



Dear Johns Hopkins Students, Faculty, and Staff:

The rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic has called upon Johns Hopkins—and each of you—to take a series of unprecedented steps to safeguard our community and ensure that we can accomplish our mission to care for those we serve, including the most vulnerable among us. Today, we have arrived at another critical juncture in our response, and we have made the difficult but necessary decision to suspend all in-person classes through the end of the spring 2020 semester.

Community transmission of the virus is accelerating nationally and within our region, and we continue to be guided by public health authorities and infectious disease and epidemiological experts at Johns Hopkins who are now urging all of us to observe stricter social distancing protocols for a longer period of time. We make this decision mindful of the toll caused by the uncertainty around this pandemic, including the uncertainty that comes with not knowing whether or when we might reconvene in person as a university community this semester.

With the safety of our community foremost in mind, we are taking the following steps:

- All in-person classes will continue as remote/virtual instruction for the rest of the semester, with remote/virtual instruction beginning in full no later than March 23 (for undergraduates, following spring break).
- All in-person, university events are suspended pending further notice, including tours, admissions events, and alumni events.
- The Provost's Office and deans will convene remotely divisional academic bodies to consider and make necessary adjustments to exams, grading, course credit, and degree requirements, among other academic impacts.
- Online and virtual teaching support is being made available for all faculty, lecturers, and TAs.
- The May 2020 universitywide Commencement exercises will be held virtually (all in-person Commencement ceremonies are cancelled). We will work with our divisions and students on plans to gather our graduates together for virtual ceremonies this May and in-person celebrations at a later date. More information regarding virtual universitywide Commencement activities will be made available to students and families later this week.
- University meetings and work activities, even those deemed essential, must be conducted remotely whenever possible and no in-person meetings or activities may be held with more than 10 people (with limited exceptions, such as select types of clinical care).
- Nonessential university-sponsored international and domestic travel is suspended.

- We are winding down all but critical research, transitioning to telework for as much of our work force as possible, and providing emergency COVID-19 leave for our employees, as set forth in the email messages over the last several days.

Outlined below, please find details about these actions. Please also check the [Hub's COVID-19 information page](#) for further updates.

We recognize the very real challenges these steps pose for members of our community. In particular, we know that the decision to end in-person activities for the full semester comes as a great disappointment to many, as it does to us. We deeply regret that we will not be able to celebrate in person with our graduating students, their families, and friends at Commencement. Gathering as a community to honor our graduates is a cherished tradition, but in true Hopkins fashion, we will summon our optimism and creativity to mark that important milestone in a way that expresses the great joy and pride we take in the accomplishments of our extraordinary students.

As we face this profound challenge together, we are so proud of our students, faculty, and staff—among them our indefatigable frontline caregivers and researchers—who have demonstrated unflagging devotion to furthering our mission to educate, discover, and serve. You exemplify the best of this institution, and in these most trying times, we are truly grateful for all you have done to help us forge a path forward as a community. Though we will not be together in person for the immediate future, we continue to draw inspiration and strength from this remarkable community no matter where we may find ourselves in the world.

You will continue to hear from us and university leadership over the course of this unfolding situation. Please take care and treat yourselves and one another with compassion and thoughtfulness.

Sincerely,

Ronald J. Daniels
President

Sunil Kumar
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

For undergraduates:

- The suspension of in-person academic work includes labs, research for credit, practicums, and similar experiences.
- Residential undergraduate students have been required to leave campus and provided support to do so. Only those who have been granted specific exceptions have been

allowed to stay. Any student who was granted an exception but is now able to leave campus should contact Student Affairs for support in arranging departure from campus.

- Student Affairs will establish a procedure for residential students to return to campus to collect their belongings or move them into storage. Please look for an email detailing the collection procedure before coming on campus.
- We strongly encourage our undergraduates who live off campus to seriously consider returning to their permanent residence, in consultation with their families, given the limited on-campus support capacity at JHU.
- JHU will provide credit for the balance of the semester for university housing and dining contracts.
- On-campus student workers will be paid through at least April 12, and we are exploring a further extension for those students with demonstrated need, as well as opportunities to continue campus employment remotely.

We are especially mindful of the impact of this decision on graduating seniors, and we are working on plans to commemorate their time at Hopkins and to help prepare for life after college. Our Life Design Lab stands ready to provide career services remotely, as well as assistance to those applying to graduate school or planning to work at Hopkins after graduation. We will hold a virtual Commencement this spring, and offer opportunities to walk at future graduation ceremonies, and are already in discussion with student leaders about gathering the class together this fall as a part of our traditional Young Alumni Weekend.

More information about Life Design Lab services and plans for Commencement will be communicated later this week.

For graduate students:

- Plans for clinical and lab-based programs, practicums, or the equivalent will be determined by the divisions, but all in-person courses will be delivered virtually/remotely through the end of the spring semester.
- Graduate students with teaching responsibilities are expected to continue their duties via remote instruction for the remainder of the semester.
- The salary or stipend support and benefits currently offered to PhD students and postdoctoral fellows will not be interrupted as they work remotely. Trainees who are currently receiving support from research grants will continue to receive it and must carry out their duties remotely.
- The Office of International Services has confirmed that the visa status of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows will not be adversely affected by performing their position functions remotely during this period of social distancing.

For researchers:

- The [guidance issued to JHU researchers](#) on March 14 remains in effect until further notice.
- In accordance with that guidance, we are ramping down research to essential levels.
- Critical research related to COVID-19 will continue.
- For evolving guidance and resources, visit the [Research Preparedness website](#).

For staff:

- The [guidance issued to JHU employees](#) on March 12 remains in effect until further notice.
- The university campuses remain open on a limited basis for work that is deemed essential or critical to continuity of operations, including clinical health care.
- Employee guidance requires telework for all jobs that can be performed remotely.
- Employees who cannot work remotely but whose duties are not presently critical to the university's limited operations will remain on a paid, "on-call" status with the understanding that as the university's needs change, they may be required to perform other duties.
- Employees whose work is critical and cannot be performed remotely should follow strict social distancing and other measures to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Buildings and facilities:

- Most university buildings remain open at this time; however, we anticipate enacting further building restrictions given the diminished level of activity on campus and the necessity to protect capacity among our security workforce during the COVID-19 situation, while maintaining needed access for university operations.
- The Milton S. Eisenhower Library is closed to Johns Hopkins and public users until further notice.
- All recreation facilities and fields are closed until further notice.

Events and gatherings:

- All in-person university-sponsored events are suspended until further notice (including tours, admissions events, alumni events, etc.).
- All university meetings and activities, including those deemed essential, should be held virtually/remotely (except required clinical care and/or necessary research, including COVID-19 research, as previously outlined); no meetings/activities may be held with more than 10 people (with limited exceptions, such as select types of clinical care).

Travel:

- All nonessential university-sponsored travel (both international and domestic) is suspended.
- Essential travel may include time-critical research, clinical care delivery, and/or clinical trials, as determined by the dean or his/her designee.
- University-sponsored travel includes all travel funded by the university or its sponsors, including discretionary funds, and all travel sponsored or organized by student organizations, regardless of the funding source.
- All personal travel is strongly discouraged – international and domestic – and may be prohibited for certain employees (e.g., the healthcare workforce).