

COVID Updates DMH

Friday March 27, 2020

Dear DMH family,

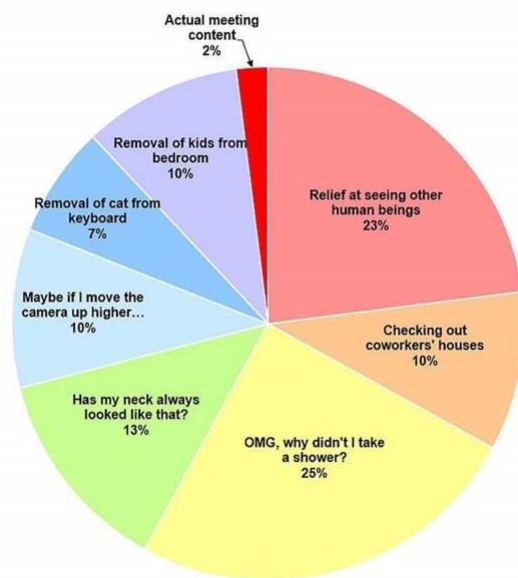
Happy Friday! We have all made it through our first week of 4th term, which is a huge accomplishment, although I know it wasn't easy. I have heard many stories of successful zoom class sessions, lunch gatherings, dissertation defenses, and group meetings. I have also seen amazing backgrounds that show places people have visited, family, pets, or aspirational living spaces. It has been fun to see personalities highlighted as we all become zoom experts. Unfortunately, have also learned new words like "zoombombing" and have had to disseminate tools to prevent this in the future.

I am very impressed with the energy and work that you have each brought to the table this week (the many tables actually: kitchen table, dining room, office,...) as students getting a handle on your new courses this term, as faculty teaching in a new format or planning your research transitions, and as staff keeping things running and implementing necessary changes. You are all amazing, and I know it has not been easy. We all continue to feel anxious, sad, and sometimes overwhelmed. I personally haven't figured out yet how to best allocate time across regular work, covid-related response work, home-school management, social and family time, checking in on others, and exercise. But I am trying to practice self-care. If you are struggling with similar challenges, you are not alone. I hope you are each working on ways to manage your own challenges, leaning on each other, and using the resources available as much as you can.

Below are some updates that are hopefully helpful:

For fun: This pie chart is more true than I would like to admit:

Diagram of Zoom Meeting Attention Span



Education: This is a challenging time and we recognize the disruption we have all experienced and that this can take its toll on students this term. The school is trying to make this term as manageable as possible. In that regard, students should have received an email about the option to take courses pass/fail this term. Please work with your advisor and your instructor if this is an option you would like to pursue. You have several weeks to make your decision.

Research: Adam has been monitoring research guidance as things evolve. Recent NIH guidance has indicated that grant applications for due dates between March 9, 2020, and May 1, 2020 will now be accepted through May 1, 2020. For details: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-091.html>. More general coronavirus-related info from NIH can be found [here](#).

Also, thank you to Katrina Rodriguez for answering the call for volunteers from Monday! She helped make an [FAQ for research participants](#) that the IRB has now put on its website and provided to investigators. Thank you Katrina!!

On campus: Everyone should be working and learning from home at this point, except for essential tasks that require you to come in. The School sent out information about reduced hours for Hampton House and Washington St will be reduced to 9AM-4PM. Even in these hours, you will need to sign in to the building.

Email overload? I recognize how many emails you are getting. If you feel overwhelmed, don't worry. The [school emails are here](#), and these department emails are [here](#).

Your own mental health: The mental health task force has continued to collect and generate content to promote mental and behavioral health at this time. Our long compendium of resources can be found [here](#), and we will continue to distribute one-pagers for specific topics. The previous one on JHU resources is [here](#), and one on social isolation is [here](#).

Also, if you would like to send in a picture of you with a statement of how you are managing mental health, or a video about this, please let me know. We are planning a campaign to promote mental health and wellbeing and would love to have you in it! Finally, Michelle Carlson's wellness committee sent out a great email with resources for wellness that can be helpful. Take a look and find one that works for you.

For the weekend: Please find ways to enjoy your weekend. It is increasingly important, as our days are spent in the same space, to distinguish weekends from weekdays and get some personal rejuvenation. I want to thank you all again for your extraordinary resilience and flexibility. I will continue to repeat my admiration and gratitude for all of you. We have risen to the occasion and are showing each other and the world what public health is at its best and why public mental health is so important.

Warmly,

Dani