



Dear Members of the Johns Hopkins Community:

We write today to update you on our preparations for the gradual resumption of Johns Hopkins' in-person activities as we face together the ongoing challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic.

No final decisions have been made at this time, and the health and safety of our community will remain paramount as we embark on a consultative process to consider our next steps. But we have set for ourselves the goal of resuming suspended in-person educational, clinical, and research activities to the greatest extent possible as soon as it is prudent.

Given the uncertainties about the course of the pandemic, we are considering a range of options, and we are planning a multiphased return during the coming months and into the fall, consistent with government regulations.

Accomplishing this aim is a significant challenge for an institution as multifaceted and interdependent as ours, and the broader local and national environment will be a critical factor in our progress. We know that life on our campuses will not return exactly as it was before COVID-19. Yet we are also certain that this community will bring ingenuity, innovation, and determination to answering the question of how to return swiftly and safely, adapting to our new normal in a way that preserves the essence of the Johns Hopkins experience.

With this in mind, we want to lay out the planning process ahead, share the principles guiding our decision making, and ask for your ideas and insights as we undertake this effort together.

### **Consultation and Planning**

The university recently launched a planning task force that includes workgroups to examine research; undergraduate and graduate academic programs; student life, including campus residential life; and health and safety. Another set of workgroups is focusing on broad operational issues, such as returning employees to campus, safe use of university facilities, and monitoring the public health situation to inform university decisions.

These workgroups are composed of interdisciplinary teams from across the university, with faculty, staff, and students contributing their time and talent to help assess our needs and formulate guidelines in each area, working in close coordination with each of the schools. A parallel and consistent effort is underway at the School of Medicine regarding how and when to increase non-COVID-19 and nonemergency clinical activities across our Johns Hopkins Medicine facilities.

Throughout the planning process, we will be seeking your participation. We have created [a dedicated website](#) where you can find additional information about the workgroup membership and activities and [submit your ideas and feedback](#). We appreciate the creativity and input of the many faculty, staff, students, and trainees who have already participated in activities to generate ideas and shape options for fall. In addition, this week we are launching a student advisory committee so that graduate and undergraduate students can provide input and contribute to developing solutions. We encourage all interested students to [apply online](#). We also will host online forums with university and divisional leaders over the next several weeks.

The aim of this process is to produce draft guidelines which will set out key parameters for our operations over the course of the pandemic. Each school, department, and program will then use these guidelines to develop local plans and protocols for carrying out our research and educational activities going forward.

Draft guidelines will be posted online for comment throughout the rest of May, and then presented to the deans, faculty governance bodies, and university leaders no later than June. Specific timelines for resuming various activities will depend on not only the relaxation of local, state, and federal restrictions but also the conditions on our campuses and the advice of our public health experts. We expect that the guidelines for resumption of research will be the first to emerge followed by those related to academic programs and student life.

### **Guiding Principles**

As always, a task of this magnitude must be informed by a set of clearly articulated principles and shared values. We welcome your feedback and perspective on those we've identified as our essential starting point in this endeavor:

- **We will fulfill our mission and meet our standard of excellence.** The core mission of JHU remains unchanged, even in a changed environment. We are committed to maintaining our standard of excellence in all the forms that our instruction, research, and other activities may take, including in-person, virtual, or hybrid modalities. Our efforts will focus on allowing our students and faculty to pursue their personal and professional aims and will encompass not only classroom and research activity but also other critical components of campus life, including support services, campus traditions, and co-curricular experiences.
- **The health and safety of our community is paramount.** Protecting our learners, faculty, and staff is the starting point for each decision. When and how we resume our in-person activities in the physical spaces that animate university life will be dependent on the arc of the pandemic and the best public health practices available to mitigate its impacts, from social distancing and personal protective equipment, to effective testing, contact tracing, and adequate quarantine facilities.
- **Science, evidence, and pragmatism will guide our decisions.** Our plans for resuming campus activities will rest on guidance from public health authorities and the best available data and scientific information. We will be bold in developing options for

resumption of all clinical, research, education, and service activities, but also clear-eyed about the trajectory of the pandemic and the effectiveness and practicality of mitigation efforts across our large, complex community.

- **We will be flexible and innovative in the face of evolving circumstances.** We will embrace fully the challenge and opportunity of exploring new ways to continue our mission as the circumstances evolve. The path of this pandemic is not linear; indeed, it will require us to be flexible for quite some time. So we will prepare for multiple scenarios and be innovative in providing a robust and dynamic campus experience that plays to our community's greatest strengths—scholarly focus, insatiable curiosity, and a drive to turn ideas into impact—in whatever form those academic encounters occur.
- **We will provide inclusive and equitable solutions.** Students, faculty, and staff from every part of the university will be integral to shaping and implementing our plans to reflect the full range of our community's needs and interests. The approach we take will be thoughtful and attentive to the disparate impacts of the pandemic on members of our community.
- **We will heed our responsibility to ensure the university's financial strength and stability.** The success of our response to this pandemic will have lasting effects on the university, and we must be mindful to make decisions that not only help us weather the present crisis but also position us for sustained institutional excellence.

The challenge ahead of us will require our utmost imagination and adaptability, as well as patience with and compassion for each other. We have no doubt that we will, yet again, forge a path forward that not only sets a high bar but ensures that all of us clear it together.

We are truly grateful to each of you for helping us navigate this important moment for Johns Hopkins.

Sincerely,

Ronald J. Daniels  
President

Sunil Kumar  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs