

From the Office of the Dean

Dear Colleagues,

Many of you have settled into what is now being called the “new normal”.

The new normal has students that are learning online and communicating through Zoom. Faculty administering classes online or reviewing student progress and patient rosters remotely. Staff performing administrative duties remotely or coming in to perform essential duties. Many of you also tending to personal matters (home supplies and groceries, home-schooling, home entertainment!).

Leadership teams at the University and Dental School continue to meet remotely to monitor the national and local situation.

Since I know many are receiving information from the other leadership groups (academic, research, clinical and student affairs), I will keep my communications brief and share my weekly reflection with you.

3.26.20 Key Messages:

- A stay-at-home advisory was issued for Massachusetts. We are an essential service under the order and will continue to provide emergency services.
- Our emergency clinic (now operating from 9AM-12PM) continue to be busy with emergency cases for patients of record. Faculty, residents, students and staff are working very hard under difficult circumstances to help our patients. Thank you to everyone who is helping (especially Dr. McGarry and the clinical leadership team). The patients that are seen are thankful that there is a service to take care of their pain and infections. A new protocol to perform “telehealth” has also been developed and many faculty from all Departments will host emergencies through this new service.
- Clinic Re-opening/rotations/externships. Our leadership team continues to monitor the National and Local environment/guidelines to determine the type of opening/date of opening. We will communicate this to our community as soon as we can.
- Our academic teams continue to deliver curriculum where they can and are actively looking at student clinical progress, grading, and what the new academic calendar might look like (didactic, preclinical and clinical). Plans are being built based on local and federal guidelines regarding accreditation and practice.
- Our research activities have been modified as much as possible.
- The University has a resource pass that can help with questions you might have around “Public Health & Medical Issues FAQ” <https://coronavirus.tufts.edu/health-and-medical/>
- If anyone has a concern about a COVID-19 Positive test/exposure please email-covid19@tufts.edu, or e-mail robert.kasberg@tufts.edu , Morton.Rosenberg@tufts.edu understanding that confidentiality is respected
- Everyone continues to think about what a “re-opening” might look like, understanding that a lot is predicated on the local and national mandates.
- Many of us have been affected by the new social guidelines that continue to evolve. Please practice these to help keep those around you safe and to help our medical colleagues. These are also affecting many traditional gatherings and celebrations-please see the communication that was sent to our D/IS 20s and Masters students below regarding graduation.
- Travel. We have moved from restrictions concerning international travel to restrictions within the USA. Please refer to these two sites to keep up to date.

<https://announcements.tufts.edu/announcement/travel-guidance-related-covid-19-coronavirus>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>

- We encourage you not to travel unless absolutely mandated. There is now a recommendation that anyone travelling out of the metropolitan New York area “self-quarantine” for a two-week period. Please keep this in mind if we are to have a “physical restart” of some of our academic/preclinical and clinical programs.

Publications of interest.

Dean’s Letter to the Boston Globe.

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/03/24/opinion/access-oral-health-care-has-been-limited-by-this-crisis/>

Team Comes Together to Repair Thousands of N-95 Masks-students working at TUSDM

<https://now.tufts.edu/articles/team-comes-together-repair-thousands-n-95-masks>

Link to Singapore “comic” about COVID-19-developed at the medical school sent to me from the Dean of the Dental School in Singapore.

<http://nusmedicine.nus.edu.sg/medias/news-info/2233-the-covid-19-chronicles>

Message sent to D/IS 20s and Masters Students.

Deans Message: Commencement and Other Events 2020

Dear D/IS20s, Masters degree candidates,

We have recently received notice from the University that the Commencement Ceremonies scheduled for May 17th have been canceled due to the Coronavirus outbreak. We are deeply saddened to miss the opportunity to celebrate your profound achievements in the traditional fashion with your family and friends. The University plans to develop a virtual university-wide commencement ceremony, and they have asked schools for ideas on what we might want to do. Typically, right after the University-Wide ceremony the Dental School would hold its own ceremony to grant degrees. We will hold a similar virtual ceremony on that date.

Other events (senior awards dinner, senior gala, , etc.) have also been affected due to current guidelines on gatherings and due to hotels/venue sites cancelling events.

We are entertaining ideas (as discussed with your class leadership) to celebrate the achievements of your class. For example, one idea is a weekend later this summer or fall during which we might conduct a scaled down version of the Senior Dinner, followed by the Class Gala on Saturday night and ending the weekend with a another/modified graduation ceremony.

Although this idea is only in its infancy and might prove unfeasible, we encourage you to share your thoughts about it and other ideas you might with your class leadership who will communicate them to us.

The closer we come to an end of the pandemic crisis and a return to some semblance of normalcy, we will develop and finalize a plan for you.

Dear Faculty, Staff, D21s, 23s, 24s

I know many who participate in celebrating the accomplishments of our graduating students are saddened at the cancellations of senior dinners, award ceremonies and commencement.

Please do reach out to our seniors as this academic year progresses to congratulate them on their accomplishments. We will “share” information regarding any celebrations we are able to host (virtual or real) in the coming months

Sincerely,

Dean Karimbux
Associate Dean Kasberg

Katherine Vosker, Director of Student Affairs
Karen Alexander, Associate Director of Student Affairs

Dean’s Reflection

I have a group of mentees from each of our DMD classes. Typically, I go out to dinner with each group separately at the start of the year. It has been a tradition for all of the groups to go out at the end of the year to celebrate the “seniors” accomplishments. This year we may not be able to have this gathering. I will miss this get together. I will miss it with all my heart.

I’ve watched “my” students go from “insecure” year 1’s to “knowing” year 2’s, back to “insecure clinical” year 3’s to competent, confident clinicians as year 4’s.

I will not let COVID-19 take away from the fact that “my Year 4’s” will soon be my colleagues, my fellow Doctors!.

We will all raise a glass to soon to be Dr. Shawn Kim, Dr. Qurratulann Khokar, Dr. Amanjot Sarao (My D4s).

We will all raise a glass to all of our D/IS 20s!

Sincerely,

Dean Karimbux