



A MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PRESIDENT

**Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.**

My Dear Colleagues and Students,

In the interest of sharing communications widely, I am forwarding an email communication from CUNY Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost José Luis Cruz. The communication will also be posted on our website.

Thank you for your consideration.

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.  
Interim President

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Dear Presidents and Deans, Provosts, Chief Student Affairs Officers, and Chief Enrollment Managers:

Happy Friday. Please find the nineteenth installment of our University's Academic Continuity memo which will be uploaded to our [University's COVID-19](#) portal soon. A summary of new and updated sections is presented below.

- **Academic Policies, Requirements, and Deadlines:** Recording of Remote Classes; Final Exams for Developmental Courses.
- **Financial Aid and Other Types of Supports:** Chancellor's Emergency Relief Grants
- **Distance Learning Platforms, Tools & Resources:** Zoom University Licenses; Mi-Fi Hotspot Devices
- **Student Success, Equity & Inclusion:** Covid-19 Student Conduct Protocol; Student Face Mask Accommodations, Modifications, or Exemptions; Accommodations for Students with Hearing and Communication Disabilities.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments, concerns and/or recommendations. For your convenience, I have pulled out the updated sections and reproduced them below my signature block.

All the best,

JL

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José Luis Cruz, Ph.D.  
Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost  
The City University of New York

**NEW Recording of Remote Classes:** As is the case with many colleges and universities that have chosen online and distance learning modalities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty utilizing Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate and other digital technology to deliver course curriculum/material must be sensitive to issues of privacy. To that end, faculty offering classes through web conferencing digital technology like Zoom must not record a student in a class session without the student's consent. Similarly, CUNY discourages students from recording the sessions unless such recording is part of a reasonable accommodation under the law or is not prohibited by campus policy. To obtain consent, faculty who wish to record their class sessions must provide the following announcement, in emails, and/or class syllabus, to enrolled students and verbally at the opening of the first class session:

*Students who participate in this class with their camera on or use a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded solely for the purpose of creating a record for students enrolled in the class to refer to, including those enrolled students who are unable to attend live. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live.*

As mentioned in the announcement, recording of classes is for the benefit of students. Faculty shall not use class recordings as a means of determining class attendance and are reminded that CUNY is classified by the U.S. Department of Education as a non-attendance taking institution. Doubts faculty may have regarding the identity of participants should be alleviated if faculty offer their classes through applications and resources that have been licensed by CUNY Central or their college and require a CUNY/College ID for login, thereby giving reasonable assurance that participants are CUNY students.

For the avoidance of doubt, the prohibition on recording without consent does not apply to audio or video lectures of the faculty member only and that do not include a student participation component.

**UPDATE Final Exams for Developmental Courses:** Given plans to reduce density on CUNY campuses in the fall 2020 term, University-wide final exams for developmental courses and interventions will not be administered for those terms. This is a continuation of guidance issued for the spring and summer 2020 terms. Under normal circumstances, the CUNY Assessment Test in Writing (CATW) and CUNY Elementary Algebra Final Exam (CEAFE) are administered in person at campus testing centers. Per University policy, these tests normally constitute 35% of a student's final course grade in top-level developmental/English as a Second Language (ESL) courses and interventions in writing and math. The instructor determines the other 65% of the course grade based on the student's course performance. For fall 2020, faculty and instructors

of such courses/interventions (including CUNY Start/Math Start/USIP and any other intervention) will determine 100% of the final course grade based on student performance in the course/intervention. Top-level reading courses and interventions typically use a departmental (rather than University) final exam as 35% of the course grade. For fall 2020, faculty and instructors of reading courses/interventions may also locally determine 100% of the final course grade based on student performance. Proficiency in reading, writing, and math will continue to be awarded based upon successful completion of the course/intervention.

Colleges are not required to, but may, substitute a local final exam in place of the University final exam. Because CUNY Start/Math Start uses structured common curricula and has a professional development team that works across partner colleges, the program has created standardized grading plans for its math and reading/writing interventions which will be used to determine students' grades and proficiency status.

Some short USIP interventions have used CEAFE or CATW as 100% of a student's grade (no instructor grade component), as authorized in the September 28, 2016 memo "Exit Standards for Non-Course-Based Developmental Interventions." A poll of USIP Directors found that no campuses planned to do that for summer 2020. If a Provost decides to exercise that option for Winter 2020, the University will share test forms for local use and grading. The same 2016 memo indicated that the CUNY Language Immersion Program (CLIP) would use the CATW as a high-stakes exit. For CLIP, alternative measures were coordinated with the program leadership. These decisions were made in consultation with the ESL, Reading, Writing, and Math Discipline Councils; CUNY Start leadership; USIP Directors; and the University Director of Disability Programs. For additional information, please contact Director of Testing Melissa Uber at [Melissa.Uber@cuny.edu](mailto:Melissa.Uber@cuny.edu)

**UPDATE Chancellor's Emergency Relief Grants:** On April 8, The City University of New York announced the launch of a Chancellor's Emergency Relief Fund to help students facing financial hardship during the COVID-19 crisis. To date, more than \$5.2 million has been donated and/or pledged from among others, the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation, the James and Judith K. Dimon Foundation, The New York Community Trust, The Carnegie foundation/corporation, Deutsche Bank, JPMC, the Jeffrey and Shari Aronson Foundation, Goldman Sachs, the AT&T foundation, The Pinkerton Foundation, the Altman foundation, the Teagle Foundation, The ECMC foundation, the Summerfield Foundation, Citi and more. Of this amount, a total of 4,000 grants in the amount of \$500 per student (\$2 million) have already been disbursed and an additional \$1 million will be disbursed to 2,000 students during the week of July 6<sup>th</sup>. This emergency fund is the latest financial-assistance resource CUNY is providing to its most vulnerable students in response to the COVID-19 crisis. On August 14, the University announced that the Andrew Mellon Foundation earmarked \$2.5 to enable CUNY to award retention and completion grants of varying amounts to undergraduates who otherwise would not be able to continue

their studies. Students who are ineligible for other forms of federal emergency assistance, including undocumented and international students, will especially benefit from this gift. The Office of Academic Affairs will manage this award and will provide additional information to campuses shortly.

**NEW Zoom University Licenses:** The University has secured an enterprise license for the use of ZOOM. The license covers all CUNY faculty and staff (up to 49,000) and all students (capped at 320,000). Some of the key features are: 1) Unlimited meeting duration; 2) Up to 300 participants per meeting; 3) Free VOIP and International Toll Number; 4) Polling; 5) Screen Sharing; and 24/7 Technical Support. In addition, after consultation with many of you also included a pre-negotiated schedule of additional add-on features that are of varied interest among the campuses such as webinar, large meetings and ZoomRooms at an additional cost only to those campuses that are interested in these add-on features. The CIS team has already begun the implementation efforts to include sub-accounts for campus delegated administration and their Training and Communications teams are working on materials to support the program. All faculty and staff should have access to ZOOM under this license before the end of August.

**NEW Mi-Fi Hotspot Devices:** On August 12, CUNY's Board of Trustees approved a resolution to "Authorize the Purchase of WiFi Hotspot or MiFi Devices for Emergency Distribution to Students Needing Broadband Internet Access in Response to the Continuing COVID-19 Pandemic Health Emergency." To this end, the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Computing and Information Systems (CIS) in collaboration with the office of the Chief Operating Officer will purchase and distribute approximately 4,000 "WiFi hotspot" devices to campuses, which will provide them to the students deemed to have the greatest need for broadband internet access.

**NEW Covid-19 Student Conduct Protocol:** The City University of New York takes the well-being and safety of our students, faculty and staff very seriously. During the pandemic, we all have an obligation to behave in a responsible manner per the guidance approved in your campus' re-opening plan to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Responsible behavior extends to your off-campus and personal lives, which can affect your ability to transmit the virus on campus, including at a minimum:

- always wearing a mask when on campus and when gathering with other individuals
- maintaining physical distance of at least six feet on campus and when gathering with individuals outside the classrooms and other areas
- limiting the size of on campus gatherings;
- minimizing and limiting the size of events gatherings with other students

Article XV of the CUNY bylaws requires that each student obey policies, regulations, and orders of the University/College. Students are reminded that the

Rules and Regulations for the Maintenance of Public order pursuant to article 129a of the education law (“Henderson Rules”) prohibits:

- behaviors that recklessly or intentionally endangers the health of others
- behavior that interferes with the institution’s educational processes.
- failure to comply with the direction of a University official

The University is committed to adhering fully to current and future directives about social encounters from the federal, state and local public health officials. Any student found in violation of these directives may be subject to discipline under article XV of the CUNY bylaws.

**NEW Student Face Mask Accommodations, Modifications, or Exemptions:**

The office of disability services works with students who may require academic accommodations. If a student is unable to wear a mask for health reasons, the student should contact the campus office of disability services. This office will work with the student to help identify arrangements to complete in-person courses in an alternate format. If, however, there is an in-person class that cannot be accommodated in an alternative format, a student may be approved by the CUNY Office of Disability Programs, in consultation with the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, to wear a modified face mask or, in very rare circumstances, no face covering. In this situation, the office of disability services will communicate this information directly to the faculty member. Approved students will also be provided with a written exemption from the CUNY Office of Disability Programs that indicates any modifications or exceptions, which they must carry with them to show faculty if requested. Please note that medical exemptions are extremely rare and are based solely on medical necessity. If a student is exempt from the face mask policy, please consider how to seat students to ensure proper social distancing within a given instructional setting. For more information, please email Chris Rosa, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Inclusion Initiatives [Christopher.Rosa@cuny.edu](mailto:Christopher.Rosa@cuny.edu).

**NEW Accommodations for Students with Hearing and Communication Disabilities:** Some students with hearing and communication disabilities may need their instructor to wear a clear mask for lip and facial expression purposes. If the student has registered with the college office of disability services and has requested an accommodation for clear masks, the office will reach out to the student’s instructors and provide a clear mask for them to wear while teaching and/or interacting with the student. If you have questions, please contact the office of disability services at your campus.

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