

The Friday Five



Take Five Minutes for College Updates

We're continuing to bring you College news and opportunities to interact with other staff members and teams. Previous communications can be found on the [staff resources page](#).

What's Happening

*Here you'll find program updates from teams and departments
and news about on-campus developments.*

Reunion 2020

All College staff are invited to join virtual Reunion 2020 on Saturday, June 6. Here is [the link](#) to watch a live update with Dean Valentini, a Contemporary Civilization lecture and [much more](#). There is no need to register, feel free to log in at the

appointed times.

Updates from Academic Affairs

Within Academic Affairs there are two areas that advise students and provide funding for research opportunities: Undergraduate Research and Fellowships (URF) and the Columbia University Scholars Program (CUSP) in the Center for Student Advising. With Columbia laboratories closed, limited access to archives and libraries, and restrictions on travel, students have had to pivot dramatically and creatively to find remote summer research opportunities. Some projects were redefined by the COVID-19 pandemic, while other projects have been able to continue as originally conceived.

URF oversees specific scholars programs that support students to pursue summer research. For the STEM-focused programs (Rabi Scholars and the Columbia College Science Scholars), approximately 20 students (out of 45) are currently pursuing remote summer research. All 10 students in the humanities-focused Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program are conducting remote research this summer. The Laidlaw Scholars Program supports 51 scholars across the disciplines, of which 31 are conducting their research or a community engagement project remotely. For one example, Laidlaw Scholar Jacob Kim Sherman will investigate the possible link between the NYC subway and the extreme severity of the COVID-19 outbreak in specific NYC neighborhoods.

URF also oversees fellowship funding that allows students to undertake independent summer research. When travel became impossible, students were given the opportunity to revise their research to make it feasible in a remote framework. Faculty were generous with the time, support, and expertise they provided to students in this process; URF was able to fund 38 projects.

CUSP oversees the Summer Enhancements Fellowships (SEF) program that provides funding to support independent research and creative projects. These merit-based awards recognize the commitment of SEF applicants to developing high-quality research, as well as their work with Graduate Student Mentors to broaden and refine their grant-writing skills. Prospective fellows this year proposed projects on an exciting array of topics, many of which directly address current challenges in the Columbia community. Examples include: an interrogation of public space and architectural designs in response to infection control; an investigation of artificial intelligence in online learning; and an exploration of queer theories in order to envision a more just pandemic response.

We have been heartened and inspired by students' resilience, by their desire to delve into topics that are meaningful to them, and by the perseverance they've shown to reconfigure their projects under exceptional circumstances.

Stay Connected

Learn new skills and exchange creative ideas for managing our new realities.

Trivia Lunch

Join the Zoom Trivia Lunch on Tuesday, June 9, at noon, hosted by Nicole Statuti. Please sign up [here](#).

Effective Presentations with Google Slides

Alycen Ashburn and Chris Chan will teach you how to make engaging and effective presentations with Google Slides on Thursday, June 11, at noon. Register [here](#).

Friday Reflection



In his Tuesday email, Dean Valentini encouraged us to care for and support one another with empathy and a renewed commitment to the values expressed in the [letter to students](#) . As we try to process the gravity of this moment as well as the relevant historical and contemporary political contexts, we invite you to pause for reflection and consider taking whatever supportive action you feel comfortable with, whether it be as an individual, with your family, or with your community.

Email sent by **Columbia College**
1130 Amsterdam Avenue, Hamilton Hall New
York, NY, 10027, USA

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