

Dear Class of 2022 Parents,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones safe and in good health, and that your students have managed—challenging as it has been--the transition well to on-line instruction and the virtual campus community. Although the COVID-19 social distance protocol, necessitated the move to on-line advising and meetings by video conferences, I too have embraced the opportunities for engagement afforded by the use of technology while still longing for the physical energy of advising students without the barrier of a computer screen or cell phone.

To accommodate the transition of students into the online classroom environment, several modifications to the academic regulations have been put in place this semester. The credit/unsatisfactory grading option is available for all courses. Students who wish to exercise this option simply need to send an email to their professors before the last day of classes. All major, minor, and certificate programs have waived any existing regulations requiring courses be taken for a letter grade this semester.

As the final days of the infamous Spring 2020 courses draw near, students report feelings of exhaustion yet there seems to be a glimmer of optimism in their hopes and plans for their junior year. Working from home at my dining room table, I share their optimism. The COVID-19 social distancing protocol stretched, but did not sever, the Wesleyan University ties and mission to engage your student in academic experiences that are substantive and preparative for their future work and lives. So, consistent with our typical academic calendar, students in the month of April and early May are busy with the tasks of final projects, term papers, studying, and taking final exams. Rest assured, the academic supports and resources of the libraries, tutoring services, advising, and so much more are still available and accessible on-line and by video conference for all students.

Looking forward, the last day of Spring 2020 classes will be on Wednesday, May 6 and the reading period will take place from Thursday, May 7 until Monday, May 11. The final exam period runs from Tuesday, May 12 until Friday, May 15. In just a few weeks, your students can officially say that they are “rising juniors” and well on their way to a future of new triumphs and challenges that with our collective guidance, they will be prepared to take on.

A successful end of the sophomore year marks a point of transition in their undergraduate academic career. Your student has likely declared their major and are settling into their academic departments. Membership in a major provided them with preferences during the recent course pre-registration process and they now have the opportunity to meet with their new major faculty advisor (or advisors for those pursuing multiple majors. Understandably, a few students are still completing final requirements for acceptance into their preferred major and will continue to be guided by their initial faculty advisor and me).

The end of sophomore year is truly a milestone in the lives of Wesleyan students. This is the ideal time to begin the career exploration process. The [Gordon Career Center](#) staff and resources are accessible on-line and available to schedule meeting with students through video

conference. But for now, the focus of students' attention must be divided between their safety and wellbeing and the successful completion of their Spring 2020 coursework.

Students and families should continue to visit the university homepage for the latest updates and resources concerning Wesleyan's COVID-19 pandemic responses and protocols. The University will offer on-line summer courses and we are all looking forward to the eventual time when we can meet again in person. Until then, there are still papers to write, presentations and projects to prepare, and exams to take. Please encourage your students to contact me by email at [rjohnson01@wesleyan.edu](mailto:rjohnson01@wesleyan.edu) with any questions or concerns or schedule a meeting with me using [my Google calendar link](#). I am available to meet with students every weekday afternoon and will make special arrangements to accommodate geographical time zones.

Please encourage your student to stay in contact with me and other members of our community of care.

Sincerely,

*Dean Thornton*

Renee Johnson Thornton, Ph.D.

Dean for the Class of 2022

[rjohnson01@wesleyan.edu](mailto:rjohnson01@wesleyan.edu) [my Google calendar link](#)

<http://classof2022.blogs.wesleyan.edu/>