

Dear Madam/sir,

This is Maryanne, once again I would like to sincerely express my gratitude for the far all of you great people have brought me. I am very thankful and blessed to have friends like you in my life. I recently celebrated my 20th birthday on 24th December and I am glad to be alive and healthy thanks to God.

The last semester did not end as planned due to students strike. It was actually brought about by students' politics that led to the complete closure of the university until further notice. The strike was very serious in that the university old Administration building was burnt down, some students were beaten and their belongings destroyed. The worst part of it was that even some lost their lives, so we had no choice but to return home. This was unexpected because I was psychologically prepared to finish the first semester and was looking forward to start a second one.

At home, I decided to go back to work at the salon so as to earn some up keep money and put my time into good use. Since December is a festive season, salons are quite busy because most women prefer to look good and smart. Usually at this time I really work long, around 13 hours, meaning starting around 9 AM and return home at 11 PM.

The strike was finally called off on January and we were to resume immediately. The journey to Nairobi was good and safe, thanks to God. At this time the city was quite cold compared to Mombasa, the bus station was full with people since the government had banned night travelling due security and safety purposes. Travelling from Mombasa to Nairobi takes a bit long, so I reached Nairobi at around 7:30 PM and was picked up by Eunice (a friend).

The next morning was a Sunday, I woke up very early and went to my younger sisters' former school in Thika (a nearby town where my sister used to study), it is an hour drive from our University. I was to clear her from that school and pick up some of her boarding stuffs since she was transferring to another school. Unfortunately, I did not succeed since there was no teacher at the school to assist me. I did not have option than to return to my university on the evening though disappointed.

On Monday our classes resumed, though most of my classmates were not yet present. After the classes I went to look for hostel and luckily, I found one through the help of a friend and I decided to move in immediately.

The room is quite nice, I am to pay 13,000 Ksh (approx. 110 euro) every semester of which bed, electricity water and mattress are provided. I stay alone for the time being until I find a roommate. With time I was able to buy things for the house and foodstuff.

We had to study for a month and do our end semester exams. The month went fast since most of my time I spent either studying or doing class assignments and also in group discussion with friends. Examination time came, it normally takes two weeks to do all the exams which I did. The exams were a bit challenging but I did my best and hope for the best results.

After the exams, we were given a one-week break before resuming again to classes, I decided to remain in university and not travelling to Mombasa. This was an opportunity to spend some time with friends and to relax a bit.

The second semester classes began on 19 February. Eunice helped me to pay fees and register all the units online, the units were 7 compared to last semester where we had 8. Most of my classes begin at 9 AM and end at around 4 PM.

We studied for two weeks then again there was strike. This time not students rather the lectures who demanded more salary from the government. This made our learning cut short again. I stayed in school for three weeks in hopes that this strike might be called off, but it was not. I had no choice but to return home (Mombasa).

It's my great hope that the strike will end soon so that we resume our studies.

Once again, I offer my sincerest gratitude to all of you, may almighty God continue to bless you abundantly.

Yours Faithfully,

Maryanne Amondi