Dear Colleagues,

First, thank you for all you and your loved ones have done and will do through the end of the semester approaching, we are writing to offer a few words of encouragement.

As a reminder, classes are slated to take place on November 3rd. President Price’s recent message noted that faculty have the flexibility to remind students about where, when, and how to vote via a sample course syllabi language.

Most of your students are likely eager to vote in this year’s election, and we encourage you to take extra steps to support student participation in the democratic process.

First, vote early. If you are able. The DukeVotes website includes information for students, faculty, and staff as well as contacting your local election office to discover where and how to vote. That might be at your local polling place, through voting by mail, or by voting early in-person.

If you are concerned about a specific student for any reason, Faculty, Student, and the Election

Keep Learning

Given its condensed nature and limited opportunities for social connections, this semester presents a host of unique challenges for students. From a recent survey of students, we have learned that many have gone above and beyond to engage and support their peers in all capacities. This includes mental health, wellness, academic, and social support.

One of the challenges students face is the lack of opportunities for social connection. As a reminder, we encourage you to schedule office hours and other opportunities for students to engage with you in a meaningful way.

In addition to voting information, the Duke Votes website features resources and events for students. The Office of Student Affairs is working to ensure that students have the support that they need.

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Duke sponsored resources available to support faculty wellness include:

- The Personal Assistance Service (PAS) is the faculty/employee wellness resource page including a list of trained wellness representatives who will reach out within 24-48 business hours.
- DukeReach is a convenient way for Duke students to receive no-cost mental health support from a licensed counselor. There are two ways to connect: 
  - “Duke2020” is the faculty/employee wellness resource page including a list of trained wellness representatives who will reach out within 24-48 business hours.
- Duke-sponsored resources available to support faculty wellness include:

For more information about the issues, visit the DukeVotes website.

Incident threat levels and reporting

In the context of the election, we encourage you to take a longer view than is customary on the timeframe of this election season. There is a distinct possibility that we will not know election results on November 4th. This may create additional uncertainty and stress on campus. We urge you to consider how you can partner with students to help them keep things in perspective.

You can point them to COVID-related wellness strategies on the Office of Student Affairs website or to DukeReach, which offers free confidential support from licensed professionals who offer assessment, short-term counseling, and referrals to mental health care resources.

As always, if you are concerned about a specific student for any reason, Faculty, Student, and the Election

As a reminder, classes are slated to take place on November 3rd. President Price’s recent message noted that faculty have the flexibility to remind students about where, when, and how to vote via a sample course syllabi language.

For most of your students, voting is the first Presidential election in which they will vote, and thus is an important marker of student engagement and voting for the first time. We expect that many of our students will be voting for the first time, as well as voting for the first time in the shortest election years.

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