

From: [Summers, Greg](#)
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Colleagues,

Who would have thought that nine months into a raging pandemic, with millions getting sick and thousands dying, the pandemic itself would feel like a relatively normal, even predictable part of American life next to the unprecedented events unfolding in our political world? But alas, here we are....

Just a few brief updates to report this morning:

- Please find attached the presentation that Dean Gretel Stock gave at the virtual town hall on November 12. Gretel summarized the results of several recent surveys of students, faculty, and staff members the university has conducted to gather input on how the fall semester has gone. Please know we are determined not just to gather your input, but to use your advice to make improvements as we move forward through the rest of the year. You'll receive an early update on this process later today from the chancellor. In the meantime, thanks very much to everyone who took time to share your experiences and suggestions.
- We are beginning to plan for the Fall 2021 semester, and here there is genuine cause for optimism. Given the promising news of effective vaccines on the horizon, we have decided to create a course schedule based on the hope that we will have minimal physical distancing requirements in campus classrooms. Department chairs and deans will soon receive guidance for crafting this schedule, and of course, we will all need to be prepared with a robust "Plan B" if we are still dealing with pandemic health restrictions. This remains a realistic, even likely possibility. Still, it is wonderful to feel hopeful about the not-too-distant future for our academic community.
- That hope will need to steel our resolve for navigating the coming weeks and months, which sadly promise to be among the darkest and most frightening periods of the pandemic. We have done a remarkable job thus far in minimizing the spread of the virus in our campus community, and I trust we will continue to follow best practices in the days ahead, especially during the holidays.

Have a good weekend, and stay safe, everyone.

Greg

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