

Daniel Lee Kleinman, Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs

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TO: Boston University Graduate and Professional Students

FROM: Daniel Kleinman, Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs *gok*

DATE: December 17, 2020

SUBJECT: End of the Fall Semester

I write to wish you a healthy, restful, and happy holiday season. For many of us, 2020 was a very challenging year. You – our graduate and professional students – faced the complexity and difficulty of navigating academic life during a global pandemic, and you showed remarkable resilience. You’ve progressed in your programs by finding new and innovative ways to learn, teach, practice, and do research. Many of you have done this on limited incomes, or while caring for children or parents, or alongside partners who have lost or changed jobs. Once the work of your semester is complete, I encourage you to take some time in the next few weeks to rest before the start of the spring semester.

As we head into winter break, I want to take the opportunity to highlight some important information about COVID testing and compliance, travel, and your overall health and wellbeing.

COVID Testing, Compliance, and Intersession Travel

If you have specific questions about testing, compliance, or travel please visit the [Back2BU website](#) or contact [Healthway](#).

If you are enrolled in one of our on-campus graduate or professional programs on the Charles River or Medical Campuses, please note the following:

- In accordance with the guidance issued by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker and the BU Medical Advisory Group, we strongly discourage you from traveling or attending gatherings during the winter intersession. Travel and gatherings are significant contributors to the spread of the virus.
- If you do plan on traveling, please remember to update your LfA status to reflect this. The same applies upon return to the Boston area; you should change your LfA status the day before you travel. Should you choose stay in the Boston area, you are required to remain in compliance with testing protocols and daily health attestations. Please consult the [COVID testing center’s amended intersession hours](#).

- We invite graduate and professional students previously ineligible for testing to utilize our COVID testing facilities during intersession. These include students who have taken courses and attended to all of their BU responsibilities remotely for most or all of the semester while living in the Boston area, as well as those enrolled in our online or off-campus graduate or professional programs. For more information, please reference the email you should have received on December 9, 2020, with the subject line: “[Category 4 Testing During Holiday Break](#).”

If you are enrolled in one of our online or off-campus graduate or professional programs we invite you to visit one of our COVID-19 testing facilities during the winter intersession. Please reference the email you should have received on December 9, 2020 with the subject line: “[Category 4 Testing During Holiday Break](#).”

Wellness Resources

We head into winter during a pandemic with an apparent end in sight. US vaccine distribution has begun for frontline healthcare workers, and hopefully, by late spring, vaccines will be widely available for the general public. Still, the winter is likely to be challenging for many members of our community, and I encourage all of you to prioritize your mental and physical wellbeing. You can take advantage of our wellness resources now and throughout your time at BU, particularly:

- [Headspace](#), a research-backed app for mindfulness and meditation. Available for free to all BU degree-seeking students.
- [Wellnest](#), a voice-powered journaling app that has daily check-ins and guided content on topics like imposter syndrome, happiness, resilience, and much more. Available for free to all BU students.
- [The Wellbeing Project Virtual Resources](#), a curated list of BU mental health and wellbeing resources available to all BU students.
- [Behavioral Medicine Groups](#), virtual groups on topics such as managing anxiety, grief, mindfulness, as well support groups for graduate students, Black students, and the LGBTQ+ community.
- Programming at the [Howard Thurman Center](#) and through the [BU Arts Initiative](#).
- [Food Insecurity Resources](#), a list of food and nutrition resources at BU and within the local area.
- [Graduate Education Health & Wellness Resources](#), a list of many local and BU resources and initiatives pertinent to graduate and professional students.

Take good care.