

# The Adventure Begins!

## My first semester experience

Eduarda Stein Christ

### A little bit about me...

This is my first time writing a newsletter, so let me introduce myself to you before I start:

Hello everyone!

My name is Eduarda Stein Christ, I am 20 years old, born in Brazil, and I have just finished my first semester as a freshman majoring in Biochemistry at Texas Lutheran University, located in Seguin, Texas!

I am one of the ten new girls from the International Women Leaders Program that have started studying in the US in 2021, and the first IWL student at TLU, which is a great honor, and I am loving it already!

My church is the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil, and my



**A photo of me in front of one of the beautiful trees at my campus!**

**Photo by me**

community is located in the state of Espirito Santo (which literally means "Holy Spirit" if you translate to English! Cool, right?).

So much has already happened with me in these last four months, and I am about to share some with you in this newsletter. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did!

## How the pandemic has affected me so far

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I got admitted as an IWL student back in June 2020, when the Covid-19 issue had freshly started. My answer already got delayed because of it - usually, I would have it around April. At that moment, the US frontiers were close for anyone from Brazil, and I could not make my visa in time to start studying in August 2020. I had to wait a year, but it was worth it - a good opportunity to rest and spend time with my family after three hectic years of high school. Finally, in July 2021, my visa was ready, and since then my journey as an international student has started.



**First day of class photo!**  
**Photo by me**

In my opinion, TLU has done a great job handling the pandemic, and I can say that my first-semester experience was almost what would be considered normal, including the circumstances. In-person classes, especially laboratories (which is crucial), a good number of students and staff vaccinated, obligatory use of masks and social distance when possible, weekly emails with information about new cases and quarantine status. I felt comfortable and safe in all environments, and I am glad that the semester went by without any major problems.

I pray that in 2022 everything will go back to normal as soon as possible!



## The College Experience

Being a college student in the US is just like the movies! But at the same time, it can be so different. One thing I can say for sure is: living it is definitely much more fun than just watching it!

I have already met a lot of people, and all of them - students, professors, staff, everyone! - are so cool and considerate. They have helped me in many situations in class and outside of it, and I can just be grateful for all the help they have been providing me!

I have also met pastors and people who work at ELCA for the Southwestern Texas Synod, and they also have been a huge blessing in my life. I am looking forward to meeting with them more, and even maybe participating in some church events in the future!

Between chemistry and biology classes, which were fun and difficult sometimes also, I participated in events and activities like watching movies and decorating ornaments for Christmas, and clubs as well, such as the Mexican American Student Association (MASA) and the chemistry club, Pi Rho, in which I am the treasurer during the 2021-2022 period!



**Fun experiments at the chemistry lab**  
Photo by me



**Watching my first Football game in person!**  
Photo by me

## The Future

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This semester was a lot of fun and it already made me feel like I am a whole different person now from the beginning. And this is only my first year! I can not even imagine who I will be when this ends. But, this is still far away. For the next semester, I hope I will meet more people, especially outside of my classes, and continue to be active in clubs and events, as well as do good in my classes. I got a campus job as a math grader, which I am excited to start, and I also hope I will be able to do summer research in May after the semester ends. I am sure the Spring semester will be even more special than this one, and I am so thankful for being able to live this opportunity!

See you in the next newsletter!

### Prayer Box

Please, pray for:

- For the health of my family, friends, community and country, as well as for people at TLU, the IWL and ELCA community and the United States, as we are still fighting the Covid-19 virus;
- For a good next semester, with things going back to normal day by day;
- For my safety and academic success.



The beautiful TLU chapel  
Photo by me



## Some more photos!

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Pi Rho officers  
Photo by Ethan Stokes



Me and my roommate Angela!



A beautiful evening at campus  
Photo by me