
From: Lynn Cooley, Dean of the Graduate School <grad.dean@message.yale.edu>
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 4:19 PM
Subject: Update on GSAS COVID-19 response measures

Yale

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Copied to: DGSs, Registrars, GSAS Staff

In this message: Dean Cooley conveys pandemic-related measures taken by GSAS administration to date and summarizes current GSAS and University policies. It's a long one but packed with information!

May 22, 2020

Dear graduate students,

With an unprecedented Spring semester and Commencement behind us, it is a good time to take a deep breath and review the measures we have taken at GSAS over the last two months to respond to the effects the pandemic has had on all of you academically, professionally, and personally. I have also noted places where you can find further information, or when you might expect an update to work in progress.

Since March 4, I have sent [14 messages](#) to all of you dedicated to COVID-19 related issues alone. Your feedback about these messages and your input over these weeks have greatly informed my priorities, and I hope you will continue to reach out to me or my staff to express your concerns. I am especially grateful to the Graduate Student Assembly leadership for their help navigating our response to the pandemic.

Here is a brief overview of GSAS responses to the pandemic since mid-March:

Academic accommodations and continuity

- Extended the deadline for submitting and withdrawing dissertations
- Created an optional SAT/UNSAT grading mode for Spring 2020 graduate classes

- Extended deadlines for dropping courses and switching from credit to audit

Funding

Stipends to Ph.D. students continue to be paid in full and on schedule.

Expanded Dean's Emergency Fund

- **New: the emergency fund is available to Master's students**
- Covered costs of return from research sites that were closed or when funding was halted
- Covered costs of early return from research locations when travel embargoes were announced
- Helped offset costs for students required to quarantine
- Provided funding for new internet connections for Spring TFs teaching from their homes

Extensions of registration and funding

In an effort to find sustainable ways to compensate for pandemic-related research delays, my team and I worked closely with the Directors of Graduate Studies (DGSs) to empower main-campus (FAS) departments to provide funding extensions of up to one year for students currently in years 1-6, and registration extensions for students in year 7 of study.

New Graduate School Alumni Fellowship

Through a combination of generous donations from Graduate School alumni, the MacMillan Center, ARCHAIA and NELC, we have offered **32 Alumni Fellowships to Ph.D. students who submitted dissertations for a May 2020 degree**. These positions are designed to provide post-graduate employment to new graduates facing a slowed job market caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and to better situate them for future job searches.

Family subsidy support

We provided a \$500 grant to all student parents who were TFs in the Spring 2020 semester.

Healthcare

Healthcare coverage is naturally paramount in all our minds right now, and I know it can be a great source of anxiety for graduating students in particular.

For May 2020 graduates, **Yale Health coverage continues through July 31, 2020 and can be extended until August 31** by contacting Howard el-Yasin (howard.el-yasin@yale.edu). If you are away from New Haven and have questions about how you are covered wherever you are, [please read more here](#). The university is exploring ways to

further extend coverage for new graduates.

Some university updates and reminders:

Travel and visas

As you know, visa and travel guidance has been changeable and sometimes gives us all little time to react. Currently, university-funded international travel is prohibited, and domestic travel should be avoided. Current information can be [found here](#). International students should check with an OISS adviser frequently and [the OISS FAQ page for updates](#).

Laboratory research

As announced in [Provost Strobel's May 13 message](#), we are entering Phase 1 of research reactivation, which is limited to projects that require access to campus facilities. Every lab must establish a comprehensive plan for conducting research that meets public health guidelines and that is approved by their department chair and dean. If you are considering whether to return to lab work, [please review the latest guidance \(dated March 18\) for trainees here](#). There are very clear policies protecting student researchers of which you should be aware, and concrete ways to address concerns if they arise.

Detailed information about **Phase 1 Research Reactivation** [can be found here](#). We expect an update to this information in the coming week.

Libraries

Yale Library has created a detailed set of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) regarding the reactivation of library services. Check this webpage regularly for up-to-date information on access to library resources.

Fall 2020 contingency planning

The Provost [announced on May 13](#) that the fall semester will begin on time in the week of August 31. The [Academic Continuity Committee](#) is developing recommendations contingent on public health guidelines for how courses will be delivered. Scenarios include residential/remote (students on campus, classes online) and hybrid classes (combination of online material with remote or in-person teaching).

One way or another, we will return for a Fall 2020 semester. What that will look like will be announced in the first week of July.

Summer activities

In the meantime, all in-person, campus-based programming through June 27 remains cancelled. A decision to hold in-person programs from June 28 to early August will be made soon as more information on the pandemic becomes available and public health experts advise university leadership.

The regular work of the GSAS has continued in the midst of the pandemic and I am happy to announce new academic initiatives:

Two new certificates

Certificate in Leadership and Mentorship in the M.D./Ph.D. Program

Certificate in Public Humanities

A new track in an existing degree program

Architectural Science in the Ph.D. program in Architecture

New GSAS degrees

M.A. in Medieval Studies

Joint Master's degree in Environmental Management (M.E.M.) and Environmental Sciences (M.S.)

Combined Ph.D. in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (December, 2019)

M.A. in Statistics and Data Science (December, 2019)

New and improved international exchange programs

New agreement with Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU), China

Extended agreement with University College London (UCL) with the addition of Yale Child Study Center and Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program (INP)

Commencement and Convocation Awards

- [Degrees conferred](#): 417 Ph.D., 382 M.Phil., 244 M.S., 258 M.A., 3 M.A.S.
- Graduate Mentor Awards to:

Pieter van Dokkum, Astronomy

Michael Kraus, Management

Joanne Meyerowitz, History and American Studies

- Two GSAS Public Service Awards

- Dozens of departmental awards to students

In closing:

If you have questions I have not answered in this message, please e-mail me and you will receive a response from me or one of my staff as soon as possible. I am planning a Zoom town hall soon -- please stay tuned for an announcement in the coming week.

I am nostalgic for how our lives were on campus as recently as three months ago. Like you, I miss pursuing my research in a community of scholars passionately dedicated to their work. I miss supporting and working with you from Warner House and seeing you on campus. Nothing will be business-as-usual for a long time, and we all need to continue strict adherence to the health and safety guidelines that help to prevent the spread of the virus. But I am confident that with continued patience, caution and goodwill, we will all be back on our beautiful campus together, as soon as possible.

Wishing you a safe, happy, and peaceful summer,

Lynn Cooley

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