Dear Grad Students,

Grad Student Instructors (GSI) and the Strike: As you know, the Graduate Employees’ Organization, which represents graduate student instructors and graduate student staff assistants, announced yesterday that its members have voted to strike over issues related to COVID-19, defunding police on campus, and other issues. Link This strike does not apply to students who are currently Graduate Student Research Assistants. College of Pharmacy classes will go on as scheduled.

I understand there are significant concerns among the UM students and faculty regarding the COVID response at the University. I hope that your confidence in the College of Pharmacy leadership during the COVID pandemic is high. I want to be fully transparent with you on how the College assigned GSI / faculty teaching this semester, in the face of COVID. All GSIs and faculty members were surveyed about their preferences for in person teaching before assignments were made. I am happy to say that we accommodated 100% of those preferences, meaning that to our knowledge no College of Pharmacy GSI or faculty member has been mandated to teach in person against their will. This has been my stance on day one of this pandemic and will be throughout this academic year. 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. The safety of our students, staff and faculty is our highest priority.

COLLEGE INFORMATION

Early in my Deanship, I was approached by students concerned that COVID could reduce the networking opportunities of our students with faculty and alumni. I agree that it
could, so I am going to try an experiment where I will be bringing the networking directly to you. 'In the Interim' is a new 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 you to ask your own questions of the guests just like any other networking you might do. During each session, you have access to exclusive networking and career opportunities. My first guest on In the Interim will be our newest faculty member, Dr. Lydia Benitez, who works in hematology pharmacy. Do you have a question for Dr. Benitez that you want to submit ahead of time? Click HERE. 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, please join me Thursday night!

I am also interested to hear your ideas for guests on the program of special interest to grad students. Send me an email with requests!

❖ **Reminder for Building Hours for Students:** The College of Pharmacy building is open to students Monday through Friday 6am to 6pm (grad students have increased access due to research activities compared to other students). Please make sure to use your MCard when entering the building and make use of the ResponsiBLUE symptom checker tool to answer health screening questions before coming to campus.

❖ **Student Services Hours:** The Student Affairs Office will be open 8am-5pm Monday through Friday for limited service to students in the building during the week. One member of the Students Services team and one Assistant Dean will be in the building each day. The Office may be closed during the lunch hour (12-1pm) on select days.

❖ **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.

[https://record.umich.edu/articles/university-to-test-3000-weekly-for-covid-19-on-campus/](https://record.umich.edu/articles/university-to-test-3000-weekly-for-covid-19-on-campus/)

There is an opportunity for students to volunteer to assist in this important work. This opportunity requires in-person participation at Palmer Commons on campus. The testing site opens Thurs, Sept 10. Shifts are available through the hours of 8am-5pm.
Please see the description of the volunteer opportunity below and complete this registration form if you would like to volunteer. At the testing center, students will complete participant check-in and collection kit distribution, including verifying participant identity and labeling each swab kit. The on-site team will also be responsible for observing specimen self-collection, coordinating participant flow throughout the testing center, and delivering specimens to University Health Service for pickup by courier throughout the day. Personal Protective Equipment including surgical mask and face shield will be provided at each shift. Interested in learning on how you can participate? Send questions to: Angela Beck, ajbeck@umich.edu.

YOUR WELLBEING

Wellness takes time, energy, and should be a priority for each and every one of us. You’ll be hearing more about future efforts to help ensure these conversations are occurring within our community. We are all here to support each other in our wellness journeys. Virtual appointments through The Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) on central campus and groups or appointments through Wolverine Wellness are available virtually. Are you already losing sleep getting adjusted to the new school year? Did you know Wolverine Wellness offers wellness coaching on topics such as sleep to make sure you’re functioning at your best? Our Student Services team is always available as well to support you and/or point you to other available resources!

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