

COVID Updates DMH

Tuesday April 21, 2020

Dear DMH family,

I am sorry I did not get an update out yesterday!

We made it past the half-way mark for term 4! Congratulations to all! Making it through the middle of the last term of the year is always a reason to celebrate, but even more so given the circumstances you have all surmounted. We are closing in on the last several weeks of a very memorable year, with a lot to reflect upon, a lot to be proud of, and a renewed recognition of the power of public health.

I know the next few weeks will also be bittersweet, as graduation approaches. I will deeply miss seeing your wonderful faces in person for parties, award ceremonies, celebratory dinners, and graduation. Yet, I have learned over and over that there is value in our new virtual engagement. Today, our Wendy Klag Center journal club was perhaps better attended (and more engaged?) than our in-person events. We have also had greater attendance to noon seminars (definitely catch this week's episode – see below) and other school-wide lectures, likely due to the ease of logging on versus walking across campus or driving to/from locations! With this in mind, I am looking forward to our upcoming virtual engagements as they present the opportunity to have more intimate graduation celebrations with family and friends near and far, who may not have been able to attend in person. We have already announced some of these events, and stay tuned for others as they roll out!

Below are some new updates to begin the week:

Education:

- In case you missed it, I want to point your attention to an email from the Dean's office sent out yesterday about measures being taken to address concerns of students regarding program milestones and coursework. The email reiterates my comments in this section last week recognizing the uncertainty and challenges our students are facing and letting you all know that we are working hard to make accommodations where possible to ensure that students can successfully complete their programs. **Students**, please reach out to your advisor or program director if you have ANY questions. We very much want to help. **Faculty**, please continue reaching out to your advisees to check on them. If you have any questions about details to help them figure out – please reach out to me, Patty Scott, Judy Bass (PhD and PDF), or Jeanine Parisi (MHS).
- **Summer institute plans:** All summer institute courses will need to be offered online or virtually. If your course is already slated to be hosted online – thank you! Our only request of you is to consider adding COVID-related content. Michelle Carlson sent out an email request with details. If you were planning an in-person course, we are very much hoping you will deliver it virtually, via zoom. Michelle Carlson has sent you a separate email about this and provided options and help to convert to this

format. Thank you so much for doing this! Please also consider what COVID-related content you can add as well. Please reach out to me or Michelle Carlson with any questions.

Research:

- If you are submitting a **COVID-related grant proposal**, please let your budget person know. The school is tracking these separately.
- Please remember **the department is collecting information from each other about tools for remote research** such as new IRB amendments, protocols for quantitative and qualitative remote data collection, consenting, etc. Please send to Adam Spira. He will make these available for sharing internally.
- Also a reminder that the School is continually updating resources for investigators here: [University HUB research site](#) and the [JHSPH IRB site](#).

#ApartTogether: We continue to plan cohort, department, and school events. Please join us!

- **You are invited to a movie watch party hosted by Daniel Sonnenberg, MHS student, and the MHSG!** We're getting the Department of Mental Health together to **watch the only movie specifically about the National Institute of Mental Health (kind of)!** Let's all unwind on the last day of an extraordinary academic year by watching this animated classic about the trials of family and friends, the mysteries of the labs of NIMH, and the adventures of the heroic Mrs. Brisby.
ZOOM: Time: May 15, 2020 04:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) | [Join Zoom Meeting](#): Meeting ID: 956 194 7170. Password: NIMHrod
- Students are also planning a game night for next week – more details soon.
- Wednesday noon seminars: **Wednesday, April 22, seminar will be a TV show style set of interviews on the Mental and Behavioral Health consequences of COVID-19**, followed by a group discussion. The following week, April 29, will be a “town hall” style session for question and answers and a debrief on the academic year, the current events, and the opportunities for the future. Finally, on May 6, we will have a discussion on self-care as we end the term. We are working on some specific tips, maybe a guided meditation, or a group walk! If you have ideas for virtual gatherings, challenges, etc., please let me know!
- End of year department party will be **April 28 from 5-6 PM**. Volunteer to share your talent with us!
- **Student check-ins:** Judy Bass has set up 2 times this week for doctoral students to check in via zoom on Tuesday or Thursday from 12:15-1pm. She asks that any post-doctoral fellows who would like to touch base please email her!

Staying informed: Also a reminder, the School is using our [my.jhsph](#) site for internal communications and is a very helpful landing place for many things, including all COVID-related emails, and [Student FAQs](#); [Faculty FAQs](#); [Mental Health Task Force Resources](#). Also, our department update emails are [here](#). For external audiences, the main JHSPH site has a fantastic COVID [landing page](#) as well.

Your own mental health and other pandemic tips:

- The mental health task force developed a couple new resource pages: one on [time-management](#) and one on [grieving](#). We plan additional ones each week, so please let me know if you have a desired topic!
- Several of you have also been busy writing about your own experiences or providing useful advice. Thank you! Check out [this video](#) by Laura Murray on leadership recommendations!
- JHU Hub had a [great article](#) with MANY useful resources including:
 - Working from home in the new normal
 - Free fitness options
 - Emotional wellness programs via JHU's mySupport (myStrength)
 - Daily Mindfulness sessions with Neda Gould
 - Activities for families with children at home
 - Tips for managing distance learning stress

For fun: I discovered this a few days ago. You're welcome!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hq1bEHNqbPs&t=11s>

Also, I cannot resist sharing with you a picture of our new puppy, Billy Bowlegs: He has been a great source of love, joy, and responsible scheduling in this strange time!



Have a great week. Please continue to send any questions or concerns to me. We are eager to help in whatever ways we can. I know I am repeating myself, but I am just so grateful to each of you for your hard work, flexibility, and resilience. What an inspiring group of people!

Warmly,

Dani