

November 2, 2020

Dear Peabody students:

As the university continues its planning process for the spring semester, I write to you today with the latest news on our related plans for Peabody. As always, our plans are driven first and foremost by considerations for the health and safety of our community; shaped by consultation with Johns Hopkins' world-class public health and medical experts, with reference to best practices that have proven successful among JHU and Peabody peer institutions; and informed by careful monitoring of metrics related to the spread of COVID-19 in our area and around the country.

While we are hopeful that the plans outlined below will materialize as envisioned, a **final determination about whether public health conditions will allow us to safely carry out our plans will be made in early January, if not sooner**. Until then, we will continue with careful planning under the full knowledge that plans are subject to change. And we will continue to keep you informed with additional details in the weeks to come.

We know that many of you are eager to return to campus, particularly for your lessons and other applied areas of your studies as performing artists. With that in mind, we are planning a hybrid semester that offers as much in-person instruction as is feasible, while continuing the remote experience across various areas of instruction, and for those unable to return to campus.

The success of our return-to-campus plan depends on the communitywide understanding that safety is a shared responsibility. Many of you have demonstrated that commitment to one another's safety through your actions and agreement with the [student social compact](#) this fall. With a university-wide social compact expected for spring alongside a robust COVID-19 testing program, I am confident that every member of the

Peabody community will do their part to keep each other safe and healthy as we move forward.

Academics & Tuition

The core of the in-person experience for spring will focus on performance-related activities and include applied lessons, chamber music and other ensembles, and technique courses, with strict adherence to distancing and room density protocols, and to the extent that individual faculty circumstances safely allow. Most academic courses will remain in a remote format in order to limit larger gatherings and minimize density on campus; all students, whether on campus or not, will take these courses remotely.

All Peabody Conservatory students in all programs, both undergraduate and graduate, are invited to return to campus under this hybrid plan for the spring semester. Students who either choose to remain at home or for whom traveling to Peabody is not possible can continue to pursue a completely remote program.

With this return to campus, [tuition](#) will adhere to the originally published 2020-21 rates for the spring semester. At the same time, recognizing that many students and families have struggled with the financial impacts of the pandemic, which led to our decision to provide a one-time reduction in tuition for the fall semester as part of a package of assistance, we are committed to continuing to invest in enhanced [financial aid](#) and additional support where needed.

Due to public health concerns associated with travel, the [academic calendar](#) will be modified. As at Homewood, classes will start on January 25 as originally planned, but the week-long Spring Break will be replaced with five break days interspersed throughout the second half of the semester. Audition Week will take place as planned (February 14-19); large ensemble and chamber music activities will continue throughout Audition Week and current students who have returned to campus will be expected to remain on campus. Registration for spring classes will take place November 13-20.

The courses will appear in SIS approximately five days in advance; however, an earlier draft of the course schedule will be available on the [Registrar's website](#).

International Students

Unfortunately, SEVP/DHS has not yet established guidelines for international students for the spring 2021 semester. We are working closely with the Office of International Services and will update international students as soon as possible. If SEVP issues a continuation of their fall 2020 guidance, *new* international students can enter the U.S. to pursue their program as long as the program is not 100% online and the student is able to take a course load that is not 100% online. New students must take at least one in-person course for spring 2021. Assuming SEVP extends the fall guidance to spring 2021, *continuing* students would be able to enter or remain in the United States enrolled in a hybrid format or take a fully online course load.

Many countries still have travel restrictions and/or suspended consulate activity, which may limit the ability of international students to travel to the U.S. As with the fall, we will continue to provide the highest quality experience remotely for those unable to be on campus and our faculty and staff are ready to support you in every way possible should you need or elect to pursue your program completely online. International students with questions should contact the JHU Office of International Students at 667-208-7001, or at ois@jhu.edu.

Housing & Dining

In order to safely welcome students back to campus life and enhance everyone's ability to observe social distancing guidelines, all student residential rooms will be single-occupancy for the spring semester, with limited and controlled sharing of bathroom facilities.

Freshmen will receive priority for on-campus housing, and sophomores are released from the residency requirement. Sophomores with concerns about securing off-campus housing should be in touch with [Student Affairs](#).

Peabody's dining plan for the spring is focused on a grab-and-go model for students living in Peabody housing.

In addition, appropriate spaces are being identified and set aside for isolation and quarantine protocols should those become necessary.

Health & Safety Protocols

We will continue to require strict adherence to proven public safety protocols including masking, physical distancing, and handwashing. For instrument-specific guidance around studio lessons and ensemble classes, please read the Conservatory's detailed return-to-campus guidance for applied instruction at peabody.jhu.edu/campusguidance. These protocols have been developed with input from the university's leading health experts to ensure the safety of our community.

In addition, the University will be significantly expanding its current COVID-19 testing program. Testing will be available to all, and required of many, on a weekly basis beginning in January, with the potential to increase or expand required testing based on real-time positivity rates, participation rates, and public health conditions in Maryland and D.C.

Testing protocols at Peabody will include the collection and testing of saliva samples on Peabody's Mt. Vernon campus as follows:

- Those who are experiencing COVID symptoms or who may have been exposed to someone with the COVID virus should call the Johns Hopkins COVID Call Center (833-546-7546).
- Twice weekly mandatory testing of all undergraduates living on and off campus.

- Once-weekly mandatory testing for all graduate students in Baltimore, and for faculty and staff who are working on campus or participating in or directly supporting in-person on-campus classes, or who are otherwise student-facing.
- Peabody may also designate for required testing any faculty and staff who are deemed to have a heightened risk of exposure.
- Optional, free testing will be available on a weekly basis for all asymptomatic affiliates who are on campus.
- Testing will also be available and/or required for our contract workers, vendors, and necessary visitors.

Rigorous adherence to this testing schedule and cooperation with contact tracing will be required and is crucial to our ability to make sure the spread of COVID in our community is known and limited. *More information and detailed guidelines for testing will be available in December, including test collection locations on all campuses and instructions for how to make testing appointments and receive test results.*

Daily health monitoring using [ProDensity](#) will continue to be required for those on campus. Please note that [influenza vaccination](#) is also required for all affiliates who will be on campus, starting November 20.

Face coverings will be required indoors and outdoors, without exception. In those instructional situations where the Conservatory's commitment to quality education makes masking impossible, alternative protective measures will be in place. Signage will reinforce the need to remain physically distant from each other, and no gatherings of more than 10 people will be allowed. You may see safety ambassadors on campus; their job is to provide information on our health and safety measures and ensure adherence to established health protocols.

With the guidance of JHU public health professionals, we are ensuring that common areas and teaching spaces are cleaned and disinfected appropriately with time between scheduled activities for rooms to rest. The [practice room reservation system](#) introduced this fall will continue to be in place for individual practice and for small, masked chamber groups.

Non-essential travel outside of the greater Baltimore area is strongly discouraged for students at any time. Any essential or emergency travel must be registered with Student Affairs so students can receive support for appropriate self-quarantine and testing upon return to Baltimore/campus. Depending on the circumstances of travel, additional testing and quarantine may be required.

Moving Forward

We will continue to work out the details of our plans and are committed to keeping you informed and answering your many questions in the weeks ahead. Your feedback is critical to our planning efforts. Your input through our [online feedback form](#) and your participation in upcoming town halls will provide valuable input alongside expert guidance and key data as we shape the spring semester.

Above all, I am grateful for and inspired by the commitment each of you has made to Peabody, as together we have navigated this very unusual fall semester. It has not been without its challenges, but there is much to be proud of in the work you have done, the teaching and learning that has transpired, and the art you have created – and even more to look forward to as we plan with optimism to return to campus in the spring.

Sincerely,

Fred Bronstein
Dean