

Dear Members of the Penn State Law and SIA Community,

As we make our way through our first day of remote instruction, the first thing I want to express to our community is gratitude. We all pulled together in these extraordinary circumstances, and had a successful first day of classes in which our students were largely able to focus on learnings. Thank you again to our incredible response team, IT team, faculty, and staff who have worked around the clock to make sure today went smoothly, and to our students who have been supporting each other and attending class from wherever they are today.

I've been thinking a lot about the term "social distancing" the last few days. As a number of emails have expressed today from members of our community, it is crucial that while we physically separate to slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect vulnerable people in our community, we also maintain our connections with each other. What is going on in the world right now is challenging and scary, and we need each other to get through it. I have been so moved by the way in which people have been reaching out to each other in our schools, the broader Penn State community, and the legal and international affairs community around the country and world. Please make sure you find creative ways to connect and take care of yourself, whether through a remote social gathering or various forms of exercise.

I also think it's important to acknowledge that a lot of people in our community are having a hard time right now. COVID-19 is taking a physical, economic, and mental health toll. People have friends or loved ones ill, or are worried about them because they are high risk. Some members of our community are particularly vulnerable to the virus. Some people are being significantly financially impacted and are trying to figure out how to pay their bills. And it's hard to physically separate from our community even though we know it's what we need to do from a public health perspective.

We are here to help people get the support and resources that they need. The University continues to update its key websites: <https://sites.psu.edu/virusinfo/>; <https://remoteteaching.psu.edu/>; and <https://remoteteaching.psu.edu/>. Both Penn State Law and SIA will also be continually updating their resource pages: <https://pennstatelaw.psu.edu/psl-virus> and <https://sia.psu.edu/sia-virus>. I also wanted to highlight a few financial and mental health resources:

- Penn State has an emergency fund intended to provide short-term financial assistance to students who are managing demanding academic requirements while struggling with debilitating financial circumstances: <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/support-safety-conduct/student-support-services/financial-concerns>
- Although CAPS Chat will not be coming to the building this Thursday, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at University Park is open for services. Students can receive services by calling CAPS at (814) 863-0395 to schedule a phone appointment to discuss their concerns and review treatment options. If students have immediate urgent concerns, they can contact CAPS Monday through Friday (8am – 5pm EST), the Penn State Crisis Line 24/7 at (877) 229-6400, or the 24/7 CrisisTextLine (Text "LIONS" to 741741).
- The Office of Student Care and Advocacy and Counseling & Psychological Services are two resources that stand ready to support any student requiring attention to immediate financial or academic issues or counseling needs arising from the many changes and uncertainties caused by the global coronavirus outbreak.
 - Student Care and Advocacy: studentaffairs.psu.edu/studentcare; 814-863-2020; StudentCare@psu.edu

- Counseling & Psychological Services: studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling; 814-863-0395; 24-hour Crisis Line: 1-877-229-6400
- For employees needing support, the Penn State Employee Assistance Program (EAP), through the EAP+Work/Life program, offers short-term counseling from licensed EAP professionals, by phone, email or in person to help employees better cope with personal, family and work issues. EAP also offers access to Personal Health Advocates, who can help navigate healthcare and insurance systems, efficiently and dependably. More information is available at <https://hr.psu.edu/health-matters/employee-assistance-program>.

Please feel free to reach out to me and the key offices at both schools as you navigate the unusual challenges of COVID-19. We plan to have information and listening sessions for students and for faculty and staff every week during this remote instruction period so that we can keep our community updated and be responsive to questions and concerns. WE ARE here for you and we will all get through this together.

Warmly,
Hari Osofsky

Hari M. Osofsky
Dean | Penn State Law and the School of International Affairs
Distinguished Professor of Law | Professor of International Affairs | Professor of Geography
The Pennsylvania State University | University Park

814-863-1521 | hmo8@psu.edu
252 Lewis Katz Building | University Park, PA 16802
Twitter: @hariosofsky
SSRN: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/cf_dev/AbsByAuth.cfm?per_id=512185

