

From: [Mueller, Bruce](#)
Subject: Update from the COP Dean's Office for Faculty & Staff
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[ProvostStrikeLettertoGrad_Students.docx](#)



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September 8, 2020

Dear Faculty & Staff,

Could more crazy stuff happen in 2020? Let me catch you up with what is on my desk:

❖ **Graduate Student Strike:** As I shared in an email to all of you, the Graduate Employees' Organization, which represents graduate student instructors and graduate student staff assistants, announced yesterday that its members have voted to strike. <https://www.michigandaily.com/section/academics/geo-members-strike-protest-fall-reopening>. I have attached the Provost's message to UM grad students to this email in case you did not see it.

I want to be 100% transparent with you on how the College dealt with COVID and GSI / faculty teaching this semester. All GSIs and faculty members were surveyed about their preferences for in person teaching. We accommodated 100% of those preferences. No GSI or faculty member has been mandated to teach in person at the College of Pharmacy against their will. That has been my stance on day 1 of this pandemic and will be until this pandemic is over. Additionally, you already know that we are observing all COVID safety recommendations and are having as many faculty, staff, and students working at home as possible. **College of Pharmacy courses will continue to be taught on our original schedule.** Course coordinators and course faculty who may be impacted by the GSI strike need to ensure they are set to conduct their classes without GSI support for now. **To aid in your planning,** you may ask your course GSI if they plan on attending class/doing their GSI work for your class, but do not engage them in a conversation about the merits of the strike, etc. Contact Dean Sweet (gsweet@umich.edu) if you are unable to identify a workable solution for your course so we can explore options together. I will update you as I learn more about the ongoing negotiations which are still ongoing.

❖ **In the Interim Program:** Early in my Deanship, I shared with you the students' concern that COVID could reduce the networking opportunities of our students with faculty and alumni. I am going to try an experiment where I will be bringing the networking directly to the students. 'In the Interim' is a new weekly interview series that I will host each week (I am Interim Dean... get it?). My goal is to offer the student audience insight into the unique careers of U-M Pharmacy faculty and alumni with an opportunity for them to ask their own questions of the guest. My first guest on In the Interim will be our newest faculty member, Dr. Lydia Benitez, who works in hematology pharmacy. The first program will be held Thursday evening September 10, 2020 at 5:30 PM in Eastern Time. I am aiming for a ~20 minute networking time. Thanks to Lydia for agreeing to be the first guest, and I will be hitting up other faculty members to be future guests. If you would like to see the webinar, click the yellow REGISTER button on the graphic in this section of this email.

❖ **U-M Sampling and Testing Program:** The University of Michigan will begin a Sampling and Testing Program of asymptomatic students, faculty and staff for the virus that causes COVID-19 next week as part of a free, opt-in, voluntary surveillance testing program on the Ann Arbor campus. More info here: <https://record.umich.edu/articles/university-to-test-3000-weekly-for-covid-19-on-campus/>.

❖ **Remote Teaching Technology:** We had some snafus with technology in classrooms inside and outside of our building. I think most problems have been worked through, but that doesn't make it any less frustrating for all of you that put in the effort to get your classes ready for the semester. Thanks to Brian Vanderziel assisting all of us in need! I am interested in how your teaching is going so far, especially if you are teaching in person. Drop me a quick note to share how things are going for you.

❖ **Faculty Senate:** I usually don't spend much time talking about the Faculty Senate, but the upcoming Faculty Senate meeting promises to be quite interesting. It will be held on September 16, 2020 at 3 PM. There are Motions on everything from electronic voting, complaints on how the University handled COVID, how Provosts are chosen and more. It should be interesting. You are invited to attend the virtual meeting, but by UM Faculty Senate rules, "Visiting, Adjunct or Clinical professors, acting or interim appointees to executive or Dean positions are not entitled to Senate membership". I guess that puts me out of the loop just like our clinical faculty! Our faculty representative is Amanda Garner, who from today forward shall be addressed as Senator Garner!

Hang in there everybody! I appreciate all that you are doing to get us through these crazy times!

Sincerely,
Bruce A. Mueller
Interim Dean and Professor of Clinical Pharmacy



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