



April 2, 2020

The Faculty Senate commends our University leadership for its wise and humane response to the Covid-19 outbreak. Brandeis's response has been exemplary among universities in giving students time to vacate campus, in providing detailed messages to our constituent communities, and in acting responsively and decisively when new problems arose. We acknowledge the administration as well for its decisions to keep staff and contractors on the payroll, to address issues of pass-fail grading, to extend the tenure clock, and to send an important message through voluntary 10% pay cuts at the highest level. Regular communication from President Liebowitz, Provost Lisa Lynch and other campus leaders has helped all of us to navigate this unprecedented challenge.

In addition, we express our deepest gratitude to our colleagues and staff involved with the full range of student services who continue to be available around the clock at this stressful time for both graduates and undergraduates. We could not do our work in virtual classrooms and online office hours without the support you are providing.

The Senate would also like to applaud Mary-Ann Winkelmes and the staff at the Center for Teaching and Learning, as well as Jim La Creta and the staff in IT, all of whom have done an astounding job moving faculty to an online environment. The CTL's 24/7 support, resources, and responsiveness have made a huge difference in helping us weather the initial phase of this uncertain new territory.

We thank the dedicated staff in our academic departments, research centers and institutes, as well as in other parts of the campus enterprise. In every case, the important work that each does has been redesigned on short notice, and every effort has been made to attend to the needs of our diverse internal and external stakeholders.

As we all know, there is no telling what trajectory this crisis may take in the months and even years ahead or what financial ramifications the University may encounter. We may be facing hardships for a long period. We applaud the decisions recently communicated by President Liebowitz that suggest an approach more just and equitable than that undertaken during the financial crisis in 2008. We are committed to working with the administration so that all measures undertaken in response to this crisis continue to be aligned with our values of justice, equity, integrity, and inclusiveness.

We expect that any financial burden will continue to be distributed in ways that shield, to the greatest extent possible, the most vulnerable employees, including front-line service workers, contract faculty, adjunct instructors, and early stage tenure-track faculty. Continued special care

and attention is especially needed for marginalized groups, people with disabilities, people under great financial stress in general, those whose residency/visa status is uncertain, and others whose voices are not always well represented.

We trust that our collective decision-making process will continue to honor the University's principles of shared governance, and that transparency will be prioritized over shielding employees from "uncomfortable truths".

We recognize that even with the strong internal alignment and good will that has been evidenced by all parties, issues on which there is disagreement will likely arise. In engaging these issues, it is important that we continue to treat each other at all times with compassion, respect and kindness—honoring and addressing the differences even as we all work for the common good.

Jennifer Cleary, *Theater Arts (Creative Arts)*

Joel Christensen,\* *Classical Studies*

Joel Cutcher-Gershenfeld, *Heller*

Susan Dibble, *Theater Arts*

Jane Ebert, *International Business School*

Gordon Fellman, *Sociology*

William Flesch, *English*

Danielle Igra, *Education*

Dmitry Kleinbock, *Mathematics*

Sue Lanser, *English, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, and Comparative Literature (Emerita)*

Sarah Mead,\* *Music*

A.K. Nandakumar, *Heller*

Carol Osler,\* *Economics*

Rajesh Sampath,\* *Heller, South Asian Studies, Comparative Humanities*

Liuba Shrira, *Computer Science*

Laurence Simon, *Heller*

Sabine von Mering, *GRALL, WGS, ENVS, CAST*

Pu Wang, *GRALL, Comparative Humanities, EAS,*

Grace Zimmerman, *International Business School*

\* Indicates member of Senate Council

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