



**March 17, 2020**

Dear Linguistics majors:

We wanted to follow-up on the several messages you have received from the University and the Department of Linguistics to elaborate on some of the ways the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation will affect Linguistics undergraduate life in the coming weeks.

First of all, we want to acknowledge, again, what a weird time this is for everyone. Outside of the anxiety and stress you may be feeling because of the disruption to your routines and the concern you feel for yourself and others, you may be feeling sad about events you were looking forward to now being cancelled. We just want you to know that we are here to support you and we hope you feel comfortable asking questions and sharing concerns and ideas in the coming weeks. You may find [this article](#) helpful in managing anxiety related to coronavirus.

Additionally, we have been discussing things we can do as a department to help you stay on track with your studies, research, and overall well-being. Here are some updates for the time being:

- **Virtual advising:** You will still be able to meet with advisors for course planning, senior releases, and other advising needs virtually through the remainder of the semester. When signing up for an [advising appointment](#), please pay attention to the “Location” and “Alert” columns, as this is where advisors will have information about platforms available for meetings.
- **Interacting with Faculty and GSIs:** The instructors for your courses will be working with you to help you manage all the pieces of this new way of learning. They have been working diligently to make this transition as smooth as possible, but there will be glitches and mistakes, on your part and on theirs. Try and work with your instructors to let them know how things are going. Be patient as you all work to keep improving.

Instructors will continue to hold virtual office hours and you can continue to meet with them--just virtually now instead of face-to-face.

- **Backpacking/Registration:** We are thinking about ways to ensure you have the support you need during registration weeks. Outside of advising, we are planning to hold a virtual backpacking session on April 3rd. Please stay tuned for details!
- **Community Building in an Uncertain Time:** We are also thinking about ways to continue building community among undergraduates, especially during a time when feelings of social isolation may become widespread. Some of the ideas we have are virtual study sessions with other Ling majors, setting up some kind of online forum on which undergraduates could connect regularly, etc. If you have suggestions, we would love to hear them!

As you know, things are developing rapidly and there may be further changes or announcements regarding daily operations at the Institute. We will continue to communicate with all of our students and staff regularly via email, and continue to implement best practices in accordance with University and CDC guidelines. [This page](#) has the latest updates from the University and a kind of FAQ list about everything from commencement to travel.

**If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email us at [linguistics@umich.edu](mailto:linguistics@umich.edu).**

Stay safe and healthy! We will pull through this together.

Robin Queen, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor and Department of Linguistics Chair  
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