

From: [Summers, Greg](#)
Subject: Academic Affairs Update, 11-13-20
Date: Friday, November 13, 2020 1:43:31 PM

Colleagues,

The major virus-related news this week is all about its frightening surge across the country, including in Wisconsin and our respective communities. In the past few days, most UWs which hadn't already planned to teach remotely following Thanksgiving [have made this shift](#). Fortunately, we had long built this into our schedule, but even these more conservative plans could be further disrupted given the fragile state of local health systems. We will all simply need to stay tuned.

I know the past few weeks have been frustrating for many faculty and staff members in Academic Affairs, as we've worked hard to listen to student concerns about their semester. The dialogue has been constructive and our respective governance groups are working well together. However, what's most clear from the surveys we've done is that, despite some concerns, teaching and learning this fall has been remarkably successful under the circumstances. That's true thanks entirely to your dedication as faculty and staff members, your willingness to serve students in multiple modalities despite the increased workload, and your generous patience, empathy, and flexibility. Please know how grateful I am for your efforts.

Speaking of gratitude, as Thanksgiving approaches, we should spare more than a few thoughts for our local health care workers who are struggling under increasingly difficult circumstances. [This article](#) provides a sobering description of where things stand. Whatever you might think of the politics of the present moment, please note that the most important thing we can do to help is to minimize our risks of becoming infected, a reminder that's especially important as we approach the coming holidays.

Greg

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