

Progress toward the fall semester

President Joanne Berger-Sweeney <President@trincoll.edu>

Fri 6/12/2020 10:04 AM

To: President Joanne Berger-Sweeney <President@trincoll.edu>



Trinity College
HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 12, 2020

Dear Trinity College Community Members,

As we continue to manage the college's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I'm eager to see everyone back on campus this fall, and I'm pleased to share with all of you now some important progress toward that goal. Public health guidance will inform our decision-making, and we are grateful for the partnership of the state of Connecticut in this complex work. Provided we meet the state's required conditions for reopening residential colleges, we plan to start classes on Labor Day, September 7, 2020. Student move-in is likely to be gradual over a period of several days, beginning in August. We will be back in touch with specific timing and the details of our plans for re-opening. And when we begin the semester, we will be flexible to accommodate a variety of needs and conditions, and we will do all we can to reduce the likelihood of the spread of COVID-19 on our campus.

For the 2020-21 academic year, the faculty have now voted to approve an amended calendar that would maximize the possibility of in-person learning and offer flexibility for students and faculty to, respectively, customize distribution of their courses and determine the duration of their courses and the terms in which they would be offered. We are offering considerable flexibility to support our mission to educate our students.

Calendar for 2020-21

- **Fall Term:** 10 or 13 weeks, in-person/remote hybrid (in-person classes would run from September 7 until Thanksgiving if possible, with no fall break, and 13-week classes would continue remotely through December, with exams concluding by Dec. 21)
- **Optional January Term:** 5 weeks, remote (January 5-February 5)

- **Spring Term:** 10 or 13 weeks, in-person/remote hybrid (13-week classes would begin remotely in February; in-person classes would begin March 1 if possible, ending by May 14)
- **Summer Session 2021:** 5 weeks, in-person (June 1-July 1)

We'll share more shortly about our academic plans for the fall, including details surrounding registration and study away. And our campus emergency planning teams are hard at work developing the complex detailed plans for repopulating campus safely and seeing to our ability to monitor the health of the community, contain the spread of the virus if detected on campus, and plan for a shutdown in the event it becomes necessary. No consideration is too small in this planning effort, because nothing is more important than the health and safety of our community members.

As we reported last week, another huge step toward the fall semester is the enrollment of the Class of 2024. I'm thrilled to welcome these exceptional students to our community, and deeply grateful to (and impressed by!) the entire enrollment team for its work to enroll this class amid a pandemic and more uncertainty than any of us could ever have imagined. We shared the details in this [news story](#) last week. The headline is this: We have a terrific, talented, diverse, and excited incoming class of 610 students from nearby and all over the world! Welcome, students and families in the Class of 2024!

Special thanks to our alumni and many other members of the community who stepped up to contribute financial support and to engage directly with admitted students in so many ways this spring. You made a huge difference. Your financial support, for instance, allowed us to increase financial aid awards for 160 incoming families whose needs increased unexpectedly because of the pandemic. Thank you!

In the story about the newly enrolled class, we also shared the news of an exciting program we're offering our incoming students from China, for whom travel restrictions and other challenges may make getting to Hartford in the fall difficult if not impossible. For those students, the college is expanding its long-standing partnership with Fudan University by launching a Special Semester in Shanghai. Students who choose to take part will spend their first Trinity semester at Fudan, taking a mix of small seminars and introductory courses taught by both Fudan and Trinity faculty members. We are delighted to be able to offer this opportunity to our incoming students from China, and we look forward to having them join us here on campus before long!

There's so much more to do to prepare for fall, and more communications coming to you as we make progress. Next week, we'll begin sharing details of a phased return-to-campus plan for college employees, and we anticipate announcing our fall semester plans in full on or around June 30 (though we know there will still be details to determine and conditions to monitor as we move toward the fall). We appreciate your patience and understanding as we carefully manage our response to this pandemic. Together we can accomplish great things!

Sincerely,

Joanne Berger-Sweeney
President and Trinity College Professor of Neuroscience