

March 17, 2020

Dear College of Law Students,

I write to make sure that you have read yesterday's messages from [Chancellor Syverud](#) and [Vice Chancellor Haynie](#) and to deliver additional news and guidance, and adjustments ahead, based on the feedback you have provided.

### **Online Courses through the End of the Semester; Final Exams also Online**

Based on the continued evolution of COVID-19, including official guidance from the CDC and New York State officials, the College of Law will not resume residential instruction this semester. **All classes will resume on March 23, and will be conducted online through the end of the semester. Final exams also will be administered online**, and we will provide you with details soon on how that will take place.

### **Limited Access to Dineen Hall**

Like other buildings on campus, until further notice, Dineen Hall (including the library) will be closed to students, with few exceptions. If you need to retrieve your belongings from your locker, please be in touch with [Sarah Valenti](#) to make arrangements to enter the building for that limited purpose. Library Director [Jan Fleckenstein](#) will be in touch with all of you tomorrow with details of the Library's operations between now and the end of the semester. We are fully committed to supporting your research needs in these difficult times, including delivering and retrieving physical books and other materials where appropriate.

### **In-Person Meetings and Events**

As you know, any and all College of Law in-person meetings and events have been cancelled. These cancellations do not affect online classrooms, online conversations, consultations, webinars, chats and other events, whether class-related, student-led or social in nature. These events, whether now scheduled or to be scheduled between now and the end of the semester, enhance your academic journey. Please take advantage of these events and the many online tools out there to stay connected and share knowledge.

### **College of Law Operational**

Notwithstanding the move to online instruction, College of Law business operations will continue. Staff and Faculty are available to you by phone or email at all times during business and office hours.

### **Your Feedback: Adjustments to Online Approach**

I appreciate those of you who have emailed LawPreparedness with your feedback on your online learning experience last week. Based on your reflections and suggestions, we will implement the following changes, effective immediately after Spring Break:

- Learning Platforms: Faculty are free to use Blackboard (Collaborate) or Zoom. Your professors will be in touch this week to make clear how to attend class, and enter the classroom, when

classes resume after Spring Break.

- **Recording Classes and Attendance:** Given the occasional sound challenges and internet connectivity issues we've experienced, all classes will be recorded and the recordings of all classes will be available through the end of the semester. Please know: this measure is not a substitute for online attendance. All students are expected to attend all of their classes, online, and faculty are tracking attendance through our online platforms. Recording the classes will make sure that no one loses any content or opportunity because of technical challenges that may surface. If you have any technology-related questions, please contact IT [via LawHelp](#).

### **Your investment**

You have invested a lot of yourselves, not to mention a great deal of financial resources, in your legal education. Please continue to make the most of it. We will do our part to provide the best experience possible, and you will play an important role in defining that experience. Please don't let the pivot to online learning get in the way of completing all of your credits as required by the ABA. All of the measures we have instituted will enable you to do just that, but you must stay the course. **Please, attend class and participate.** The Socratic method endures; embrace it.

Continue your leadership on your student organizations; advance your missions and goals. Online tools are at your disposal, always. If you need help or would like advice on continuing the work of your student organizations or on how to collaborate in study groups, please contact [Sarah Collins](#). Please also continue to send [Rob Conrad](#) the news of personal and organizational achievements. We will share those news items visibly and with pride, with our entire College of Law Community. Please stay tuned for additional guidance on this front.

Please remember to send your questions, feedback and concerns to [lawpreparedness@law.syr.edu](mailto:lawpreparedness@law.syr.edu).

We are tracking questions, exploring and troubleshooting responses, and updating our evolving [Law Preparedness](#) page on the College of Law's response to concerns and impacts around COVID-19. Visit that page often for information and resources in support of our journey together.

### **A Note on Commencement**

I know that the Class of 2020 is thinking about Commencement. I am too. My team and I are thinking through many contingency plans for a memorable recognition of your graduation and achievements. Please stay tuned and know that we will not give up on the essential need to congratulate and celebrate you.

There are no words to describe the impact of COVID-19 on our journey together. We will never forget the profound disappointment caused by the many cancellations and disruptions caused by this truly unprecedented crisis. I am confident that we will get through it together, however, and that we'll remember how we rose to the occasion with Orange pride and resolve.

Stay the course, heed the guidance, be well.

**Craig M. Boise**

Dean and Professor of Law