Good morning, my brave and fierce advocates for learning!

It's beginning to feel all too real, isn't it? There's something about a Monday that wakes us up and sets direction. It's sobering and yet centering.

Many of you are sharing stories of students in trouble and absent. And many of you are sharing stories of students who are showing up virtually and responding with relief and warmth to the messages you are sending. We are doing this ourselves, here, on social media, through text and phone calls. While isolate for safety, let's remember how connected we are.

Last night, all of us not directly teaching or enrolled in classes were asked to remain home and work remotely along with you. What this means is that many offices will be physically closed and virtually open. Please email us to set up virtual appointments (phone, Collaborate, Zoom) and check our websites and social media for updates, resources, and tips. I'll send a separate email about the TLC tomorrow and perhaps we can come up with an infographic for you that illustrates what different departments do and how they connect for faculty support.

This morning we are moving into the parts of your syllabus and course that are indirectly academic yet absolutely essential. These are the human parts. Rather than social distancing in our language and construction of activities and assessment, we need to come closer to our students and encourage them to come closer to each other (appropriately and virtually). It is in healthy communities that we can create and expand our capacities.

As we move from physical proximities to the ones afforded by technologies, we can see the coming weeks as opportunities to take small teaching risks and to interact differently with our students. Coming virtually closer means taking on the challenges of inclusive, accessible, and accommodating language and behaviors. Please visit the links below for guidance and resources in these areas:

Inclusivity (remember to change the information to John Jay's if you borrow!)

- Inclusive Teaching
  https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/

- Inclusive Syllabus Language
  https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/2017/08/24/inclusive-syllabus-language/

Accessibility:

- CUNY IT Accessibility for Students
  https://www.cuny.edu/accessibility/students/

- CUNY Assistive Technology Services
  http://cats.cuny.edu/

- Microsoft Office (creating accessible PDFs)
  http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word-help/create-accessible-pdfs-HA102478227.aspx

Accommodations:

- Reasonable Accommodations: A Faculty Guide to Teaching Students with Disabilities (pp.23-26 for teaching online and with technology)
  http://cats.cuny.edu/reasonableaccommodations/index.html

During the coming weeks, many students will need accommodations from us. And they will look to us to meet them in their needs to feel wanted, included, and seen. As this may resonate with our own needs (homeschooling children, tending those who are ill, juggling finances to keep basic needs met, wrestling with feelings of isolation and anxiety), we can design our work together to be attentive to those needs. Learning will be even more meaningful if we are honest and compassionate with ourselves as well as our students.

I am compiling a reference list of student assistance resources for our next email. In the meantime, find joy wherever you can today, and share appreciation and care for all.

Warm wishes. Stay safe. Be well.

Gina