Dear Princeton Undergraduate Students,

We’ve all had a very tumultuous week, as the news about COVID-19 changes moment by moment. We appreciate your patience as we’ve worked diligently and carefully to make decisions and arrangements to address the impact of this international public health crisis on our campus. This unprecedented situation forces us to guide campus behavior by making tough calls on a daily basis, which must then be refined as we gather more information each hour from public health officials.

We write to refine our guidance now. We realize this is not how you want to conduct your Princeton semester. We know you’re heartbroken at the prospect of leaving your friends, professors, and other campus colleagues. And we know this is not how you expected to study and participate in campus life at Princeton. We’re so very sorry the coronavirus has proliferated and changed everyone’s lives so dramatically, for now.

But our number one goal during this crisis is to ensure the health and safety of our students and community. We know that these policies will cause serious disruptions. We’ll continue to work with you and our faculty and staff to mitigate the impact of these necessary public health decisions.

We ask that you read this message closely; that you adhere to the guidelines outlined in this letter; and that you work with us to safeguard our collective health.

This guidance is based on the best public health information we have today. We will continue to update the community in real time when and if this guidance changes, given how rapidly this situation evolves.

Most importantly, all students who are able to must return home and stay home for the rest of the semester. University settings like Princeton present unique challenges during a pandemic, because of the density of students living and studying in close quarters. Large, highly concentrated numbers of students living on campus will increase the chance of rapid transmission of the coronavirus. Furthermore, our capacity to quarantine those who are sick and those who have been exposed is extremely limited.
The more students who leave campus, the more we can decrease the potential health risk to the larger community. The more students who leave, the easier it will be to care for those who may become ill and to manage the eventual impact of this virus.

We know that, for a variety of reasons, some students cannot return home. As always, we will work with these students to ensure they can remain on campus with our support. As President Eisgruber said in his message on Monday, “Princeton University has always been a community that cares for one another, and we will need that spirit now more than ever.”

Returning home represents a vital gesture of care for those who can’t leave campus. We appreciate your generosity and your understanding as you support your fellow students and other more vulnerable members of the campus community.

Guidelines for Remaining on Campus

Public health officials tell us that it’s crucial to reduce density on campus. We must take steps to ensure that those who are able to leave campus will do so.

Unless you meet one of the criteria listed below, you must leave campus and stay home for the rest of the semester. If you are currently off campus participating in University-sponsored study abroad programs, you may not return to campus unless you meet one of these stated criteria.

We will ensure that students can meet their academic requirements remotely. Students who must remain living on campus will also receive instruction online. On-campus social activities and interactions will be severely limited as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of the disease.

You are permitted to remain living on campus until the semester ends only if you meet one or more of these criteria. You are:

✓ A senior who must conduct lab or other Princeton-based research on campus that’s required for your senior thesis;
✓ A student who faces housing insecurity (homelessness or a precarious living situation);
✓ A student who faces financial insecurity;
✓ A student previously certified “independent for the purposes of financial aid”;
✓ An athlete still in competition and required to be on campus;
✓ Currently residing in “family housing.”
➢ An international student may fall into any of the categories above. Other criteria for international students include those:
  ✓ Who have immigration, travel, and/or visa restrictions;
  ✓ Whose home is in a country currently designed at a Warning Levels 2 & 3 and USDOS Levels 3 & 4 for COVID-19.
  ✓ Whose home is in an area with extremely limited internet connectivity.

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If you meet one of these criteria, you must register to stay on campus to ensure that you have the necessary support and accommodations during this period. Please use the form on this website. If you are not registered, your prox access will be deactivated by March 19th. We’re taking these steps so that we have a clear picture of who remains on campus.

**Leaving campus**

We realize that for those of you leaving campus, the next few days will be distressing and fraught. As you make your arrangements, try to pack in ways that will allow you to leave campus yourself, rather than requiring family members to assist you. Our goal remains to limit the number of people on campus.

We hope everyone who is able can leave by March 19th. We realize you may have logistical questions about packing or storing your belongings; we will post updated information on the student FAQ tomorrow.

**Academic accommodations**

All classes, lectures, seminars, labs, and precepts will move to virtual instruction beginning Monday, March 23, and remain virtual through the end of Spring 2020, including exams. We realize that some of your coursework will be significantly hampered by this teaching format. We’ll help your instructors accommodate this shift in the best possible way. As we continue remote instruction, we’ll guarantee that you’ll be able to complete your Princeton academic work for the spring semester.

The Office of the Dean of the College is actively considering how to manage the unexpected disruption of this semester. We’re studying a variety of strategies that might alleviate the stress for students and faculty, including P/D/F options for the whole semester; re-weighting midterm examinations (which we know have in some cases been interrupted); and other policy adjustments. If you are completing junior independent work this semester, we’ll help your department and your instructors assess how you’ll be able to finish.

We just this morning urged faculty administering midterm exams to be flexible as we confront this crisis. We asked them, if possible, to

- Administer the midterm exam online, using Blackboard or Canvas;
- Allow students to pick up the exam and then take it elsewhere to finish and return it, under the auspices of the Honor Code;
- Re-weight the mid-term examination in their grading rubric, to acknowledge student stress and confusion.

We understand students’ concerns about how your academic work will be evaluated under these circumstances. The Office of the Dean of the College will explore with our faculty
colleagues measures to mitigate your grading concerns, which we do appreciate and with which we certainly empathize.

The campus is confronting an enormous disruption. Please bear with us as we assess the best and most equitable way to move forward, and know that we have your academic interests and the integrity of your Princeton degree front of mind. Watch the FAQs for more.

Academic enrollment services for next fall, such as sophomore A.B. concentration declaration and fall semester course selection, will continue online as scheduled. Room Draw will also proceed as planned. As always, instructions will be communicated via your Princeton email.

We understand that some classes—dance classes, rehearsals, performances, labs, experiential courses, and service courses—won’t transfer easily to digital formats. We’ll be working closely with faculty to substitute for these in-person experiences as much as possible. Please give us time to coordinate and work through these challenges, especially during spring break week. We also understand that many of you will have questions about accessing remote instruction and technology.

We will post more information shortly on the Coronavirus at Princeton site under the student FAQ section.

Financial accommodations

Travel

Scholarships grants for University-aided students include allowances to cover their travel home at the end of each year. If you already booked round-trip travel for return in May, and face challenges re-booking the flight or other financial challenges related to travel home, the University will be prepared to assist. Students on aid will each receive a $150 credit to their student accounts to help with the expense of moving out.

Reimbursement for room and board charges

The Provost’s Office and the Office of Finance and Treasury will arrange pro-rated reimbursements of room and board charges for the period during which you are not on campus. Credits for room and board will have no impact on financial aid packages. We’ll send information as soon as possible about the process through which these refunds will be handled.

Student employment
We are considering accommodations for students who hold spring term campus jobs and who expected to continue receiving wages from their employment. Please bear with us as we assess how best to provide these resources.

**Emergency funds**

If students leaving campus face financial hardships that aren’t compensated by the room and board refund, you can apply to the Office of the Vice President for Campus Life, which is able to provide limited assistance to high financial need students who are suffering severe hardships. If you would like to be considered for this emergency funding, please submit the this form.

**International students**

International students who meet the criteria for remaining on campus will not have to return home. If you’re an international undergraduate student, you will receive a separate communication from the Davis International Center addressing travel concerns and other important information.

General inquiries can be sent to puvisa@princeton.edu or please reach out to your assigned international student advisor to discuss your particular situation.

**Life on campus for those who remain**

**Dining**

To promote social distancing, meals will be available from campus serveries to box up and take back to your dorm room or to eat on site. Whether or not you are on a meal plan, if you must remain on campus, these meals will be available to you at no charge.

- The Whitman dining hall will be open for brunch (10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.) and dinner (5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.).
- All undergraduate students living on campus will use their PUID and sign in to access the dining hall.
- For additional details, please see https://dining.princeton.edu/.

All eating clubs and co-ops will be closed. If you are a member of a club or a co-op, you will be able to eat meals from the serveries on campus.

**Events**

All student organization events will be canceled, postponed, or held remotely. Other campus events will also most likely be cancelled or postponed, including events sponsored by the University, departments, or other units.
No final decisions have been made at this time regarding Commencement or Reunions. Given the uncertain nature of this health crisis, we believe it’s premature to cancel those plans based on the information currently available. The decision to hold or cancel these important events will be made based on the best public health advice possible, and once made, we’ll inform the community.

**Virtual community**

Facilitated by the Office of Wintersession and Campus Engagement (OWCE), this page [winter.princeton.edu/virtual](http://winter.princeton.edu/virtual) contains resources for Princeton students to reduce social isolation and encourage connections while many on-campus opportunities are suspended due to COVID-19 precautions.

The page will be updated frequently with details about additional virtual activities. Contact Leanna Jahnke or Judy Jarvis in the OWCE to learn how to organize a virtual event.

**Hours of operation**

Dillon Gym, University Health Services, and campus libraries will be open with revised schedules and social distancing protocols in place. Information about extended or reduced hours for these and other facilities is available on this [website](http://winter.princeton.edu/virtual).

**Seeking support**

This crisis is provoking wide-spread anxiety. You may be experiencing stress related to concerns for yourself, your family, or your friends. Please remember the many campus resources available to support you.

Your residential college staff are always available to answer your questions and to talk through your distress. College staff are currently working on ways to stay connected to their students remotely and will follow up with communications in the respective colleges.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) can be reached at (609) 258-3141. [Virtual CPS](http://winter.princeton.edu/virtual) counseling sessions are being offered as well. Do reach out to our campus life centers, to the Office of Religious Life, and to other campus support resources.

**And finally . . .**

We truly do understand how devastating this guidance will be for all of you. This is not how we expected Spring 2020 would unfold.
We want to thank the many students who have reached out to share their concerns and express their support for working together to keep us all as safe and healthy as possible.

We especially want to acknowledge that important leadership that Chitra Parikh, USG President, and Noah Apthorpe, GSG President, have shown in keeping us informed about student concerns.

We deeply appreciate the work of so many faculty, staff, and students who have responded thoughtfully to this public health emergency.

Please don’t hesitate to reach out to us if you have questions. And look frequently at the online FAQs that we’ll post shortly and update continuously.

We’re concerned and we care. We’re so sorry that this unexpected global event has disrupted your semester here at Princeton. But we’re all in this together. Stay healthy, stay strong.

With our concern and best wishes,

Jill Dolan, Dean of the College
W. Rochelle Calhoun, Vice President for Campus Life