



OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

May 11, 2020

Dear CUNY Community,

As we near the conclusion of what has been an extraordinarily trying semester, I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge your resilience and applaud your resolve.

I am profoundly humbled by the way you have pulled together and looked out for one another under incredibly difficult circumstances and unspeakable tragedy. It is important that we acknowledge the losses we have suffered as a university community; we all know somebody who has been personally affected. But even as we grieve, we have found the inner strength to carry on with our daily lives, to rally around what is most important to us: Our families, our communities and our commitment to keep pursuing our goals.



I commend all of you who made the quick pivot to remote working and distance teaching and learning, finding a quiet corner in your busy households to focus on

the tasks at hand. I congratulate our students, who are coping with daily frustrations and struggles. Even as the structure of your lives has been shaken, you found a way to keep it together. Whether you are winding down your first year or preparing to graduate and planning for your future in these times of uncertainty, you should feel proud.

Kudos to our faculty, who have risen to the occasion, modified their syllabi and kept their students on track through webinars, video conferences, text messages, emails and any other channels they could identify. You have imparted lessons that transcend the course description; you have fostered a real sense of community, and stressed the need for mutual support. You have shown yourselves to be remarkably empathetic. Your commitment to your craft, and to your students, will not soon be forgotten.

To the tireless members of CUNY's staff in the Central Office and across our campuses, I thank you for your unceasing service. This goes for those who have worked from their homes to sustain our operations, and for the campus peace officers, mechanics and workers who maintain CUNY's many buildings and grounds. Each one of you has managed to tackle work that had to be done, and I know it hasn't always been easy.

Equally laudable, many of you have shown the fortitude to stand with your neighbors, helping the University and the broader New York City community and exhibiting an abundance of good will. You are the pillars of strength through which our University is sustained. I could not be prouder to lead such an unwavering institution.

And let's be honest: I know how tired you are, of being socially distanced and cooped up in your homes, especially with the arrival of warmer weather. We are all experiencing some degree of fatigue. It's more important than ever that we stay safe, but also that we continue to make sure we all are getting the care and support we need. Please take a moment each day to check on your loved ones and friends, and remember, nobody should have to go it alone.

We know the rhythm of your semester has been interrupted in numerous ways, and it's been difficult to sustain your academic momentum. Students, please keep in mind that we enacted a [credit/no credit grading policy](#) that will give you the option of foregoing a letter grade in any or all of your classes this semester and instead opt for pass/fail grading. You can wait until after the University's final grade submission deadline or the date of actual grade posting to make a decision. Before

you make these decisions, I recommend that you talk with an academic adviser and plot a considered course of action that makes the most sense for you.

This period in our lives has been trying on so many levels, but we will come out of it stronger, sharper and with an evolved sense of purpose. We are redefining what it means to be CUNY Strong.

To our students, good luck on your finals. To the greater CUNY community, I thank you again for your continued patience, persistence and courage. Today, I ask you to take a deep breath, take stock of your inner resolve and keep pushing. The academic finish line is in view, and I know you can get there.

Sincerely,

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