Update #8 CUNY COVID-19 Guidance on Academic Continuity

Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost |**March 28, 2020**

This document presents CUNY's latest COVID-19 Academic Continuity Guidance. The information herein complements and supersedes information currently presented in CUNY's COVID-19 Portal and will in due course be reflected on the portal as well. For convenience, the document is formatted as a running list of issues, with updates from previous reports and new entries marked as such for convenience. ✪ = New entry not included in previous guidance. ↻ = Update from previous guidance. ⭕ = Past entry with no changes since previous guidance.

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Grading Policies and Deadlines

✪**CR/NC Grading Policy**: As we had previously foreshadowed, in response to a change in instructional modality and the disruption the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the lives of our students, faculty and staff, the University Office of Academic Affairs, in consultation with campus presidents and deans, the University Faculty Senate, and the University Student Senate, has determined the need for a flexible grading policy that will provide students maximum flexibility as they navigate the challenges associated with the University's move to distance learning and the effects of our City's social distancing guidelines on their personal lives. The proposed policy, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees on March 30, is reproduced below for convenience. Please know that detailed implementation plan and FAQs based on questions raised during the development of this policy will be published in due order.

Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy for the Spring 2020 Semester

As part of The City University of New York's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, during the Spring 2020 semester, all students shall have the option to convert any or all of the (A-F) letter grades they earn in their classes, to Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) grading.

1. During the Spring 2020 semester, all students shall have the option to convert any or all of the (A-F) letter grades they earn in their classes, to Credit/No Credit grading.

2. Students shall be able to make this decision up to 20 business days after the University's final grade submission deadline. Once selected, the CR/NC option cannot be cannot be reversed.

3. If a student chooses to exercise this option, a passing letter grade (A, B, C, or D) will convert to 'CR' with credit for the class being awarded, while a failing grade (F) will convert to 'NC', with no credit awarded. Credit/No Credit grades will not impact the student's GPA.

4. Courses taken for a letter grade will continue to be included in the semester and general GPA, while courses taken for a Credit/Non-credit grade will be excluded, just as is the case with such courses taken at a student's home institution.

5. If a student exercises the option of Credit/No Credit, the Credit (CR) grade will not negatively impact the student's satisfactory progress toward degree completion.

6. Students with Credit/No Credit grades will be able to transfer those courses across colleges within CUNY, per current CUNY policy.

7. The Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy shall apply to coursework completed on Permit and will not affect Board of Trustees Policy 1.14 – Policy on Coursework Completed on Permit.

8. Students placed on academic probation by their institution at the start of the Spring 2020 semester shall not be penalized with academic dismissal based upon their grades earned this semester.

9. The Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy shall not affect the University standards of student retention and progress in accordance with Board of Trustees Policy 1.26.

10. Before choosing this grading option for one or more of their classes, students shall consult with their academic and financial aid advisors regarding potential impact to their financial aid, licensure requirements, and graduate school admissions.

11. The Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy shall supersede and override all undergraduate and graduate program-level grading policies currently in effect at CUNY colleges and schools, including those related to required and elective courses within the major, minor, general education (Pathways), pre-requisite courses, honors courses, courses taken on permit and maximum number of credits that a student can earn with Credit/No Credit grades.

12. The grade glossary, attached to each transcript, will be updated to include a notation denoting that all Spring 2020 grades, including CR or NC, were earned during a major disruption to instruction as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

13. The Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy shall apply to all CUNY colleges and schools**,** except the School of Law and the School of Medicine, which may develop their own Pass/Fail policies, subject to approval of the Board of Trustees, to conform to norms in legal and medical education.

14. The Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy, which shall be effective April 1, 2020, applies to the Spring 2020 semester only and that the Chancellor, may, in his discretion, to meet public health emergency policies and practices, extend this policy to future semesters, if necessary and report such extension to the Board of Trustees immediately.

15. The Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy shall be codified in the Manual of General Policy as Policy 1.4. and cannot be overwritten by any individual units of the University, including presidents, provosts, or college councils.

The policy will remain in effect for the Spring 2020 semester and will be reviewed by the Chancellor and extended as necessary to meet public health emergency policies and practices.

✪**Flexible P/F Grading Policy for the CUNY School of Law:** As specified above, The Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy, shall apply to all CUNY colleges and schools, except the School of Law which may develop their own Pass/Fail policies to conform to norms in legal education. To this end, the School of Law has proposed a grading policy that fully comports with norms of legal education, as well as the requirements of the American Bar Association and the New York Court of Appeals as governing bodies; and that on March 17 the American Bar Association issued guidance to member law schools explicitly extending policies governing distance education rules to include the Summer 2020 term. In designing its grading policy, the Law school vetted various policy proposals for flexible grading in a series of school-wide town halls, online discussions, and a special faculty meeting on March 26, which included faculty and student voting members, as well as additional student representatives where a final vote on the adopted policy was taken, passing unanimously. Subject to the Board of Trustees approval, the School of Law's flexible grading policy would include the following provisions.

1. A mandatory Pass/Fail system without a letter grade opt-in for the Spring 2020 and Summer 2020 terms.

2. The School of Law faculty will explicitly state the criteria for passing each course.

3. The Pass/Fail be implemented during the Spring 2020 and Summer 2020 terms and shall supersede the Law School's existing Credit/No Credit Policy for these terms; and that a passing grade will not impact the student's GPA.

4. That a grade of "Pass" will not negatively impact the student's satisfactory progress toward degree completion.

5. That students placed on academic probation by their institution at the start of the Spring 2020 semester shall not be penalized with academic dismissal based upon their grades earned this semester.

6. The Law School Office of Academic Affairs will counsel students regarding any impact to their ongoing academic program and licensure requirements; and that faculty have expressed a willingness to augment letters of recommendation with additional evaluative information to support student's employment prospects during this crisis period.

7. The grade glossary, attached to each transcript, will be updated to include a notation denoting that Spring and Summer 2020 grades, including Pass or Fail, were earned during a major disruption to instruction as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. The Law School Pass/Fail Grading Policy, which shall be effective April 1, 2020, applies to the Spring 2020 and Summer 2020 terms only and that the Chancellor, may, in his discretion, extend this policy to future semesters, if necessary and report such extension to the Board of Trustees immediately.

9. The implementation of this resolution shall be consistent with prevailing accreditation standards.

10. The Law School exception to the Special COVID-19 Flexible Grading Policy shall be included in the codification in the Manual of General Policy as Policy 1.4.

✪**Student Retention and Progress:** Per University policy, each student will be expected to maintain a grade point average of at least 1.50 for the first twelve credits, attempted and at least a 1.75 grade point average for the first twenty-four credits, attempted. In each subsequent semester students will be expected to maintain at least a 2.00 grade point average. Students who fail to meet their college's retention standards or the conditions of an academic or other probation for Spring 2020, are to be placed on continued probation and will not be subject to academic dismissal.

⭕**Course Withdrawal Period:** Last Day to Drop with a Grade of "W." The current deadline date listed on the calendar is Wednesday, April 1, 2020. We will move that date to Thursday, **May 14, 2020** (for KCC/LAG/GCC – Spring Session 1: **June 4, 2020**; Spring Session 2: **August 1, 2020**). This is the published "Last Day of Classes," and *before* final examination week and also prior to the "End of the Spring Term".

⭕**Incomplete Grades:** Students who receive an INC grades in the Spring 2020 term would generally be required to submit outstanding work, "according to a deadline established by individual colleges of the University but no later than the last day of the following semester." But the University will allow students to submit incomplete work to faculty for resolution of INC grades for courses taken in Spring 2020 through the Fall 2020 semester, and the new deadline for faculty to submit Incomplete to Grade forms to the Registrar's Office for resolution will be Wednesday, **December 23, 2020** (for KCC/LAG/GCC – **March 1, 2021**). This date coincides with the "Final Grade Submission Deadline" for Fall 2020 courses. For Students who received an INC grade in the Fall 2019 semester, the University will allow students to submit incomplete work to faculty for resolution through end of Summer 2020 semester. The new deadline for faculty to submit Incomplete to Grade forms to the Registrar's Office for resolution will be **August 30, 2020**.

Academic Calendar and Events

✪**Recalibration Period for Educational Equity:** Per the Chancellor's messages on March 24 and March 25, in an attempt to ensure that no CUNY student is left behind and that the "distance" in distance-learning does not contribute to widening existing opportunity gaps, the University has instituted a Recalibration Period for Educational Equity, that among other important objectives will allow the University and its colleges to put more tablets and laptops in the hands of students who without them would face difficulty in completing the spring 2020 term.   As part of the Chancellor's communication, the following clarifications were made and are reproduced here for convenience:

- All 16 colleges will be on pause in the Recalibration Period, no classes will be held, and no assignments or tests should be due during this period. These colleges are: Baruch, BMCC, Brooklyn College, Bronx Community College, City College, City Tech, College of Staten Island, Hostos, Hunter, John Jay, Lehman, Macaulay Honors, Medgar Evers, Queens College, Queensborough Community College and York College. All faculty and students at these schools will be off from Friday, March 27 to Wednesday, April 1 and again from Wednesday, April 8 to Friday, April 10, for a condensed Spring Recess.
- Administrators and staff will continue to work as they normally would from March 27 to April 1 and during Spring Recess, albeit remotely in most cases. All local plans to reduce campus density for faculty, staff and students remain in place.
- The University's previously scheduled Spring Recess will now run from Wednesday April 8 through Friday April 10, encompassing the beginning of Passover and Good Friday. For faculty, staff and students whose religious observation extends into the week of April 13, as always you have the right to

request a religious exemption to observe the holiday and we will offer maximum flexibility in addressing the requests. CUNY's guidance for religious exemptions can be found here and we will remind faculty and staff about our guidance as we get closer to that date.

- The only schools exempted from the Recalibration Period are professional schools and graduate schools (Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism, School of Labor and Urban Studies, School of Law, School of Medicine, School of Professional Studies, School of Public Health and Health Policy, and The Graduate Center) and the community colleges that operate on a different academic calendar (Guttman, Kingsborough and LaGuardia) and just recently started their Spring semester. There are a few other programs exempted including Pre-K to 12 schools in our system and pre-matriculation programs like CUNY Start, Math Start, CLIP and Adult Literacy. Decisions on continuing education and graduate programs are at the discretion of school presidents and deans.
- Furthermore, per the original guidance, Schools that offer programs and courses that were being taught online before the broader move to distance learning can proceed with the authorization of campus presidents and deans.

⭐**Impact of Recalibration Period and Instructional Recess on CUNY's Academic Calendar:** To date, when we consider the losses and gains in instructional days due to CUY's Instructional Recess and Recalibration Period, the number of instructional days we need to make are as follows: Mondays (1), Tuesdays (1), Wednesdays (1), Thursdays (0), Friday's (2), Saturdays (1), and Sundays (1). These days, in the absence of regulatory relief, can ultimately be made up using additional assignments to assist students in making up missed work. Such assignments might include interactive projects, supplemental instructional material, preparation of reports, or other assignments at the discretion of the department and the instructor. This is similar to what the University did to make up lost instruction time during Hurricane Sandy. For Sandy, campuses had to "make up" from 5 to 10 days, so we have plenty of wiggle room based on precedent before having consider extending the semester.

As to the University's previously scheduled Spring Recess, per the Chancellor's previous communications, it will now run from Wednesday April 8 through Friday April 10, encompassing the beginning of Passover and Good Friday. For faculty, staff and students whose religious observation extends into the week of April 13, as always you have the right to request a religious exemption to observe the holiday and we will offer maximum flexibility in addressing the requests. CUNY's guidance for religious exemptions can be found here and we will remind faculty and staff about our guidance as we get closer to that date.

Finally, the University — along with several other state colleges — continue to consult stakeholders and monitor the current situation as it moves to complete its course offering for Summer 2020 sessions — especially as it pertains to whether or not distance learning should be primarily or completely privileged.

Shared Governance and Contractual Obligations

⭐**Tenure clock:** The University recognizes that the transition to distance learning in the Spring 2020 semester as a result of COVID-19 may cause interruption and delay in faculty research and scholarship. This is particularly critical for faculty advancing toward tenure. Accordingly, the University will permit faculty whose candidacies for tenure are coming up in the fall 2020 semester to receive a one-year extension, if they so desire. Such faculty must request a tenure clock extension by emailing the request to their college Provost by **May 1, 2020**. Going forward, faculty on the tenure track who subsequently want to request a tenure clock extension based on the circumstances of Spring 2020 must so apply by February 1 in the year immediately preceding their tenure

review. Faculty wanting to apply for a tenure clock extension should follow the procedures normally followed at their college for requesting these extensions to tenure review; their request will be subject to fact-specific review, in accordance with past University practice.

✪**Appointment/Non-Reappointment Notices:** During this period of telecommuting, any notices required to be provided to faculty and staff, including those pursuant to Article 10 of the PSC-CUNY collective bargaining agreement regarding notification of appointment/non-reappointment for faculty and staff and Article 13 regarding HEOs, should be sent, at a minimum, to an employee's CUNY email address. If there is no CUNY email address on file, whatever email address is on file should be used. If possible, especially in cases of non-reappointment, we suggest that multiple methods of communication be used. These may include CUNY email address, personal email address, and text to cell phone number. It is important to use our best efforts to get notification to faculty and staff. We understand that this is an extra burden, but the number of non-reappointments pales in comparison to the number of reappointments, and the colleges must demonstrate strong best efforts to ensure that notice of non-reappointment was effectuated.

✪**P&B Meetings and Remote Voting**: Earlier in the week, the University had a conference call with the college Legal and Labor Designees on this issue. Several of the colleges reported that they had tested/were testing systems to be able to hold remote P&B voting. Colleges that were still trying to figure out how to proceed were advised to reach out directly to their colleagues, including those at Lehman College, City College and Baruch College who were among the schools that had worked out a process for these important meetings.

↻**Public Meetings:** Per previous guidance, Article 7 of the Public Officers Law, to the extent necessary, permits any public body to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings and authorizes such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceedings and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed.

↻**Distance Learning and Contractual Obligations:** The following guidance is in response to questions pertaining to faculty office hours, classroom observations, annual evaluations, student evaluations, adjunct overload waivers, and the reappointment, tenure, and promotion process. This guidance is based on consultation with several provosts and in discussion with the Professional Staff Congress at a recent labor management meeting with the Chancellor and his executive team.

1. Both full-time faculty and adjuncts who are responsible for, and paid for, office hours will hold office hours through distance technology and will notify their students and their department chair regarding how they plan to hold the hours. These notifications were due on or before **Friday, March 27**.

2. Classroom teaching observations that have not yet been conducted during the Spring 2020 semester will only be conducted if requested by the employee to be evaluated. The department may use the new protocol for observations in online settings (Article 18.2(b)3), where the course was changed to a distance modality mid-semester, provided the employee is made aware and has the option to proceed with the observation. Teaching observations for those who have been teaching online since the start of the semester, and who were otherwise contemplated to be observed pursuant to the new provision in Article 18.2(b)3 for online observations, will have their observations conducted.

3. Annual evaluations which include the conference and confirming memorandum will have the conference conducted through distance technology, which may include telephone and/or videoconferencing.

4. Student evaluations are discussed in the BOT Statement on Academic Personnel Practice. The Statement on Academic Personnel Practice states that "Personnel committees should consider student evaluations as a factor in assessing teaching effectiveness …." But it does not specify how often these evaluations must be done. Therefore, college presidents and deans — after careful consideration and consultation — can determine whether or not their colleges will do student evaluations this semester. But if they decide to do student evaluations, given the extraordinary nature of this semester, faculty should be given the opportunity to decide whether or not the evaluations should be considered as part of future personnel actions. Please note that these decisions must be college-wide and apply to all faculty.

5. In addition to the five adjunct overload waivers routinely allotted to each college, for the duration of the semester, each college is being allotted an additional three adjunct overload waivers. If your college does not need these additional waivers, or is not using all of the five waivers, please email Pam Silverblatt pamela.silverblatt@cuny.edu and let her know so that those waivers can be redirected to a college that needs them. Please call SVC SIlverblatt or EVC Cruz if your situation requires further discussion.

6. Decisions on tenure, promotion, reclassification and discretionary assignment salary differentials that are currently in process shall be completed.

7. Faculty and staff shall be permitted to retrieve personal belongings and materials needed to work remotely. <u>Some colleges may allow staff, faculty and students on campus to collect any personal or work-related materials they need via an appointment process. Faculty should contact your local campus for specific information.</u>

Research Continuity

↻**Activation of Research Ramping Down Protocols Mandated:** Effective **Monday, March 23,** all research projects must ramp down/suspend unless they can be conducted remotely and all colleges shall activate their corresponding emergency protocols related to animal care, equipment etc. Is should follow guidance provided by their campus administration, many of which are asking PIs to ramp down to only essential functions. PIs should consider whether maintenance of research resources (e.g., equipment, animals) require emergency personnel (trained people to work on site), in case the University were to close, or mass transit is impacted. It may take time to develop sufficient plans to ramp down research activities. Planning now will help us to be proactive and responsive if the University were to close. Note for students engaged in any research (from undergraduates to graduate students, for courses, theses, dissertations, etc.), they should be guided by their faculty, who should be guided by their campus and the information below. All research engagement, whether funded or not, requires compliance with federal guidelines.

↻**Remote Work:** Principal Investigators (PIs) should continue aspects of their research that can be conducted remotely (without a campus or site visit) such as manuscript writing, data analysis, report writing, administrative tasks, and should continue to support those who are grant or contract funded who can assist in this work. Contact your program director and/or grants officer and document these decisions. PIs should have suspended projects and not start new projects requiring on-site activities, but continue or modify their research to engage in remote activities (see below for more detail). The research enterprise must continue to follow appropriate

regulatory guidance. Federal sponsors are allowing for maximal flexibility with regard to administrative, cost, and reporting requirements (e.g., NSF, NIH). For example, NSF allows payment of salary and stipend costs, as long as those costs align with CUNY and RF CUNY policy. Documentation of charges for research, operational changes required to be flexible and remote, and their rationale/justification will be very important for funders and auditors. If a study needs to be paused (because all activities require on-site work) then PIs should use the standard process to notify the sponsor in accordance with sponsor issued timelines. Unless otherwise notified by the sponsor, all reports due to sponsors must continue to be submitted. PIs should also ensure that their Program Directors/Grants Officers are aware of any changes being implemented to sponsored projects.

PIs should follow guidance provided by their campus administration, many of which have asked PIs to cease on-site activities excepting essential functions (e.g., animal care, facility care). These essential functions require essential personnel (trained people to work on site), who can be designated as such at any time, though adequate training and coordination with campus leadership is required. In designating such personnel, please consider access to campus (e.g., in case the University were to close or mass transit is impacted). Those students who are engaged in any research (from undergraduates to graduate students, for courses, theses, dissertations, etc.), should continue to be guided by their faculty mentors, who in turn should be guided by their campus leadership and the information below. All research engagement, whether funded or not, requires compliance with federal regulations and guidelines and University policies.

Lastly, as we are all facing these difficult and uncertain times, we want you to know that we are with you. Many of us are dealing with myriad issues, anxieties, and frustrations, let us take a moment to be grateful for what we are able to do, to reorganize our activities to focus on pressing priorities, and to work together to find solutions to new issues as they arise. Please be as flexible, patient, and compassionate as possible with yourself and your research teams.

↻**Human Subject Research:** For research involving interactions with people, interactions should be limited to minimize risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19, in accordance with CUNY Coronavirus Guidance, CDC Guidance, and campus guidance. Follow your campus HRPP guidelines, but in general **human subject research involving direct interaction with study participants should be paused and no study participants should travel to CUNY colleges (except studies with therapeutic benefit, see below)**. PI judgment is most critical and we rely on PIs for determining necessary changes to protocols. Ethical principles of research and federal regulations for the protection of human research participants require an acceptable risk/benefit ratio for in-person contact associated with research. The prospect of direct benefit to the participant is determined by justification provided by the PI. This guidance is being provided in order to promote public health. PIs should follow guidance that is in the interest of public health, and thus engage in the responsible conduct of research. Unethical or irresponsible conduct may result in disciplinary action from campus administration.

Studies which offer direct therapeutic benefit to participants or where stopping procedures would cause harm to study participants may continue, on a case-by-case basis. For health and safety, changes to protect study participants can be instituted immediately. Please submit a modification to the IRB to indicate temporary modifications within 5 business days.

Studies which do not offer direct therapeutic benefit to participants or where stopping procedures will NOT cause harm to participants and PIs would like to continue the study, PIs must submit a modification to change

study procedures requiring NO face-to-face interactions. Studies which do not involve face-to-face interactions (i.e., conducted electronically or via telephone) may continue.

PIs should notify the campus HRPP Coordinator and sponsor of any changes in research procedures and submit all HRPP/IRB modifications via Ideate. For PIs submitting new protocols, data collection protocols should be for remote data collection, depending upon therapeutic benefit on a case-by-case basis. Protocols may also include in-person data collection for some future time, when guidance for remote collection is removed CUNY-wide.

↻**Non-human Animal Research:** For animal care, essential personnel who are needed to maintain on-site facilities should be identified and trained to ensure coverage. PIs should work with campus leadership to designate essential personnel in such cases. In the case of University closure, identification of such essential personnel may depend on ease of access to the facility and the availability of mass transit. Extra food and bedding for animals should be ordered, and extra Personal Protective Equipment for animal husbandry staff. Orders for additional animals should be suspended, except on a case-by-case basis. If a campus shuts down, PIs should follow their campus and IACUC policies when determining whether a holding protocol is appropriate. Inspections are allowed to be conducted up to 30 days beyond the 6-month period, but this should not drift forward from year to year. During this interim emergency period, non-USDA inspections can be made by 1 qualified person. Waiver requests for inspections can be made by IOs, or IACUC Chairs, Coordinators, or Vets. There should be communication amongst these groups about requesting waivers. Waivers may be granted for specific functions of the IACUC (defined in The Guide), and must be accompanied by a justification for waiver of each function. Also see USDA Coronavirus guidance page.

↻**Researcher Travel:** For researcher travel, including conferences and field research, researchers should follow CUNY travel guidance on the CUNY Coronavirus portal, , as well as avoid any international travel per the U.S. State Department. For guidance on reimbursement from federal funded travel - see appropriate links or contact your Program Director. Additional guidelines for PIs from federal funders are available through the CUNY Research Foundation portal.

⭘**Data Use Agreements:** For studies of data access and analysis covered by data use agreements (DUA), PIs *may* need to request modification if you require a different platform than what is covered by the DUA. Please contact the Agreements Point Person at your campus. If the DUA involves human subjects and the protocol requires modifications, an IRB modification should be submitted via Ideate.

⭘**Tissue and other non-IACUC Materials Research:** For tissue and other non-IACUC materials such as insects, plants, and sea animals, additional orders should be suspended, except on a case-by-case basis. PIs should decide which to maintain (e.g., freeze) and which to abandon. PIs who work with such materials should contact their campus EHS Officer to design a contingency plan appropriate to the materials in question.

⭕**Equipment/Facilities:** For equipment/facilities that require human attention and/or supplies for operation, preparations should be made for extra supplies and training of essential personnel, who would be able to maintain equipment if necessary, in case of University shut down. PIs should communicate this via the proper campus contacts (including campus safety). PIs should follow their campus policies regarding ramping down equipment/facilities.

International and Domestic Travel

↻**Prospective Academic and Business Travel (Faculty, Students, and Staff):** All non-essential university-related international and domestic travel is indefinitely suspended at this time, this includes the suspension of all Spring 2020 and Summer 2020 study abroad programs**.** It also includes all CUNY-sponsored student international travel (including spring break), non-CUNY credit-bearing programs, and non-credit travel under the auspices of CUNY or any CUNY college or student organization. Please know that credits earned on non-CUNY study abroad programs this summer will not be accepted by the University.

⭕**Planning For and Returning from Personal Travel:** The Department of State's Global Health Advisory (issued March 19, 2020) warns that a shutdown of international travel options is imminent, and that Americans abroad should arrange to immediately return to the U.S., or risk an indefinite stay abroad. In order to help CUNY students, return home before it is too late, CUNY will continue to offer rebooking support to any CUNY student or employee abroad (regardless of citizenship) who is unable to make these arrangements directly with the airline. Individuals should contact evac-support@cuny.edu with details on their CUNY affiliation (including EMPLID if possible) to receive instructions on accessing this support. Students returning from abroad should coordinate closely with the Study Abroad Office on their home campus to ensure they receive support to complete the semester whenever possible. Employees returning from abroad should contact their supervisors to make arrangements to work remotely, if this is not already in place.

Conversion to Distance Learning

↻**Middle States Council on Higher Education:** As previously states, MSCHE is working directly with colleges, as well as with CUNY Central, to provide support and flexibility for accreditation matters. Please know that Central will work with colleges to navigate the current rapid changes, but that MSCHE expects individual college relationships and reporting to remain in place.

1. Colleges must submit a letter to MSCHE by **April 1, 2020** to communicate changes made in the areas of a) Distance Education; b) Temporary Agreements with Other Institutions; c) Academic Calendar; and d) Temporary Sites for Instruction. Substantive Change requirements have been temporarily waived in these areas to allow institutions to act first. MSCHE expects the college president or Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) to submit the letter and encourages questions via their MSCHE VP liaison.

2. Note that while the University is keeping MSCHE apprised as a system, this doesn't replace the individual letters.

3. The Spring Annual Institutional Update (AIU) may have some flexibility but will likely still be required; MSCHE will communicate more soon.

4. All Self-Study Preparation Visits (kickoff visits two years before the evaluation) will be rescheduled.

5. Baruch has completed the Spring Self-Study visit. The GSUC's will be rescheduled.

6. The CUNY MSCHE Symposium scheduled for **April 24** is canceled.

The Commission ALOs continues to post information at its [COVID-19 website](#) and has asked individual institutions to check that site regularly for updates. As a reminder, two recorded webcasts have been posted there along with all communications to constituents. For specific questions, the Commission asks institutional presidents and ALOs to contact the corresponding staff, based on the following directory of services.

- Peer Evaluators: emattson@msche.org.
- Substantive Change: csmith@msche.org
- State and System Representatives: dbonner@msche.org
- Finance: finance@msche.org
- Media/Communications: bkirschner@msche.org
- Additional Questions: communications@msche.org

For CUNY specific questions, please contact Karen Kapp (*karen.kapp@cuny.edu*). MSCHE will continue to email for outreach, but updates will also be available [here](#).

⭕**All In-Person Courses Suspended:** Effective **Monday, March 23,** all in-person courses were suspended for the duration of the State's "Pause". This applies to all undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education courses that have not yet converted to distance-learning modes. Faculty engaged in these courses are asked to continue to explore, in conversation with their students, ways in which the in-person courses can be converted to distance learning. If the course's learning outcomes cannot ultimately be achieved via distance learning, the courses could resume once the "pause" is lifted, at which time faculty and students would work to make up for lost time. Given the circumstances, students could also opt to withdraw from the course or receive a grade of incomplete if appropriate. For in-progress continuing education courses, colleges will communicate options available to students who decide to drop or cannot continue with coursework. The University is currently developing a refund/credit policy for these types of situations related to COVID-19.

⭕**Distance Learning:** As we have indicated before, the objective of an academic continuity plan is to help safeguard the academic term from the standpoint of our student's academic progress and their financial aid as we work to address the challenges posed by COVID-19. As far as distance learning is concerned, the U.S. Department of Education has indicated that at a minimum, our faculty must be able to "communicate to students through one of several types of technology – including email – … and [that] instructors must initiate substantive communication with students, either individually or collectively, on a regular basis." As an example of this, the USDE offers that "an instructor could use email to provide instructional materials to students enrolled in his or her class, use chat features to communicate with students, set up conference calls to facilitate group conversations, engage in email exchanges or require students to submit work electronically that the instructor will evaluate." All of these minimal levels of interaction and more are supported by the CUNY licensed software solutions itemized in previous guidance and identified in our www.cuny.edu/coronavirus portal.

Note: CUNY has asked faculty and staff to be prepared to accommodate affected students to the greatest reasonable extent. This includes, among other things: facilitating enrollment after the deadline, fast-tracking academic advising, permitting make-up exams and extending due dates of final assignments and projects. In this same spirit and understanding the minimum USDE requirements to meeting learning outcomes, **we urge faculty members to privilege asynchronous over synchronous distance learning approaches**.

Indeed, the most important thing is for faculty to confer with their students to get a sense of what the most effective and EQUITABLE way to move forward with distance learning should be, considering both faculty and student readiness, accessibility to devices and reliable internet access, and phone capabilities. Ultimately, faculty and colleges should ask themselves how they can create optimal conditions for students to meet their learning outcomes. Because the reality is that our faculty and students lives and daily schedules will surely be disrupted in the days to come — especially now that the NYC Department of Education has itself indicated a move to distance learning.

⭕**Conversion of Courses:** Per guidance issued on **March 11**, college presidents and deans will be required to submit an implementation plan to the Office of Academic Affairs. We expect to provide campuses with the necessary reporting templates once the elements of the plan are finalized and will work to minimize the amount of information that is required to the minimum needed to meet the expectations of our regulatory agencies and accrediting bodies. As of now, our plan is to cull data from CUNYFirst for retooling information (in person coding to Hybrid or Fully Online) and expect campuses to provide high level overall plans for transition and exceptions before the end of **April 2020**. But as we said before, it will be important that campuses institute an orderly process that will allow them to substantiate, on a course by course level how courses were converted to distance learning.

Furthermore, Colleges should certify providing guidance to faculty regarding relevant policies associated with IT platforms, safeguarding student data, and accessibility standards. Per guidance provided by the USDE, for an institution to meet the requirements for distance education. Also, it will also be important for colleges to identify courses that cannot be effectively transitioned to distance education mode and present a plan for maintaining instruction during the Spring semester*.* In addition to providing a list of these exceptions, colleges should explain how instruction in these programs and courses will be altered, if at all, in the current context.

Finally, Colleges will need to certify how they plan to accommodate instructional time lost during the instructional recess for pedagogical retooling and describe the steps that would be taken with regard to the academic calendar and any anticipated impact on future academic terms. (Note that we expect most courses to be able to make up the instructional time without changes to the academic calendar.)

Distance Learning Platforms, Tools & Resources

❌**Distribution of Tablets and Laptops:** The previously described Recalibration Period for Educational Equity, will allow our colleges to continue their efforts to provide their students with access to the equipment they need to complete their semester requirements under these uncommon and unforeseen circumstances. Information about how students can participate in the tablet/laptop program is being made available by individual colleges via their social medial channels and websites. Device and logistic information have been shared with the colleges. Important to note that after prioritizing degree-seeking students, colleges can allocate devices to students in pre-matriculation programs, Continuing Ed Programs, and faculty who may need them.

✪**Using Blackboard and Blackboard Collaborate on Chromebooks:** While several Blackboard Administrators and faculty have expressed concerns that Blackboard Collaborate would not work on the Chromebooks that CUNY has attained for designated students, staff and faculty, the fact is that CUNY CIS has received official assurances from Blackboard, Inc. that Blackboard Collaborate is indeed compatible with Chromebooks. CIS staff have also tested Collaborate on the Chromebook from both the instructor and student perspective and found that it works smoothly. We also validated operations such as using the whiteboard, polling, uploading PowerPoint and breakout rooms. Additionally, Blackboard Learn student and instructor Chromebook browser tests indicate overall compatibility with the exception that the pop-up blocker should be disabled. CIS is informing the Blackboard Administrators and the Service Desks of the compatibility and test results, as well as sharing with them instructions they developed for getting on Blackboard Collaborate from a Chromebook. These instructions will also be posted on the Blackboard support page (www.cuny.edu/blackboard) and on a support site for those receiving Chromebooks and iPads (www.cuny.edu/loaners).

✪**Expansion of EAB Navigate to Graduate Students at the Senior Colleges:** CUNY OAA is working in conjunction with EAB and CUNY Finance and Procurement to accelerate the addition of graduate students to the EAB Navigate implementation. The anticipated final approval of the contract expansion is at the May Board of Trustees meeting; in recognition of the importance of the tool to the CUNY colleges during the current crisis, EAB has agreed to provide this service in advance of the contract amendment. We believe that this will provide a valuable tool for communicating with graduate students. Queens College requested this acceleration and has pointed out several benefits of this added functionality. It will:

- Expedite finding contact information for any graduate students reporting COVID-19 exposure
- Facilitate sending communications to graduate students
- Allow us to track COVID-19 related issues (such as need laptop, need Wi-Fi, need tutoring, need space to work, need special financial or academic advice)
- Allow graduate students to stay connected to their graduate advisors, by being able to book appointments with them virtually.

This functionality will provide a vital tool to all of the OAA, CIS, and EAB will immediately begin work on the implementation of this functionality. Associate University Provost for Planning Bob Maruca will update the EAB Navigate program sponsors and owners on implementation progress. He can be contacted at Robert.Maruca@cuny.edu should you have any questions. We are grateful to EAB for this demonstration of partnership and support.

⭕**New Curricular Resources for Faculty:** In addition to the open educational resources indexed on the Office of Library Services website and the previously announced free access to commercial e-books offered by Barnes and Noble and Akademos (see below), some companies have offered free resources to colleges and universities affected by the COVID-19 virus, including:

1. Lumen Learning is making its courseware, **Waymaker** and **OHM**, available at no cost for courses currently in session. Lumen also provides free services to support the transition. Details here.

2. Pearson is similarly offering digital resources at no charge. Details here.

For faculty members seeking digital alternatives or supplements to their current course materials, these materials may be an appropriate fit. Please note that CUNY is not endorsing or requiring the use of such services. Nevertheless, CUNY is appreciative of their support in making such services available to our students and faculty. *For more information, contact: Bob Maruca,* robert.maruca@cuny.edu

⊙**Additional Blackboard Help Desk Support:** CUNY has contracted with Blackboard to provide this telephone support as an additional service to our students and faculty to ensure coverage when the campus help desks are closed and Blackboard administrator support to students and faculty is unavailable. After-hours Blackboard support is to assist students and faculty with using Blackboard only; all performance, technical and access issues will remain the responsibility of campus helpdesk and Blackboard administrators during their regular support hours. Starting tonight, students and faculty with a pressing Blackboard question can call Blackboard for assistance. This after-hours Blackboard support will be available by telephone: weeknights, between 8:00pm and 8:00 the next morning; weekends, all day and night on Saturdays and Sunday.

⊙**Open Educational Resources & Free Access to Commercial Books:** Building on the Open Educational Resources initiative and also including CUNY library resources, the [Office of Library Services website](#) provides an index to digital resources that faculty may use in online/distance courses at zero cost to their students. Check the [Continuity of Library Services page](#) under the heading "Support for Online Instruction." This site will be regularly updated. If you are aware of additional resources that should be added or if you have other questions or requests, please contact Ann Fiddler, Open Education Librarian, ann.fiddler@cuny.edu. Akademos and Barnes & Noble have partnered with the digital platform VitalSource to offer free access to over 50,000 eBooks to its current customers to facilitate their move to online learning. CUNY students at participating colleges can now access these materials by creating a VitalSource account at [bookshelf.vitalsource.com](#) using their [cuny.edu](#) email addresses. Free access will last through the end of the Spring semester or [until May 25th](#), whichever comes first. More information is available at [VitalSource Helps](#) and [the VitalSource help page](#)

↻**Testing Options and efforts to Secure Proctoring of Distance Learning Exams:** The University previously indicated that CIS was working with [Respondus](#), an online assessment and learning tool to support the immediate needs for an exam proctoring solution for Apple iOS, iPads, and windows based browsers (CIS is exploring ways to expand access via the Enterprise VDI environment). Respondus currently used by Hunter and a solution that some CUNY campus Provost and CIOs recommended, is partnering with educational institutions throughout the world to transition to fully remote administration of classes. They are offering an "unlimited" license for free through May 30 (June 30 for quarter systems). Two products they offer, [LockDown Browser](#) and [Respondus Monitor](#) enable students to take online exams from home, while deterring cheating and protecting the exam content itself. Both applications integrate seamlessly with Blackboard and used with over 80 million assessments annually. As CIS works to complete the important effort, they are also continuing the review of other solutions the University could consider. Recommendations should be shared with CIO Brian Cohen who will bring them to our University CIO's attention.   Additional information will be forthcoming. *For more information, contact: Brian Cohen,* [brian.cohen@cuny.edu.](mailto:brian.cohen@cuny.edu) Today, we are pleased to announce that CIS is making progress on the Respondus tool for exam and proctoring. OGC has approved the current agreement for the trial period and that will get us moving for now. We will need a final approved agreement to go beyond the free trial period.

⭕**Online FAQs and Training:** CIS Training offers a variety of training resources for CUNY-wide cloud applications that support remote collaboration, such as Dropbox and Microsoft Office 365. Webinars on these applications have been added as a result of the increased demand – registration for the webinars is available to all faculty and staff. Additionally, faculty and staff can view CUNY-specific video tutorials for Office 365 Teams, such as creating teams, sharing files, and posting announcements, on the CIS Training Stream channel. CIS Training is available for training questions and requests at CISTraining@cuny.edu. On Monday, we will also be launching a new IT Training site that consolidates links to all sites with training guides, videos, etc., so that users can more easily find the training they need to work and teach remotely. Again, we hope that the CUNY community will appreciate having one resource to find desired training and guidance. This site will also be accessible from the new IT Remote Resources site.

⭕**Cloud Resources:** As a reminder, most CUNY applications and cloud resources, such as Blackboard, CUNYFirst, Microsoft Office 365 (including OneDrive), and Dropbox can be found online on CUNY's Technology Resources pages and accessed through web browsers. Also, please know that Blackboard course shells are automatically created for every CUNY course based on CUNYFirst data.

⭕**Blackboard & Collaborate:** To accommodate greater use of Blackboard for distance learning, CIS asked Blackboard to double the default quota for all Spring 2020 courses (from 750 MB to 1.5 GB).   In addition, the Blackboard Collaborate tool, which CUNY licenses will also be able to support 300,000 students. Collaborate is Blackboard's all-in-one video conference platform that works through computer, tablet, or mobile device. As a fully interactive web conferencing environment and asynchronous voice authoring solution, Collaborate enables faculty to establish web conferences and connect with one student or an entire class, up to 500 participants per Collaborate session.

⭕**Cisco WebEx Access:** WebEx is now available for all faculty and staff across the University under a 90-day license. They can initiate calls with students now, and student-initiated calls are being enabled. It is also integrated WebEx within Blackboard for setting up a collaboration workspace, online meetings and online office hours for courses. See the ConnectCUNY WebEx Quick Start Guide for instructions on accessing and information on using WebEx Meetings and WebEx Teams.

⭕**Microsoft Teams:** Faculty can now easily add students to Microsoft Teams meetings. The CUNYfirst Class Roster now contains students' CUNY login usernames that can be downloaded and inserted into Teams Meeting invitations. Accessing the Student Roster for Dropbox/Microsoft Office 365, available on the Microsoft Office 365 for Education Training Resources page, provides step-by-step instructions.

⭕**Cloud-Based Adobe Licenses for Students:** CIS is working now with Adobe to enable student access through the CUNY Login page using their @login.cuny.edu credentials. Faculty already have home use of these tools under our current CUNY licensing agreement. The services in question are described below.

- Adobe is making temporary at-home access to Creative Cloud available until May 31, 2020 for universities who currently have only lab access for students, at no additional cost.
- Adobe provides a student asset migration portal that enables graduating students to transfer the assets associated with their assigned school account to a personal account.

- Adobe will be sharing a curated set of resources soon on the Adobe Education Exchange website to help faculty with their transition to online instruction.

Student Success, Equity & Inclusion

↻**International Students:** SEVP has permitted institutions to accommodate students as they deem necessary for instance, if a student cannot complete one course of his/her program because the course has been cancelled, that student is permitted to remain in status in SEVIS. The Designated School Official will indicate that the student was unable to complete the particular class due to the coronavirus outbreak and the student will be deemed to be in valid status in the country, and they can continue with classes once everything is back to normal. However, no clarity has been given in the event the student choses to withdraw from all courses but still remains in the country. Our understanding is that SEVP is still working on such kind of cases to come up with proper guidance for the schools. Below is recap on the last clarification from SEVP:

> The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Student Exchange and Visitor Program (SEVP) provided some clarification on department's guidance to colleges/universities about how to handle student-visa issues during the coronavirus outbreak. SEVP informed colleges that they would be given leeway to adapt policies for international students during the public-health crisis. Though the latest guidance was more on students records in SEVIS, it still gives an idea on the process. The three common scenarios below were based on the questions from the international higher education community related to emergency procedures/operations that colleges have put in place:
>
> - The first scenario is in the event the college completely closes without any online courses or alternate learning opportunities and how the students' records should be recorded in in SEVIS.
> - The second scenarios refer to colleges/universities that cancel in-person classes and shift to online instruction, and the international students decide to stay in the United States instead of going back to their home countries. In this case, students could count online courses toward their full course of study, superseding the restrictions that limit them to a single online course per semester.
> - The third situation is similar to the second, except the international student leaves the U.S. In that case, students will still be allowed to engage in online study and the records in SEVIS will remain in active status even though the students are outside the country.

Due to the "fluid nature of this difficult situation, SEVP will continue to provide updated guidance as more issues and scenarios arise making the current guidance subject to further tweaking. Please be advised that the current guidance does not address any school operations beyond the spring 2020 semester yet.

⬤**Student Veterans, National Guard & Reservists:** Please advise students who are activated to communicate with their campus Veterans Services Coordinator, Registrar's Office, and faculty. The University might be facing one of the following scenarios: 1) National Guard students called up as early as the week of **April 1, 2020**; 2) military personnel may be activated in 30 days; or 3) Military units might be given notice of activation at any time. Students' response to all three scenarios SHOULD NOT be to drop classes or discontinue their Spring 2020 coursework. Rather, as per CUNY Military Activation Policy Sections 3.1 – 3.3 listed below, faculty can and should accommodate activated students to enable them to complete the Spring 2020 semester. *For more information, contact: Lisa Beatha, lisa.beatha@cuny.edu.*

3.1 A student who is called to active duty in the armed forces of the United States or National Guard should be given every consideration around either making up the work for the course, obtaining an Incomplete, or being given the grade that he or she has earned at the time that he or she is called to duty.

3.2 At each college, the appropriated committee or other designated authority shall be empowered to grant the remaining number of credits required for graduation to a member of the graduating class who lacks twelve or fewer credits in elective courses to complete the requirements for the degree for those called to active duty in the armed forces of the United States. Credits should be applied from the service members JST (Joint Service Transcript) as MILT elective credit

3.3 Colleges shall encourage students who enter military service to maintain their status as students by availing themselves of such opportunities as may be offered to them (by the colleges, by other accredited colleges, and/or by service agencies) to continue their studies while in Military Service.

⭕**CUNY EDGE Research Foundation Campus Staff:** CUNY EDGE Research Foundation (RF) campus staff, both FT and PT, may work remotely with the approval of their supervisor. CUNY RFguidance can be found here, which outlines the recommended policy and includes a Remote Work Agreement to be completed and signed by each staff member and their supervisor. CUNY OAA EDGE leadership fully supports this move and has worked with college program directors to ensure EDGE students can be served remotely. All advisement activities can be conducted via phone, email or text, and campus staff are already using a variety of platforms to do so that have been in place for more than a year. Additionally, CUNY OAA EDGE leadership has received approval from our funder, the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) to suspend all new referrals to our HRA Fellowship Program and to submit required documentation to HRA remotely. CUNY EDGE is fully prepared to support participating students through remote work arrangements.

⭕**Disability Services:** During this transition to distance learning, CUNY's faculty remain the University's most vital resource in ensuring reasonable accommodations for our more than 11,000 students with disabilities. As our faculty prepare to deliver course content via distance learning modalities, we ask that they consider the following overarching principles and key resources:

- Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), CUNY college are still required to provide equal access to our University's academic programs – even in a distance learning environment.
- Campus Offices of Disability Services (ODS) continue to serve as key sources of technical assistance and support to faculty in determining the best ways to reasonably accommodate students with disabilities in distance learning instructional modalities; please use this link to contact the ODS on your campus:http://cats.cuny.edu/reasonableaccommodations/COSDIDirectory.html
- The barriers that exist at the intersection of a student's disability and course design may be different from those posed by the original course format. Some accommodations students used before may no longer apply in distance learning formats, and some accommodations not considered previously may need to be considered now; we appreciate our faculty's flexibility and collaboration with ODS staff and students with disabilities themselves to meet their accommodation needs in distance learning modalities.

To aid in these efforts, the guide **Reasonable Accommodations: A Faculty Guide for Teaching Students with Disabilities** resource was developed specifically for CUNY faculty to provide them with information and best

practices to be most effective in meeting the needs of students with disabilities and achieving the goal of equal access. This guide includes helpful information in accommodating students with disabilities in distance learning, including the following two sections: Technology in the Classroom and for Online Courses and Alternative Text for Students with Disabilities. Please know that our campus Offices of Disability Services will work closely with our CUNY Office of Student Inclusion Initiatives to ensure that our faculty have the support they need to successfully and meaningfully accommodate students with disabilities. We are grateful to our faculty and to our disability services professionals for their abiding commitment to the access, success, and wellness of students with disabilities.

⭕**CS/MS and Adult Literacy and Language Immersion Programs:** CUNY Start/Math Start, CUNY Language Immersion Program (CLIP), and the Adult Literacy Program are all moving their instruction online. The Central Office staff that support each program have been working with college teams to develop plans for this transition using both synchronous and asynchronous delivery via platforms like Blackboard, Dropbox, Zoom, and WebEx, and how to make use of video, discussion tools, chat, and other technology tools to deliver instruction. Each program will develop a plan, to be provided to the appropriate college leadership, that details how content will be delivered, multiple options for communicating with students, and how student work will be assessed to document learning outcomes have been met. Colleges are encouraged to make any local resources that are available to faculty to assist with this conversion available to these programs as well. CUNY CIS is also supporting assessment of technology needs for these programs if there is not a local college resource readily available. We will provide further guidance on any standardized testing that typically takes place in CUNY testing centers, which would also be developed for students in developmental education classes that require the CUNY Assessment Test in Writing (CAT-W) and CUNY Elementary Algebra Final Exam (CEAFE). CUNY OAA has also confirmed with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Adult Career and Continuing Education Services that our adult literacy programs should follow the guidance of their respective agencies/organizations (i.e.: CUNY, SUNY, DOE) regarding the use of distance learning strategies to maintain program continuity and keep students and teachers engaged while in-person classes are suspended.

Clinical Placements

↻**Clinical Placements — HHS Programs:** CUNY HHS programs have submitted alternative training model applications to NYSED OOP for 22 programs across 14 colleges, representing more than 50 certificate and degree programs. To date, NYSED has approved 13 programs (37 certificates and degrees) and denied only one program. Based on feedback and decisions from NYSED, programs may provide additional information or adjust their proposed model for reconsideration. The majority of applications are for Nursing, followed by Social Work, with the remainder for Speech-Language-Hearing Disorders, Mental Health Counseling, Audiology, Clinical Psychology, Physician Assistant and Physical Therapy programs. In general, NYSED has supported the use of simulation, telehealth, clinical case studies, online resources, reducing or adjusting scheduled training hours to the minimum state requirement for the licensed profession, and extending clinical rotations and field placements to late spring/summer as alternative training models. NYSED decisions are based on specific training/internship and supervision requirements by the respective NYS Licensing Board. Please contact Patricia Simino Boyce (Patricia.boyce@cyny.edu with questions regarding proposed models and the application process.

⭕**Clinical Placements — Education Programs:** As of Monday, March 16, education students who are participating in clinical placements for fieldwork or student teaching required by their academic program, and their faculty supervisors, were told not report to school/field sites until further notice. Education Deans and

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Chairs are receiving specific guidance and resources on conducting virtual fieldwork from Ashleigh Thompson via email and postings on http://www.cuny.edu/teachered. In light of the DOE school closure, and plan for three-days of professional development for teachers at school sites this week, we have heard requests from schools, CUNY students and faculty about candidates attending these days so they can participate in training and assist with remote learning delivery for their school site. Upon careful review, CUNY will support clinical fieldwork placements that support schools' use of remote learning, under the following conditions:

1. The principal invites/approves the candidate's continued participation;
2. cooperating teachers can provide adequate supervision to students in the context of remote learning;
3. faculty are willing and able to support student placements, as required; and
4. students are aware of risks and willing to take the necessary precautions, as per available guidance, to participate in the school-based training during the crisis.

The health and safety of our students and faculty remain a top priority, therefore considerations for placement may be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Please communicate with Ashleigh Thompson with any questions or updates on your decisions to continue with remote clinical fieldwork so we are aware of the student placements across programs and facilities. This update does not preclude colleges from engaging in virtual fieldwork, which was previously recommended. This policy, and its four conditions, pertains to social workers, therapists, counselors and other students with required school-based placements.

⭘**College Now Courses and Early College High Schools:** NYCDOE schools are implementing a remote learning model beginning March 23 through April 20, 2020, following an instructional break from March 16 - 20. No in person instruction can take place in DOE high schools beginning March 16, through April 20. We recommend any courses enrolling current NYC DOE students, including those taking place on CUNY campuses, follow this model. Early College High schools will fully implement NYCDOE's remote learning plan beginning on Monday, March 23 - April 20, 2020. Students should not report to NYCDOE school buildings for instruction during this time. Students can request remote learning devices through this form.

⭘**Admissions (UAPC/WC):** Office of Admissions staff at 42ⁿᵈ Street and UAPC/Kingsborough CC will continue to assist applicants, process applications and provide recommendations per published calendar. The majority of staff is telecommuting but maintaining regular business hours. Mail deliveries are being processed two days a week. Admissions staff is available via phone/email to answer questions from applicants / counselors / college staff. Admission decisions are being delivered without delay by college admissions offices and applicants can also review their application status via CUNYfirst self-service. For more information and updates, please visit: University Admissions or contact Mark Ciolli (mark.ciolli@cuny.edu), University Executive Director of Admissions.

Internships

⭘**Guidance for CUNY Students Working in Internships:** CUNY students working as interns, whether with private or public sector employers, should abide by the internal protocols of their internship site. They may work if the site remains open and is allowing interns to report. In addition to the work site's coronavirus policy, students who are sick or have knowingly been in contact with anyone who is sick should notify their internship manager and CUNY program manager or contact immediately. We ask that all students and supervisors touch base to work on a course of action. Some students may be working with individuals in vulnerable populations, so we ask that supervisors and students use their best judgment. Companies or organizations may institute

telecommuting or work from home policies that apply to students. We ask students to inform their internship manager or CUNY program manager if their employers move to telecommuting/work from home policies. Students should confirm that they have the tools they need to do this effectively and reach out to their internship manager or CUNY program manager with any questions or concerns. In some cases, students have negotiated a leave of absence from internships, that will end when the statewide "pause" is lifted.

⭕**Guidance for Campus- Based Internships:** Similar to the guidance for public and private sector internships, students and supervisors should abide by the protocols and policies set by the institution.

⭕**Guidance for credit bearing internships:** Students will maintain enrollment in Spring 2020 campus-based academic internship courses at their discretion and the discretion of college faculty with whom they are registered. Students and faculty will continue to meet in seminars via online/distance learning tools once they are introduced at the campuses. Students and faculty will work together to redesign any assigned internship deliverables, to ensure that learning outcomes reflected in course syllabi are met and measured at the conclusion of the semester. Where permissible, academic internship responsibilities given to students by outside organizations at the beginning of the semester will continue to be carried out via remote. In cases where internship responsibilities cannot be carried out via remote, campus faculty will develop and assign alternative experiential learning responsibilities and goals to students enrolled in credit-bearing courses.

Adult and Continuing Education Programs

⭕**Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) Financial Management:** As is generally the case for University-wide academic and administrative programs, all college business managers and budget directors should be keeping track of COVID- 19 expenses for all areas of operation, including Adult and Continuing Education. ACE units should be working with College leadership and Presidents to manage any new or existing financial needs resulting from COVID-19 impacts. The CUNY Budget Office is in process of working with the colleges on updating their current financial conditions. For more information, contact: Angie Datta Kamath, angie.kamath@cuny.edu.

⭕**Employer/Employee Resources Related to the Impact of COVID-19:** Many of our students work while attending school, perhaps especially in our Adult and Continuing Education programs, are navigating difficult financial times, both in terms of their personal finances as well as their small business operations. Below is a list of resources that may help them during these difficult times. **For workers**: 1) The NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) has a number of helpful links, including here; 2) Unemployment Insurance; 3) City of New York's Virtual Service Center; 4) Please also encourage people to call 311 with any questions – particularly New Yorkers who lack internet access. **For Employers:** 1) General Guidance for Business Owners; 2) Zero-interest loans and payroll grants for small businesses; 3) NYS Department of Labor has a program available called Shared Work that enables employers to reduce their workers' hours, and also enables those workers to be eligible for part-time Unemployment Insurance to supplement their income; 4) finally, for concerns about their business, students can contact SBS Commissioner Gregg Bishop at gbishop@sbs.nyc.gov. *For more information, contact: Angie Datta Kamath, angie.kamath@cuny.edu.*

Financial Aid and Other Types of Support

❌**Financial Aid for Veterans:** Student Veterans will continue to receive their GI Bill benefits under S. 3503, which President signed into law March 21. The law enables VA to continue providing the same level of education benefits to students having to take courses online due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The law gives VA temporary authority **to continue GI Bill payments uninterrupted in the event of national emergencies**. This allows for continued payment of benefits even if the program has changed from resident training to online training. Thanks to the law, **GI Bill students will continue receiving the same monthly housing allowance (MHA) payments they received for resident training until Dec. 21, or until the school resumes in-person classes**. Students receiving GI Bill benefits are not required to take any action. Benefits will continue automatically. VA will work closely with schools to ensure accurately certified enrollments and timely processing. Updates will be provided to students via direct email campaigns and social media regarding VA's effort to implement these new changes.   For more information, please contact Lisa Beatha, CUNY Director for Veterans Affairs, at lisa.beatha@cuny.edu.

❌**Summary of Financial Aid Considerations in $2 Trillion Congressional Relief Package**: A $2 trillion COVID-19 Relief bill passed yesterday, of which, $14 billion was allocated to Education. This must now be put into action by USED, and it should include guidance on how institutions will indicate students affected by this emergency, and direction on implementation. The relief includes:

- Emergency aid based on enrollment of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) recipients, for both the students in the form of emergency grant and for the institution to assist with expenses incurred due to COVID-19;
- More flexibility in the managing of the FWS and the SEOG programs; including allowing "emergency SEOG" to be awarded up to the maximum Pell award amount, and permitting FWS to continue to get paid during the emergency.
- If able to administer by USED, loans and Pell grant will not count as having being used for students unable to complete the term;
- Instituting a waiver process where the amount of grant or loan associated with each withdrawn student would not have to be returned by the school or the student;
- Removes the "attempted" credits requirement of the Satisfactory Academic Progress calculations;
- Extends Leave of Absences process to standard colleges permitting students to return and complete courses at a later time;
- For the duration of the declared emergency, it will allow Title IV-participating foreign institutions the ability to offer distance education;
- Suspends interest and payments until 9/30/20 of all Direct Loans.

⭕**General Issues:** The University has communicated with campus financial aid directors regarding USDE Guidance for interruptions of study related to Coronavirus (COVID-19) and HESC guidance related to the effect short-term and long-term school closures would have on student financial aid regulations. The expectation is that beginning March 19, students will successfully transition to distance education, and the guidance provided below is for the exception, not all students. To date, HESC has indicated that it will work with colleges to ensure "continued eligibility for awards under all circumstances related to the Coronavirus." The USDE guidance addresses the following five scenarios among other important matters, such as Satisfactory Academic Progress, Federal Work-Study payments in the event of a closure, etc.:

- A student was enrolled or was supposed to begin a travel-abroad experience and either the student has been called back to the U.S. or was never able to begin the travel abroad experience;
- A student was enrolled in a program and met the requirements for full-time enrollment; however, due to the COVID-19, one or more classes – such as an internship, a clinical rotation, student teaching or fieldwork – have been cancelled and now the student has fallen below the 12-credit hour minimum and is no longer considered to be a full-time student;
- A student is quarantined and misses class, or a student is incapacitated due to COVID-19 illness;
- A campus temporarily stops offering ground-based classes in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- A foreign school that serves U.S. students who participate in title IV programs temporarily suspends operations due to COVID-19.

⭕**Federal Financial Aid:** Key topics discussed in most recent guidance: 1) Supplementing the Professional Judgement form for COVID-19-related reasons; 2) Federal Work-Study for students who are unable to continue working due to closure or inability directly due to the crisis; 3) If a student is appealing SAP on a COVID-19-related circumstance. Additional guidance for the treatment of Federal Aid can be found here. Finally, a Central communication was sent recently to all 2019-20 FWS students, whom accepted their award and were enrolled, providing guidance on job locations, working remotely, closures, and the location of the FA COVID-19 Form. FA Offices were provided with a copy of the template communication and a list of the students communicated to.

⭕**USDOE Guidance on Federal Student Loans: "**The US DOE directed all federal student loan servicers to grant an administrative forbearance to any borrower with a federally held loan who requests one. The forbearance will be in effect for a period of at least 60 days, beginning on **March 13, 2020**. To request this forbearance, borrowers should contact their loan servicer online or by phone. Also, an automatic suspension of payments was authorized for any borrower more than 31 days delinquent as of **March 13, 2020**, or who becomes more than 31 days delinquent. To request the forbearance or more details on the suspension of payments, borrowers should contact their loan servicer online or by phone. "

⭕**New York State Financial Aid:** HESC has allowed for COVID-19 impacted students who are adversely affected by the crisis to be held faultless for the term. They **must** be documented individually and retained in the student file. HESC will accept the designation by the school's determination. Such instances are:

- Excelsior failed to earn 30 credits by the end of the term.
- HESC Scholarship GPA requirement not met.
- Failed Progress and Pursuit making them ineligible for Fall 2020 TAP award.

These students can only be certified online at HESCWeb and must have the Impacted by COVID-19 Check box selected. Students who were previously certified and then later report a negative impact, may be recertified by program to have the designation on the term. **Documentation is mandatory.** The form can be found here. HESC has released additional guidance as follows:

- **State Aid**: HESC is looking to address changes in family income based on COVID-19. Board would have to approve; HESC is sending communications to students, including incoming freshmen, regarding experiencing processing delays — auto processing emails still being sent which provides real time application updates and award amounts; Upcoming changes to HESC website and screens to soften

deadlines to students; Students can continue to email and upload documents to HESC; HESC is launching online student facing page soon.

- **TAP:** Processing is continuing and receiving and processing online applications. Additional messages added as well due to some processing delays.
- **Excelsior Scholarship: S**till processing records for 18-19 and 19-20 years. 20-21 application period has not yet been determined.
- **Other Scholarships:** Scholarships where students are initially applying for eligibility determination have a processing delay. Deadlines have been extended, including for any scholarship that requires signing of contracts.
- **APTS:** Colleges may send initial recipients list; file submission deadlines have been removed; Errors are not being worked on by HESC at this time.
- **DREAM:** Still asking schools to defer tuition using information on the Student Status Listing file; Vendor is still accepting and processing applications; A list of another 590 students are being processed; HESC is still working through all the first year start up issues.

As always, for more information, please contact Ms. Elaine Pimentel, University Executive Director of Financial Aid: elaine.pimentel@cuny.edu