



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

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Sarah-Jane Leslie, Dean
Class of 1943 Professor of Philosophy

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Dear Graduate Students,

I hope this message finds you and yours safe and well. Thank you for all of your individual and collective efforts to support one another as we continue to navigate these unprecedented times together while practicing social distancing. I am writing to let you know all the ways we remain connected as a community and to update you on some important programs and policies. My team and I remain committed to supporting all of you during these difficult times, so please reach out with any questions you may have.

We know that many of you are experiencing research setbacks as a result of the current situation. Please know that we are continuing to work closely with each of your departments/programs to address the circumstances of students impacted by the disruption.

Travel Updates

Given the uncertainty about when travel will again be safe and when countries will begin lifting current travel restrictions, we share the following guidance.

University-sponsored international travel

International travel continues to be suspended and this will only be reviewed when the current US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and US Department of State (DOS) travel restrictions have been relaxed. For travel to be considered, a location will have to be CDC Level 0 or 1 AND DOS Level 1, 2, or 3. At this time, no locations meet those criteria and we will provide additional guidance to the campus when that occurs. Until further notice, no international travel should be planned or scheduled.

University-sponsored domestic travel

COVID-19 continues to spread throughout the United States and we do not have nationwide, systematic advice from government authorities about the safety of domestic travel. We, therefore, maintain a strong recommendation against non-essential domestic travel. We urge those who engage in such travel to exercise caution and good judgment. Travelers should heed the advice of authorities in the states they are departing from and to which they are traveling. For further advice, please consult the [CDC's advice for domestic travel](#).

Many states continue to have “stay at home” orders so we expect domestic travel in the near-term to be limited. In addition, several states now require quarantines for those arriving from cities and

states affected by large-scale outbreaks. We encourage those considering domestic travel to develop medical and logistical contingency plans in case restrictions change, including in the state to which they plan to return.

Personal travel (international or domestic)

We continue to strongly urge against international and domestic personal travel and note our limited ability to support such travelers.

Changes to the Student Health Plan (SHP)

Please take a moment to review this [announcement](#) concerning changes to the Student Health Plan for next year, including expanded coverage related to COVID-19, adjustments related to the new academic calendar, and regular changes to the fees. The vast majority (95%) of graduate students will not experience a rate increase for their primary plan, as their premium is included alongside the tuition coverage they receive for fellowships and assistantships, including those covered by external grants.

To help address rate changes for other graduate students, the Graduate School and particular master's programs will provide assistance so that currently enrolled graduate students who will be in self-pay status (master's or DCE) next year will be out-of-pocket for an increase equivalent of no higher than \$20 per month for their annual coverage through July 2021 (billed over a 10-month period). For currently enrolled Ph.D. students who enter into a self-pay status as they progress through their program, similar mitigations will be in effect in future years.

Any graduate students who, despite these mitigations, experience financial hardship due to rate changes should apply to the Medical Hardship Fund by contacting Dean Lisa Schreyer at schreyer@princeton.edu; this will be considered an appropriate expense to be covered by that fund.

Please note that rates for the SHP are currently the lowest among our peers and will likely continue to be the lowest even with these changes.

New Princeton Service Portal

We are pleased to introduce a new tool to help you connect with the Graduate School team during this time, and beyond. The Graduate School is now part of the [Princeton Service Portal](#), a hub to access information and request services from our team, as well as other campus units including Finance & Treasury, University Services, Environmental Health & Safety, and the Office of Information Technology.

Knowledge Articles & Submitting Requests

The Princeton Service Portal adds to our personalized and relationship-based service by providing complementary ways for you to find quick answers to your questions, submit requests for services, and gain insight into the status of your inquiries. Through the Portal, you can find Knowledge Articles to address many commonly asked questions and submit requests for help in the following areas, and more:

- Reenrollment, enrollment changes, and student benefits
- University financial support and coordination of external fellowships
- Incoming and prospective student services

Notifications

When you email our departmental addresses, you may now receive a notification that a case was created on your behalf. Do not worry, you're still contacting the Graduate School staff and we remain dedicated to delivering highly personalized support. This is just a new way for us to address your questions and an easy way for you to track the status of your request.

Virtual Programs & Events

We continue to expand the breadth and variety of virtual programming and community-building efforts for graduate students. Many thanks to the Graduate Student Government and all of the graduate student organizations for their partnership. Several new programs are featured below.

GradFUTURES Virtual Forum

The [GradFUTURES Virtual Forum](#) hosted by the GradFUTURES team is currently underway (April 29-30 and May 1). This unique, three-day professional development Forum includes many interactive sessions and keynote presentations by graduate alumni designed to help graduate students explore opportunities for leadership and professional growth across all fields of endeavor. We encourage you to attend these sessions to hear from and connect with graduate alumni to learn about diverse career paths and gather advice. Please register in advance to learn, share and connect at the GradFUTURES Virtual Forum! [Here's the schedule at-a-glance.](#)

NEW Virtual Writing Labs

Having a hard time creating structure around your writing and research? Looking for a sense of community with other writers/dissertators? Don't go it alone! Join the Zoom-based virtual lab provided by the Writing Program to write with peers, consult Fellows as needed, and tackle your short and long-term writing goals! Join [here](#) during the following day and times: Sunday-Thursday 7 -11 p.m., Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., & Tuesday-Thursday, 1-5 p.m., ET.

Student Life and ADI Virtual Events

The Student Life team continues to offer community-building programming and support for 70+ graduate student organizations in their virtual programming initiatives. Virtual events are posted on the [Graduate School events calendar](#). The Access, Diversity and Inclusion team also has several virtual community building programs on [their events calendar](#).

Campus-wide Virtual Events

Please also check out the virtual community-building activities, workshops, and resources that the Graduate School and partner offices in Campus Life and throughout the University are offering for students: <https://winter.princeton.edu/virtual>. Check back each week as new activities are added.

Seeking Support

Most importantly, please know that we are here to support you during these challenging times. The Student Life team will continue their weekly email wellness check-ins with all graduate students. You may contact the [Student Life team](#) at the Graduate School Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. via email or phone. After hours and weekends, you may contact the Dean-on-Call for urgent matters by calling the Department of Public Safety at 609-258-1000.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) can be reached at (609) 258-3141, and [virtual CPS](#) counseling sessions are being offered as well.

In closing, I'd like to express my sincere gratitude to the Graduate Student Government for their outstanding leadership during these challenging times. Thank you again to you all for continuing to comply with stay-at-home guidelines and for acting in socially responsible ways to protect the health and safety of yourself, your families, and others. For the most updated information and guidance regarding COVID-19, please visit <https://www.princeton.edu/content/covid-19-coronavirus-information>.

Wishing you and yours health, safety and resilience,

Sarah-Jane Leslie
Dean of the Graduate School