, sometimes. Oh, I guess I've done one at least every semester for sure. They, I'm taking, I'm just taking this semester my first freshman year, first year fall 2020. I was taking all except for one in a speech class and it was really nice. It was in person, it was nice, the only interaction I got because I was in a COVID single. So it was like literally the only time I saw other humans. So I was really nice. And then I think I may have had one in-person one semester on that next one semester, but maybe I didn't. I can't remember. And then ever since, I've just kind of willingly taken them because I. Yeah, I don't mind them either. They're, they're fine. Yeah. So I've not stopped it, but I'm mostly in person now.

■ Well, um. Well, what would you say, what was, was the most difficult part of the transition, and what was the easy part of the transition from in-person to online?

KD: Like I said, there wasn't the, I mean, the most difficult part is, unfortunately, I probably

would have done better on my AP test had I been in-person because I just was not that focused on learning being at home all the time. Like I didn't even have the, the, the, it wasn't difficult at the time. But looking back, you know, I didn't have the transition of like, okay, work mode at school and home mode. I was always in home mode. And so I was just doing fun side projects all day. Like, I like, yeah. Right. And then I crammed and I just did my exams. But, you know, I wasn't really that upset about it at the time because I, you know. There's nothing that kind of black out there, is it? Everyone is just in such a state of shock. Like no one. Just no one knew. No one could have prevented it. So it was like, how can any of us be mad at a time like this? We just got to keep going. Yeah, for sure. And then the easy part was just that my classes got significantly easier. I mean, pass and maintain. Are you kidding me? Like that is. That is awesome. Yeah. Yeah.

■ And then transitioning. So when you were transitioning back to in-person after being online, what would you say was the easiest part and the most difficult part of that experience?

KD: I do. It didn't really feel like a transition. It felt like. I guess it was. You know, we're all wearing masks. So it was. It. Hmm. I don't know. It wasn't, it didn't, it's all but every semester has felt different. Like, this is our first semester back with no masks. What was the question?

■ Yeah. Yeah. So what was what would you say was the easiest part in the most difficult part of transitioning back to in-person? Yeah. Yeah.

KD: Um, I would say the easiest process, I like the is to seeing the same people, you know, twice a week. I like the commitment of going to class. I like the schedule. I think it makes my day. It's like, Oh, I have class at this time, so I have to do work in between. That was just, I, that's

really good for me. And the all online was pretty jarring and like I got my work done. But it's a good thing I wasn't really. What's. What's the word for? Oh. What is going on with me for, like, end of the semester? Like, just done. Mm hmm. Whatever. I can't think of the word. I was still motivated to do work for my freshman year. I could still go, wow, I, I'm in college, I can do work. And they were pretty easy. And so going into, I guess, I don't really remember any difficulties. I like in-person, it, it's been good for me. It's not like homework's due in-person, like every in-person class still uses Canvas to do everything, like, to make announcements, to post things, to turn in things. So it really wasn't a transition as much of an ex, as an extension to online was like with in-person. So that's what I was trying to get at earlier. It wasn't really a transition. It was just like, Oh, this is one more thing to do. I'll go to class. So it's interesting how we've adapted, isn't it? It's nice.

■ Yeah..

KD: For us, adventuresome. Anyways.

■ How, so, my next question is how do you feel? So I guess with you being in high school, maybe you wouldn't know. I don't know if you would maybe notice the difference. But my next question was, how do you feel your professors handled the transition from in-person to online teaching?

KD: They are doing the best they could. Oh, my, my. Doing the best they could. All of my dual enrollment professors, they just continue their lectures online. Um. Yeah, they were. We were all just learning how to, how to do it, and we all kind of felt that. So I was just like, okay, figuring this out together. So I think they, they did, they, they did it. They did the job

that they did. And I, it's the best they could have done. And I don't know if that could have been better. So I'm two thumbs up to all my teachers and professors who does.

■ Um, and then how to, I don't know if you noticed, like how, if online schooling maybe affected your learning like in terms of retaining information or if it affected how you interacted with other people or understanding the material, like if you noticed anything that may be changing online.

KD: I feel like for online classes I have to work a little bit harder because I, because of that, because I have a harder time understanding and retaining and reading on my computer is not fun for me. And I don't always want to print out a bunch of pages. And so yeah, I'm taking one. This online class are going on right now. I feel like I've learned so much just from like reading books and things. And I think that's because I'm reading a lot. Oh, really? But repeat the question again.

■ Um, how did online schooling affect your learning in general?

KD: Right. I don't really know if it's affected my learning, I guess, in the same way for you, honestly. You had mentioned earlier the procrastination. I have probably been through a similar downfall. I think I've always, I've always been a procrastinator since like elementary school. Yeah. And I think that it's just become exceedingly difficult when you see this a lot of 11:59 every single day on Canvas. It's like, there's just always, you know. Yeah. Yeah. So I guess the procrastination more than retaining or anything because I feel like even in-person classes requires a lot of outside, you know, research and that. Yeah. Like you don't get all the information from your in-person lectures anyways. So yeah, kind of similar about um.

Was there anything that you found to be because with online, like a lot of the conversation was, oh, it can be isolating to be online. Did you feel that you were maybe did you experience any feelings of like isolation during the online experience or had learned?

KD: Sure, for sure. And it wasn't. Yeah, it was online classes. And then also just the campus being absolutely shut down like my first year. Like I said, I was in a COVID single, so I was like, I had no room and no suite-mate. I live in that, no one the whole year. Like I was just like maintaining friendships with like my high school friends. Like, that's really what I'm still doing. I really have not made any solid friendships. College and like this is the first year that I am because I joined our newspaper and it's like it's been pretty frustrating. And then my second year I was an R.A. and I met some people, but like, just like things were just so really slow. So not only were the online classes and even the in-person classes, like with masks, I feel like only now without masks are you kind of able to see people's real side and like, you know, actually talking to people in class or even given the opportunity to. So, yeah, definitely very isolating. I don't want to say resentment, but I have a lot of sadness that cause, like, so ready to be so social and then two years of not talking to anyone.

Yeah.

KD: Now I'm finally getting out of it. And all of us graduating next year. Yeah, yeah. Definitely isolating for sure. And like. But it wasn't just the online classes. There was just the greater context of the pandemic. I think that if I did online classes but still did the newspaper that year like that was if that was, you know, then it would have been better. But just like it felt so limiting on campus to, like, I felt like you could only hang out in your room. No. Yeah. Not just online classes, but that definitely didn't help.

■: Yeah, for sure. And then looking back, how would you describe your experience to someone who maybe didn't experience that transition? Like, how would you explain that to someone in the future, how maybe that experience was for you?

KD: What experience?

■: Um, like, I guess if someone asked you in the future, like, oh, what was it like to go from in-person to online? Like, how would you maybe explain that to them? Um.

KD: Yeah, I would say that it would it was a necessary change for the time, like in it's like that, especially doing research just for this project. Like I'm realizing, like we really did need a big push to like incorporate online more into our in-person and online classes. So having like going for online and really learning canvas and like understanding it and then having that be a tool for in-person classes is real you don't think about how great that benefit is until I think about like someone that's a freshman now. Like just starting canvas of their high school wasn't a part of it like that. That's kind of a lot to learn. Yeah, but it's just like a little side thing with your in-person classes, like, oh my gosh. So that experience, I would just say is like, so weird way to learn unnecessary skills of zooming online or just a way, a new way of learning.

■: Yeah, for sure. Yeah. And that was my last question.

KD: Cool. Awesome. All righty. That was the ones that got. All right. Let me stop this recording.