

CHRIS O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Welcome to another edition of Let's Talk Ed with Professor Chris. This actually is Part 2 of talk to the students. We talked to the ladies. Now, we're looking at some gentlemen. Again, remember, our goal is to make sure you experience college and not survive it. So, today with me is Mr. Jerry. How are you doing, sir?

JERRY: I'm doing great.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: I'm, I'm very happy to have you here. I feel like, you know, though, that you are representing all male students since my first interview with the students was two women.

JERRY: OK.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah, yeah. I got a, you should watch that episode. But then people followed up with, "OK, let's talk to some gentlemen, too, to see" because the ladies were so nice about it, you know. I said, "OK," you know, "we'll, we'll get, we'll get some gentlemen to tell us their side of their college experience." So, how are you doing today?

JERRY: I'm doing really good today.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah, all right. All right, that's ...

JERRY: Happy to be here, yeah.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: No, that's great. So, let's get right, right to it. Usually, I want to hear from the students as to what their challenges are first, and then I will share with you some of the challenges that my students have had, and I, I'm gonna ask you to see if you've gone through them.

JERRY: OK.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: So, right now a little bit about yourself. What are you studying?

JERRY: Right now, I'm studying Cybersecurity, right now.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK.

JERRY: Really soon, I'll be graduating in the summer. [Indecipherable] summer. So, by then, I'll, I'll probably pick, be prepared to go and start looking around for a job.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Nice stuff. What made you get into cyber?

JERRY: When I first came to Wake Tech when I graduated high school, because I graduated in 2019, I came in, and I was majoring in Engineering. But really, it's like that first semester ...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: You, you just broke my heart, Jerry. You started in Engineering, and you're like, "No, I'm done with Engineering."

JERRY: I knew you were going to say that. I knew you were going to say that.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah.

JERRY: Yeah, I got into Engineering and was in that Intro to Engineering class and, like, halfway through it, and I was like, "Man," because, like, I think I wanted to do computer science. I wanted to do some sort of, like, animation.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah.

JERRY: But I was, like, I need to get through this. But the math in engineering, it wasn't for me. So, I went to the, the office on, on North Campus, and I was recommended three different, three different majors. I think it was Web Development, Cybersecurity and there was a third one. But Cybersecurity struck my interest. That's why I say ...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: On a serious note, though, you know, I would say when I have my students, they talk about, "Well, I started in Engineering, and I switched somewhere else." I always say, "That is what college is all about." Right? It's, it's supposed to provide you the different options or different tracks. So, I joke about that, but I'm very, very happy that you are actually able to find your track to get into that, and I commend you for your next steps.

So, what are some of your challenges that you have, actually, let me take that back. I'm trying to remember, I'm trying to remember the questions that I asked the ladies, so I'm fair on both sides. Now, the first question I asked them was what do you think about your faculty? Do you think your professors, your instructors, do you think they care about you? You think they just, what?

JERRY: Well ...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah, and I need you to be honest because, you know, my goal is to get this information and talk to the, the people that, you know, to help. So ...

JERRY: Do I think my professors care? I think, I think my professors do care from, like, a professional standpoint. You know what I'm saying?

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK.

JERRY: You know, if you can't, depending on if you're coming to in-person classes or if, if it's online through Microsoft Teams or whatnot, I think that the teachers show that, you know, you, the professional college experience, you know, come to teach the students what they need to know, help them out and everything. So ...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: All right.

JERRY: I think they do care from that standpoint.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. So, when you go to your professor, if, let's say, this morning, you were coming to school, you're, you're not really feeling like I need to come to school. You've got stuff going on. Would you go to your professor to say, "Can you help me out? I'm not, I, I don't feel like coming to school today." That is a no.

JERRY: I, I kinda, I kinda wanna say yes. I kinda wanna say yes, but it, it really depends on the type of the professor, because I've had some really good professors who really understand how the students are feeling. But sometimes, it really just depends on how the professor's feeling that day.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. All right. Have you gone to a counselor?

JERRY: No, sir.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: That means you, you don't have any issues.

JERRY: No, not any issues, not any issues like that.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Do you know, do you know why you would have to go to a counselor? Do you know?

JERRY: I have an, I have an idea. Yeah.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. All right. So, the same thing I told, you know, my first students when I interviewed them, it almost seemed like. and it's OK, it's OK, because I'm getting ready to kind of share with you some of the issues that my students have had. But it almost felt like, you know, "We're, we're good. We, we don't, we don't need that help." But that's good, too. Do you even know where the counselors are on the, on campus? Like, if you had to go to one, you know, where to find one?

JERRY: No, sir. I don't know where the counselors are on North Campus.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: All right. So, give me two of your most challenging things in college right now. What do you think, if, if we were to provide solution for you to make your college life, like, the best?

JERRY: I think my number one thing, I don't, I don't know if I wanna, like, say this is like a, like, issue, but, but, but, but, but it's kind of like ...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Let me rephrase that. Let's talk about ...

JERRY: Yeah.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Let's talk about what can I do to make the college life currently better?

JERRY: Like before, pre-COVID, I was like in classes.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah.

JERRY: You know, because I'm, I was in Engineering then switched to Cybersecurity. And when I switched over to Cybersecurity, my classes were in person, and I was coming to school with them pre-COVID. And then COVID hit, unfortunately, and then everything went online. And then a majority, not all, yeah, a majority of all my classes are online, and they stayed online. You know what I'm saying? And if they're in person, the closest in-person class for me is on the Southern campus. That's like 30 to 40 minutes away from my house. So ...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Time management, are you currently working, and do you have to work and go to school at the same time?

JERRY: No. No, sir. I've been blessed with the opportunity that I don't have to work. I can focus on school for the most part.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: That's good. So, money is no issue. Can I, can I borrow \$20?

JERRY: Is that what you do?

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK.

JERRY: All right, all right.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: No, that's good. OK, time management.

JERRY: Time management.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: You're getting your assignments and homework done all on time?

JERRY: Yes, sir. But yeah, everything gets done on time, but sometimes I have little lapses where I'm like, man, like, I don't feel like doing work, the work right now, but, you know, it's gotta get done eventually. So, you know.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: All right, let's talk about peer pressure. Drugs, alcohol and sex. Here, on this campus, I don't see, and I could be wrong, but I don't see too much of the distraction, like you have to be kind of in an in-crowd. On those three things that I mentioned, do you feel pressured to be involved in any of those?

JERRY: No, I don't feel pressured by any of that. I have my own kind of group of friends. You know what I'm saying? We all kind of make, we all kind of know that what, what we want to do ourselves, you know. You know that drugs, no peer pressure. That's not what we're going for. We're, I'm saying, striving to achieve something that's higher.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: All right. That's good. Let's talk about stress. I'm not even sure you're stressing out.

JERRY: Yeah.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Jerry doesn't know where the counselors are, so I'm not even sure, but are you stressing out?

JERRY: Not at the moment, no. But, but there, there's definitely times I'm definitely stressing out when it comes to school.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Right. What, what causes that? What causes that stress, though?

JERRY: I think what causes stress the most for me is, I would say, it, it kind of, I kind of bring upon myself most of the time. You know what I'm saying? Like procrastination.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK.

JERRY: And then now I got this and that to do, or I run into an issue with, like, a technology problem. And then I got this to do.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: But you've got a very good support base like a family that, you know, helping you try and make sure that you go to school and everything is, everything is OK.

JERRY: Yeah.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: All right. That's good. Yeah. How much money do you spend on food?

JERRY: I tried, I tried to, I tried to, you know what I'm saying, keep it to a minimum. You know, I, I do pick up food during the week, but for the most part, I try to keep it to a minimum.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. What do you spend money on the most? Probably food?

JERRY: Probably food and gas.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK.

JERRY: Since gas has gone up.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. Got it. OK, so, so in one of the interviews ...

JERRY: Yeah, and subscriptions like, like Netflix or stuff like that.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Jerry, you're watching movies? How many movies are you watching a week? How many, how many movies do you watch in a week?

JERRY: I don't like watching movies. I like watching TV series.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. But no, that's good because we're talking about time management and balance. I always want students to know that, you know. That's, I was actually gonna ask you what you're doing for fun, right? Besides the, the books. We did touch on time management. Try and get your homework done, Jerry. Let's get our work done, and then we're about it. Looks like pretty much balanced. You have the time to do schoolwork. You did say you're not working to, to go to school, so that's, that's good.

But so, so far stress goes, again, you know, stress is a very big one for me that I'm trying to address, and that's why I've talked to the counselors and then everybody that could help with that. I'm very happy that you're not stressing, but I do kind of wanna go back into that a little bit. Do you know friends that are stressing and what might be causing them to stress out?

JERRY: A lot of my friends, they kinda live out of town.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK.

JERRY: But if they do deal with stress, it's probably the amount of schoolwork that they gotta do, or what, or what, they gotta make deadlines to get, get it in on time. Stuff like that relating to that.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. Are you, are you pressured, do you feel pressured to be in a relationship?

JERRY: No, sir.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK.

JERRY: No, sir.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK.

JERRY: No, I feel, yeah, I feel comfortable with myself.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah. How, how's, how's, how's the girlfriend doing?

JERRY: No, there's no girlfriend right now. No, sir.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. And that will come. That will come. So, Jerry, this, you know, this is almost very similar to the first interview that I had. I feel like you're doing good. I do, definitely. I don't want this interview to be the end, the end of it. The whole goal of this podcast, you know, Let's Talk Ed with Professor Chris, is to find out where students are having issues and challenges. And I promise, I will go talk to anybody.

JERRY: Anybody?

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Anybody. Seriously, I will. I will talk to anybody. Talking about anybody, do you know who the, the president of the college is?

JERRY: The president?

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah. That's a quiz.

JERRY: I'll be, I'll be lying if I said I did.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Which is not, OK, so again, the reason I say that is I will get an opportunity to talk to the president, and if there was anything from the students, you know, for me to ask him, what would you ask the president? What would you ask the president right now if he were, he were to walk in here? What's one thing that you would ask him?

JERRY: I'd probably discuss with him what I just discussed with you about the online classes.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. OK, all right.

JERRY: Yeah.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Yeah. So, let's go back to the online classes. You know, you talked about that. That seems to be kind of your biggest, your biggest issue. What can be done for the online classes to be much more easier for you, to make it smooth for you?

JERRY: I don't know if I could say make it easier, but I know a lot of, I know, it's not, my online classes aren't bad. I don't wanna make it seem like the online class, the online class experience is, like, horrible or anything. It's actually pretty good. You know, a lot of these classes you can sign up for that are online, you can sign up for it online without a Microsoft Teams instruction or with it. I know, like, like when registration opened up recently, I signed up for a class with Microsoft Teams and know the teacher can schedule meetings, like, in a certain part of the day, and we can talk about starting things. Ad that part is nice because, you know, I can't, you know, I've been in class, I've been, I went to school where I'm in class, in-person classes like all the time, and then, all of a sudden, it's online. You got, you kind of got to teach yourself certain things. You have no choice. But it's not bad, but I kind of wish that some classes were in person because, you know, sometimes I feel like I learn better with hands on.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Right. But that's good. So, I'm gonna be closing up pretty, pretty soon here. Actually, one that I forgot was to talk about trust a little bit. You know, I did ask about whether you think your faculty or your professors do care. What about trust? Do you trust, obviously, you don't go to the counselors, but that's not a matter of trust, it's a matter of not needing them.

JERRY: Yeah.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: But if it comes to trust, you have to have somebody within the system and the within the college to actually go to.

JERRY: Right.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Is, is there somebody that you think you trust enough to, to go to if you had an issue?

JERRY: Sure. Student Success Coach Mike Eure. He's helped me out with a lot of different things, connections with other people.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. So, I'm actually happy you mentioned that because I probably should interview a student success coach as well to kind of see what they do and how they

can help students out. So, that's a good point because some, some do go to the counselors. Do you know what an ombudsman is?

JERRY: I actually just learned about that recently.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: You did?

JERRY: If it hasn't changed, is it Jerry Nuesell?

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Right, right. But do you know, you know what he does?

JERRY: I have an idea what he does, a very vague idea.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: A vague idea, OK.

JERRY: A very vague idea.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: So, again, for you and for all the students that are listening here, I do kinda wanna put in a plug for that interview I just did that will be airing very soon. But the ombudsman deals with conflicts, right? And I hope it doesn't happen, but you're gonna run into issues where, if you have something with your professor, right, that's where you go to.

I just had Student Conduct. It's another outlet or office as well for you to go to, but, you know, it's all, it's all recorded. I want students to kind of keep watching this year, but the goal is to make sure students know where to go to, you know, with the needs and all that stuff.

All right, so yeah, talking about trust. You mentioned your go-to person if, you know, you need somebody is a success coach. So, I definitely need to put that in mind and then [indecipherable] them. So, so, as far as stress goes, it leads to depression and it leads to a worst-case scenario. For those instances, by the way, do you have any friends that you've seen gone along those lines in terms of stress, getting depressed?

JERRY: Yeah, for sure.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: OK. OK, all right. But you, you're good?

JERRY: Yeah. I'm solid right now.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Thank God for that. I appreciate, I appreciate that. All right, so you didn't have anything for me to ask the president, so I probably don't need to interview the president. That's OK. My last question, again, before we wrap up, is what would make your college experience better?

JERRY: That, that's kind of a hard question for me personally, but ...

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Well, that means everything is good.

JERRY: Yeah. Yeah, I'm not, what could make my college experience better?

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: I want you to experience college. I want you graduating from college, not saying, "Boy, let me tell you about that college. It was like a war zone." You see, I don't want that. So, what can, what can I do or what do you think will make it better? Maybe it's already good?

JERRY: Yeah, it's all, it's already good right now. The school system Wake Tech has in place, you know, everything is actually pretty good, pretty nice.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: Sounds good. All right, there we go, another edition of meet the students. We'll keep interviewing students. Stay tuned. Thank you, Jerry, for coming in today. If you think about something that you didn't share with me, please let me know. I will call you back in here to interview you.

JERRY: No problem.

O'RIORDAN-ADJAH: But again, remember, Let's Talk Ed with Professor Chris, our goal, again, is to make sure you have the ultimate college experience and not survive it. Thank you.