

# Graduate Community Town Hall

with

- Doug Doren
- Mary Martin
- LaRuth McAfee
- Suprawee Tepsuporn
- Michael Alexo
- Elizabeth Salisbury
- Caitlin Hutchison (moderating)



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
**GRADUATE COLLEGE**

# Agenda

- Overview and updates (Doug and Mary) *10 minutes*
- International Students (Doug and Mary) *20 minutes*
  - Updates on stipends and tuition for students studying outside the US
- Orientation plans for first-year students (Mary and Caitlin) *15 minutes*
- Professional development and mental health opportunities in the coming academic year (Suprawee) *15 minutes*
- Holistic admissions (LaRuth) *30 minutes*
  - Rethinking the role of the GRE
  - New prompts for essays and letters of recommendations
  - Planning for the next recruiting cycle



# Guidance for this Town Hall

- Participants will be muted. Please ask questions through the chat feature. Caitlin will moderate questions. Questions will be taken after presentation on each major agenda topic. If we do not have time for all, we will respond afterwards.
- Questions will remain anonymous when read. If you would like to remain anonymous to all, please use the private message to direct your question to Caitlin Hutchison.
- Questions that do not relate directly to today's agenda items may be addressed off-line, or if there is enough interest, we can schedule another Town Hall for those topics.
- If your question is highly-specific, i.e. you do not think it would benefit the group to ask, or of a personal nature, please email [grad@udel.edu](mailto:grad@udel.edu) and we will respond later.



# Two More Town Halls Today

- Academic Operations 1 PM
- OISS 3 PM
  
- Register for either at the Return to Campus site  
<https://www.udel.edu/udaily/2020/july/return-to-campus-update-july-15-2020/>

..... And a Research Town Hall next Monday

# Incoming Students

- Current admission numbers still slightly ahead of last year
  - “Summer melt” and requests for deferrals likely to be higher than usual
  - Almost 200 requests for deferral to date, compared to 135 all of last year
  - Expect many more deferral requests from international first-year students

# Incoming Students

- Communications
  - Students want to know what their experience will be like this Fall
    - Will classes they take be online?
    - Will classes they teach be online?
      - Advice on being a TA in this modality
    - Will they have access to labs?
      - Research ramp-up
  - Answers are still evolving – but inform students as you make your plans

# Onboarding New Students

- Will be handled remotely (via Zoom)
  - HR is asking for GSCRF/SFAFs to be processed for all new students (US and International) by August 1<sup>st</sup>
- Domestic students
  - Begins August 10<sup>th</sup>
- International students
  - August 17<sup>th</sup> and possibly 18<sup>th</sup> to process International I-9's
  - HR will ask new hires to complete the I-9 and FNIF before their appointments



# Fees for AY 20-21

- Recreation Fee \$50 -- no change from 19-20
- Student Center Fee \$119 -- no change from 19-20
- Well-Being Fee (Formerly Health Center Fee) \$352 -- was \$227 in 19-20
- International Student Fee \$170 -- was \$160 in 19-20
- Medical Insurance if on contract \$369 for the year
  - was \$350 last year
  - billed semester by semester, \$154 in fall, for 5 months, and \$215 in spring for 7 months (through August)

# Fees for AY 20-21

- Mary Martin is working on a plan so that students who are taking online courses and not coming to campus are not charged for on-campus fees
  - e.g., Student Center, Recreation fees
- Many details remain to be worked out
  - e.g., should remote students pay the Health Center fee, which supports telehealth and counseling services?



# International Students

- Consulates are not scheduling appointments for student visas
  - First-year international students will probably not be able to come to Newark in time for the start of fall semester
- International travel restrictions continue
  - May delay return of continuing students with visas
- Many students living abroad are likely to request deferrals or withdraw

# Online Option for International Students Living Abroad

- If graduate programs offer online courses for the first semester, international students may be able to start on schedule even if they cannot get to campus
  - Students not in US can get credit toward degree for online courses without needing a visa

BUT

- Tuition-paying students may not be willing to pay full tuition for an online program, and may withdraw or defer
- Students offered assistantships (TA/RA/GA) or fellowships who cannot get to US
  - will probably not be able to receive stipends
  - will need tuition scholarships (contact your dean)

# Online Option for International Students in the US

- ICE Guidance against online-only programs has been rescinded
- Expect to continue temporary policy that will allow students on active F and J visas to count an unlimited number of online courses toward their course of study in Fall 2020 (this mostly affects students who have been in the US and are now out of the country)



# Students expecting Contracts, living abroad

- Contract start must be delayed until they arrive on campus
- New students
  - must be onboarded, obtain Social Security number
- All students
  - HR says that we cannot pay students living abroad
  - Still exploring solutions, but not likely to be implemented before 9/1

# International Students Arriving in Spring

- If students can take online classes in the fall, we hope they can come to campus in Spring 2021
- If they cannot take classes in the fall, some programs may not be able let them start in the spring, since spring courses may depend on prerequisites taught only in the fall
  - Programs may advise students to defer for a year
  - Programs might redesign curriculum to allow students to start in spring.
- First-year students who are not on campus until spring will not be eligible for CPT experiences, so will not be able to earn money off-campus in the summer.

# Questions

If a program writes a contract for a student starting 9/1, and they cannot get to campus by that date, can we change the starting date to make it later?

Yes, you can simply amend the JED. Please notify Mary Martin by email, so that the Graduate College is aware of the student's status.

# Questions

If a student cannot get to campus by 9/1, can we start their contract later and pay them retroactively (or effectively, at a higher rate), so that their pay for the semester stays the same?

For positions with specific work expectations, like a TA or RA, retroactive payments cannot be made for a period when they were not working.

A higher rate of pay would raise equity issues.

For fellowships that have no work expectation, retroactive payments are allowed



# Questions

At what point should new students be advised to defer? – What date is too late to begin the semester?

If students can take courses and participate in other activities remotely, they do not have to defer.

# New Graduate Student Orientation

- Two Parts:
  - Virtual, Synchronous Zoom Session
    - Tuesday, August 25<sup>th</sup> from 9-12 (noon)
    - What students can expect: welcoming remarks, panel featuring students, talking about their experience at UD, panel of senior leaders, break-out chat rooms for more specific populations among the graduate students
    - Students will receive an email prompt to register
  - Asynchronous, Modular Canvas Site
    - Module roll-out will begin in the first week of August
    - Students can work through Modules at their own pace leading up to August 25<sup>th</sup>, but will have access to site throughout the fall semester
    - Students and Graduate Program Directors will receive email prompts as modules are published
    - CTAL'S TA orientation will be a module within this site (we will provide access to first-time TAs, who are not new students)



# What to Expect on the Canvas Site:



UD Graduate Student Orientation > Modules



Account



Dashboard



Courses



Calendar



Inbox



Help



Special Term

Home

Modules

▸ Module 1: Welcome! So, What Exactly is Graduate Education?

Introduction to using Canvas, what to expect (working with faculty, community, time management), Information about IDs, Email, IT, etc.

▸ Module 2: Covid Modifications and Preparing for Arrival

Up-to-date Covid Modifications to campus, classes, student fees, and introduction to area and campus including transit and parking info

▸ Module 3: Nuts and Bolts of Being a Student

Course registration, Student Finances, Tuition, Payment, Health Insurance and Immunization

▸ Module 4: Finding Support When You Need It

Information about Libraries, CTAL, and Writing center; Community-building (GSG, OISS, Student Organizations), and commitment to diversity and equity and Title IX

▸ Module 5: Taking Care of You

Information about the Health and Counseling Centers, Recreation, Campus Safety

▾ Module 6: Advice for International Graduate Students\*

Information specific to International Students not covered in the previous modules

▸ Module 7: Advice for Teaching Assistants\*

CTAL: General advice first time Tas, as well as time management, online learning, canvas tools, and campus resources

# Questions

- Please write questions in chat. All questions will remain anonymous
  - If your question personal or highly-specific please email [grad@udel.edu](mailto:grad@udel.edu)

