

Sept. 16, 2020

Good afternoon,

As we reach the one-third mark in the semester, I hope we are settling into some routines, even in a situation that is anything but. Here are some updates:

**Second Universal Testing:** On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 21-23, we will conduct our second population-level universal COVID testing. Check for an email from **FSU COVID testing** <[info@baseline.mail.campuslabs.com](mailto:info@baseline.mail.campuslabs.com)>, sent around noon today, with signup information and instructions. (If you are a student who is entirely online and not on-campus, an employee not coming to campus for the entire semester, or you have previously tested positive for COVID-19 since July 1 and have documented your case with Brady Health Center or Human Resources, you are not required to test and will not receive an email.)

Outside of the group mentioned above, testing is required for ALL students, faculty and staff at the Frostburg campus. The combination of surveillance testing and population-level testing is among the [several key COVID-19 indicators the University is monitoring](#) to determine the raising or lowering of our institutional recovery response levels.

I again want to commend the team that is putting together this massive effort, as well as those who have stepped up to staff the stations in the Cordts PE Center, including an impressive showing from FSU Athletics. Thank you for your help!

**December Commencement:** We've come to the conclusion that it is highly unlikely that large gatherings will be permitted statewide in time for us to hold an in-person December commencement, so we have decided to once again postpone the in-person ceremony until the governor says that large events are once again possible. As we did for the May 2020 graduates, a ceremony for December graduates will occur and be announced more than a month in advance at some point in the future. We will also offer graduates the option of walking in subsequent commencements through the spring of 2022.

We will still recognize our graduates in a virtual format in 2020. We will share the details as they are formulated.

**Feeling the Strain:** If you are feeling the strain of the circumstances surrounding this year, know that you are not alone! We reached out to Dr. Susan Mandell, clinical director of FSU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) for some advice.

Here is what she offered: "My first point would be to normalize that we are experiencing an unprecedented event and might be struggling with the circumstances. To combat that, some things that can reduce our vulnerability to stress are:

- maintaining a routine,
- getting an adequate (not too much or too little) amount of sleep,
- eating a balanced diet,

- engaging in exercise,
- avoiding substances,
- taking care of our physical health, and
- engaging in activities that we enjoy.

“Maintaining social connections, even virtually, is important. These daily habits can make a difference in our mood. Other tips are remembering to breathe and be mindful of what we are feeling, rather than trying to distract or avoid our feelings all of the time.”

CAPS is hosting a weekly virtual support group on Fridays at noon for students through the rest of the semester. You’re invited to share your challenges/concerns in a safe and non-judgmental space. Access the support group at [this link](#).

And as always, CAPS is also available for individual support for students if needed. Call them at 301-687-4234.

Please continue to stay safe and take care of yourselves,

Ronald Nowaczyk, PhD  
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You may also seek assistance by contacting:

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