

Dear Colleagues,

We write with some brief updates; please don't hesitate to send us your questions.

1) Update on Summer 2020: Summer Course Content Areas

In a remarkable display of our community's generosity of spirit, over 60 educators from across campus offered one or more possible courses in response to our call for summer session course ideas. We are continually thankful for the creativity and commitment that draw us together to address the challenges we face.

The Summer Session Working Group and Curriculum Committee are currently working in conjunction with the dean to finalize a limited slate of courses that will meet the very diverse needs of different student constituencies. Our priority is to provide students with a selection of courses that represents the breadth of our liberal arts curriculum, balancing offerings across divisions and levels. This is a tall order when we can offer no more than eight courses. A final round of selection will take place over the next week so that we can announce specific courses by Friday, May 1. At this point, the potential courses likely will be drawn from these academic areas: anthropology; computer science; economics; English; general literary studies; gender, women's and sexuality studies; history; philosophy; physics; political science; psychology; religious studies; sociology; and theatre and dance.

2) Fall 2020 Options: The Research Phase

We are reviewing a preliminary set of models for the academic experience this fall, taking into account many different internal and external considerations. The Academic Continuity group has broken out into smaller research groups to review each of our dozen-plus potential models through a particular lens, such as impact on the student experience, impact on health and safety, and impact on faculty and staff workload/career trajectory.

These research groups will discuss their specific areas among themselves for the next several days, with the goal of providing input at our next scheduled meeting on Wednesday, April 29. At that time, we'll review the models and the groups' feedback on them, with a goal of scaling the list of models down to a small handful of options to investigate in more depth. We look forward to creating opportunities for feedback from divisions and departments as we prepare options and recommendations for President Kington.

3) Reviewing Cut/Close/Balance Deadline

We are fielding comments from some colleagues about the Cut/Close/Balance deadline and have created a sub-group of representatives from the faculty, the Registrar's Office and ITS to examine current conditions and needs.

4) Next Academic Continuity Message

We will plan to communicate again on Thursday, April 30. The Academic Continuity group will meet next as a whole group on Wednesday, April 29.

We continue to be grateful to you all for your commitment and dedication to our students and your hard work in continuing to teach and work under these challenging circumstances. We hope you are able to find some time for respite and recharging as we near the end of the semester.

With admiration,

Anne F. Harris, Dean of the College
Todd Armstrong, Chair of the Faculty