Student Questions from the Town Hall 10/05/20

1. Regarding the days after the election results, is there opportunity for faculty to address any need for expressed thoughts/feelings before or after class? It can be a time to debrief and wrap up with the thought of what the implications are for health care.

We will need to respect individual class schedules. It is important to acknowledge the difficulty – perhaps there is time either at the beginning or at the end of class or during a break. We recommend deferring to the faculty when they make that call, and how comfortable they are to do that. Sometimes students might want the faculty member there, and other times there are students who would just prefer to have a conversation on their own.

2. Do students have to make reservations for printing while on campus while using study spaces?

No, reservations for printing are not required. The network printers are available on the third and fourth floor of Shouse. We have also eliminated the decoder and the cost of printing.

3. Is COVID testing required prior to coming on campus?

No. We know social distancing, PPE use, and handwashing reduces the risk of transmission. We follow the Commit @IHP guidelines that are grounded in science and based on consultation with MGH and MGB infection control specialists. Realistically, it is not COVID testing that is going to keep us safe, but rather these behavioral strategies.

4. How is students’ mental health being addressed?

Jack Gormley identified many ways of addressing mental health in his presentation regarding civil unrest. We want you to use the student plan we have for mental health. Students are encouraged to reach out to faculty, academic advisors, and OSAS for any concerns or challenges. The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is another resource. Additionally, Jessica Upton posts reminders of upcoming virtual fitness classes on the @ihpstudentlife Instagram page to anyone who seeks exercise as a stress relief.

5. Are there plans to reduce tuition?

There are no plans to reduce tuition. We are providing you with an increasing amount of resources to ensure you get the education and clinical experiences you need to become prepared as an exemplary health care provider.

6. Regarding the “Commit @ IHP” initiative, there has been an addition regarding possible disciplinary action for lack of compliance. Can you talk more specifically about the judiciary process behind that?

There are disciplinary guidelines in each program’s student handbook for any kind of behavioral challenges that occur. We prioritize the protection, safety and infection control for all students. Models of adjudication of behavioral issues within specific handbooks range from written
warning issues that would go on file, all the way to dismissal. The disciplinary action depends on the level of concern and misbehavior.

7. Can the signatories of the email that included a message from the BPD Commissioner please explain why they chose to send that email last Friday, just before the biggest “Justice for Breonna Taylor” demonstration in Boston? Other schools felt the message was against their values and chose not to send it.

The message was sent after a meeting held with the Mayor of Boston and the Boston Police Department and Commissioner. The message was for every student in Boston colleges and universities – it was not for a specific university. The message was clear that we support your rights and desires to protest and have peaceful protests, but it was also a message that said to please be careful and have an exit strategy. As the president of the IHP, I am obligated to do what is necessary to keep you safe and to have you think about this before you went out to protest. I apologize to any student or individual in the IHP community if we caused trouble for you or caused you to feel uncomfortable. I was doing this as a way to be careful about protecting everyone’s safety in this difficult time.

8. I was wondering if plans for the Spring semester are more flexible in the sense that administration is open to collaborating or finding a compromise with students regarding on-campus times. Would it be possible to send out a poll asking if we prefer to have lab twice a month or every other week for X amount of time – or any other method of exhibiting some student feedback?

There was a spreadsheet that was put together to have a design of on-campus times for every program. Our goal is to have only 10% of our students on campus at any given time. We will go back to the academic programs and see if there are any adjustments that can be made. We also recommend that you approach your academic program with these concerns. We can then see if we can modify or make changes in the schedule.

9. If a student had an exit plan for a protest, but was still arrested, how would that affect their status as a student at the IHP?

Peaceful protesting would not affect your status as an IHP student. However, felony convictions might have implications for you as a clinician as you move forward in your career.