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Colleagues,

As we reach the end of this long, surreal semester, I'm writing today with three brief but important reminders:

1. Please check your email frequently during the upcoming summer, especially those of you going off-contract for the academic year. Needless to say, the weeks ahead are likely to be as strange and rapidly changing as the weeks we've just witnessed, and I'll continue to write with frequent updates. So, please stay tuned.

2. Relatedly, in the coming days we will provide a draft plan for the fall semester as well as guidelines for a phased summer reopening. I want to caution, however, that the word "plan" is likely to suggest more certainty than we will actually have. No matter what our intentions, our actions will be subject to what the virus does. Right now, in Wisconsin at least, the trends are moving in the wrong direction. Experts advise that living with COVID-19 is fundamentally an exercise in minimizing our risk levels, both personal and social. For those of you preparing fall courses or student support activities, my advice is to approach this workload in the same way:
 - In the best-case scenario, our teaching and learning will be hybrid in nature, prioritizing in-person experiences for those interactions that cannot easily be moved online.
 - For all in-person activities, we'll need to provide distance alternatives for those students unable to participate for personal reasons.
 - The lowest risk approach to preparing for fall is to focus on distance modalities first, then evaluate carefully managed in-person experiences as we closely monitor health conditions in our local communities.

I wish more than anything that I could offer different advice, but this seems the most prudent course of action today. As I mentioned, we will have more details to share in the next week.

3. Finally, please check your email frequently during the upcoming summer. I know I'm repeating, but this one's important.

Have a good and restful weekend, everyone.

Greg

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*(This message is being sent to the Academic Affairs Faculty/Staff list.)*