March 17th, 2020

Dear Graduate Students,

As the COVID-19 situation evolves, I write to follow up on my previous message concerning graduate students in University housing. In particular, I wish to reiterate the request that graduate students who have another residence they can reasonably go to, and who can work remotely, please depart for that other residence.

Faculty have been instructed to allow and encourage graduate students to do their work remotely except when absolutely necessary. Faculty members with labs must implement the following steps immediately:

- Determine the minimum amount of on-campus activity necessary to ensure research continuity and ensure that all other activities take place remotely.
- Determine the minimum number of personnel that must be present at any given time to perform on-campus activities.
- Create a schedule that allows on-campus activities to be performed at different times whenever possible. This will allow for the fewest number of people to be present in a lab at any given time, while allowing for research continuity.
- The only people in a laboratory at any given time should be those who must be there to perform the activity scheduled at that time. All others should work remotely.
- Whenever it is necessary for multiple people to be present in a lab, they must maintain at least a 6-foot radius of separation between themselves and anyone else at all times. Ensuring this may require thinking through the logistics of your space very carefully.

Faculty members with labs are submitting Research Essential Operations Plans by Wednesday the 18th. These plans, if enacted, would allow for the suspension, within 48 hours, of activities requiring physical access to campus should circumstances warrant.

Graduate students should reach out to Dean Christine Murphy (natural science and engineering) or Dean Geoffrey Hill (humanities and social sciences) if they are encountering resistance to working remotely except when strictly necessary.

While some of you may, for now, need to be present for limited amounts of time on campus, many of you will be able to conduct all of your work remotely. The more that we can reduce the number of students on campus, the better we can mitigate the spread of the virus, and the better we can care for those who may become sick and isolate those who have been exposed. Many graduate students in University housing do not have another residence they can reasonably move to -- for example, many international students are unable to return to their countries of origin given travel restrictions. Therefore, if you have the option to go to another residence, going
there is an act of public-spirited generosity towards your fellow graduate students who have no choice but to remain.

The quicker you are able to depart, the more beneficial that will be to your fellow students. **We therefore ask that those of you who can leave please do so as soon as possible and no later than March 30th.**

Under normal circumstances, graduate students are expected to give 30 days' notice before leaving University housing or else they are assessed a fee of $300. The $300 fee will be waived for any graduate students wishing to vacate at this time due to the COVID-19 situation. Further, housing refunds will be calculated on a per-day basis from the student’s specified day of departure. Graduate students who have meal plans, and who have paid for meals that they have not used, will be refunded the cost of those unused meals if they depart at this time. Graduate students for whom relocation costs are a significant impediment to leaving should contact [Dean Lisa Schreyer at the Graduate School](mailto:deanlisa@princeton.edu).

Please note that, in order to cancel your contract and receive your refund, you will need to vacate your unit. Amongst other things, this will enable us to repurpose your unit as needed, e.g., for self-isolating students. Students who have retained their housing for the 20-21 academic year but who vacate at this time will still be able to keep their 20-21 academic year housing contract.

Boxes and tape are available at the New Graduate College multipurpose room, 200 Lakeside, and 1 Lawrence mailroom from today until March 30th. Two moving/storage vendors, [Campus Storage](mailto:campusstorage@princeton.edu) and [Storage Squad](mailto:storagesquad@princeton.edu), are also available for contracting at Dillon Gym, 9am-5pm, until March 20th, and online at any time.

We would greatly appreciate it if graduate students who are planning to leave could let University Housing know by March 23rd or sooner. This can be done by emailing [askhousing@princeton.edu](mailto:askhousing@princeton.edu) or by submitting an Intent to Vacate form through the [Housing for Graduates Portal](https://housing.princeton.edu).

For further information, updates, and guidance on the overall University response to COVID-19, please refer to [coronavirus.princeton.edu](https://coronavirus.princeton.edu)

Let me express my heartfelt gratitude towards the graduate student community at this time. We are facing an unprecedented situation, and I am deeply appreciative of the community spirit graduate students are displaying in the face of it.

Sincerely,

Sarah-Jane Leslie
Dean of the Graduate School