

DMH Update Aug 19, 2020

Hello DMH family!

I look forward to seeing faculty and students today at our joint DMH meeting at noon! In anticipation of that gathering, and for those who can't attend, I am sending an update of items we will discuss and information that will hopefully be helpful as we head into fall. First, always check out my.jhsph.edu for all things education, research, and practice, including events and past emails from the university and school. Our department updates can also be found [here](#).

Education:

Summer career sessions update: Judy worked with two students, an MHS alum and a current PhD student, to organize summer sessions for students highlighting careers of our alumni, in response to requests from our students during spring term town halls. The first, held in July, highlighted former DMH MHS students who went on to medical school. Check out the recording [here](#). The second, to be held in early September, will highlight students who went on to tech and biotech positions. These are part of a longer-term program to showcase non-academic and academic career paths for our graduates - funded in part by a grant from the Provost's office. Thank you to all who helped organize and participated!

Orientation: Our new student and post-doc fellow orientation is next **Wed, Aug 26 @1-3PM EST**. If you have not updated your slide, please do so [here](#). Orientation is one of my favorite DMH activities. It is truly inspiring to be in the same (virtual) room together and to hear about why our new students have chosen public mental health as well as to hear about the work of our faculty. Please prioritize this special event together.

Online/virtual teaching tips. Thank you to our own Liz Stuart who has worked tirelessly with the School's education team to bring us multiple sessions on effective tools for online learning and teaching. The past sessions, and other tips and resources, can be found [here](#). I highly recommend them! Thank you also to Judy Bass, who in addition to being our VC for Education in this challenging time - which has been A LOT of extra work, is also serving as our **Online Faculty Peer Teaching Mentor**. She has taken extra training and is ready to help you with any questions or tool suggestions. Similarly, Kira Riehm is our department's Super TA for this fall, who has also taken extra training and is ready to help faculty and TAs for any course to navigate the tools of courseplus or zoom and to provide helpful suggestions for effective pedagogy in our VirtualPlus experience. In addition to the CTL resources for virtual teaching - there are new classrooms being set up that faculty can sign up to use that allow for more interactive teaching experiences.

Terms 1 and 2 Covid-related tuition credit and pass/fail option. Hopefully faculty and students saw the [email from the Dean's office on Aug 14](#) regarding a covid financial relief credit (CFRC) of \$500 per term in addition to fee forgiveness for the student activity fee and UHS clinic fee. Students will also have the option to take courses, including required courses, Pass / Fail this fall.

MHS co-advising and coffee requests. Despite the VirtualPlus learning environment, we have over 40 MHS students planning to attend our program this fall! This is a huge accomplishment for recruitment (thank you Jeanine, Patty, and many others!) and a very important step in our financial resilience given the COVID financial challenges. It does mean that we must now provide our very best DMH education to our incoming students, particularly in this challenging situation. With that in mind, thank you for responding to our request to set up coffee chat times with MHS students as a way of allowing them to network with faculty. You are cited as the main reason they chose to come! Please also take on at least one MHS student as a co-advisor. They can be very helpful for your grant or paper preparation, literature review, and many other research activities.

Best advising practice. This virtual experience makes the need for excellence in advising more critical than ever. Please reach out to your student advisees often to provide them with academic and wellness support. As mentioned later - we will be hosting workshops to give you tools to help with this! Also, these forms on the [faculty share drive](#) can be helpful when having your introductory and ongoing advising conversations. Students, we will make these available to you as well!

Research:

Reminder of research restart links: As described in my last update, there are multiple resources for research restart activities. First, there are IRB guidelines and applications, as described in the 7/9/2020 email [here](#), as well as return to campus guidelines and applications, described in the 7/22/2020 email from Greg Kirk and 7/16/2020 email from Denis Wirtz [here](#). The departmental plans for these were described further in my [last update](#).

Covid research links: The school has compiled links to COVID-related projects. Check them out [here](#).

Wellness:

Faculty concerns and resources: Many of you have expressed concerns around career advancement, competing personal and professional demands during the pandemic, and generally “keeping up” in these prolonged challenging times. As you saw in the [Aug 13 email](#) from Heidi Conway (JHU HR), the university has put in place some enhanced care giving resources that can be seen on the [Benefits & Worklife pages](#). The School and our Department are working to supplement and emphasize these activities where we can and are eager to continue interactions to promote and implement ideas addressing these concerns.

Wellness resources: Our own Michelle Carlson has co-led the School’s Committee on Wellness, which has put together a very useful compendium of resources. Please check out these opportunities [here](#), and thank you to Michelle and the committee for providing this information!

IDARE activities: The Dean’s office [recently announced](#) the School’s IDARE initiative. Renee Johnson, our inaugural Vice Chair for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, will lead our department’s IDARE activities and help hold us accountable to our diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism goals.

Mental health workshops: The School's COVID Mental Health Task Force is developing and deploying mental health workshops for term 1, with the goals of providing tips for self-care, reminding folks of resources available for themselves and others, and importantly providing tools for helping others. These will be held as small group virtual interactions, tailored to specific audiences: faculty, staff, students, or post-docs. Please stay tuned for invitations to serve as facilitators and for invitations to participate in the workshops. This is unprecedented as a school-wide activity and we are thrilled to have the support of the Dean's office to make it happen!

Mental health resources links: Please don't forget we have a compendium of **internal** and **external** resources available that address specific challenges to our psychological wellness during the pandemic. I know you are all believers in mental illness prevention and intervention, so please don't forget that these resources are available!

Social events: It is as important as ever to stay socially and emotionally connected to each other. This is one of my favorite aspects of our DMH family. Please attend our department fall party on **October 5 @ 5PM**. We will have games and merriment! We will also facilitate other small-group virtual gatherings, and where/when safe, potentially small group socially-distanced outside gatherings.

I miss you all. I am eager to get back into the swing of fall, to greet our new students, and to welcome our returning students back!

Lastly, we all need a moment of fun, so here are some quips to get you through the day:

**The other day I held the door open for a clown. It was a nice jester.
I put my gramma on speed dial, I call it Instagram.
And finally.... Whoever invented Knock-knock jokes should get a no-bell prize!**

Happy Wednesday!

Dani