August 20, 2020

Dear UR Law Students,

After one of the hardest summers in recent memory, we’re about to start the fall semester. Over the past couple weeks, I’ve received a number of questions from you all regarding the attendance policy and use of the law school building. I’m writing because I thought it might be helpful to summarize my responses for the entire community. So here goes:

1. **Attendance.** The attendance policy for the fall semester is viewable on the [Law School’s webpage covering all Covid-related matters for the fall semester](#). The policy speaks for itself, but let me explain a couple points a bit further:
   - Students who plan to attend some or all of their classes remotely for the entire semester should have already filled out the [Remote Attendance Request Form](#). If that describes you but you haven’t filled out the form, please do so right away.
   - Regardless of whether you plan to attend class in person or remotely, if you will miss a particular class, you should fill out the [Absentee Form](#). You are expected to attend your classes in the format you have selected (remote or in-person) unless you have a good reason not to attend a particular class. The absentee form lists the common reasons for missing class, though the quality of those reasons may vary depending on how you intend to attend class. (For example, for those attending remotely, hazardous road conditions may not be a good reason for being absent, while a migraine headache would be.) You will note that the form also lists an uncommon reason: not passing the COVID Daily Symptom Screening. Please take this screening very seriously and rigidly follow any instruction not to come to campus.
   - One reason for missing class that you will **not** see on the Absentee Form is “because I just don’t feel like it today.” If you normally attend class in person, we fully understand that there may be days when you wake up and just don’t feel like going in to school (we have those days, too). On those days, it may be tempting to just tune in via Zoom. Please avoid using the remote attendance option in these situations.
   - A final note on attendance: Communication! If something is going on in your life that is impacting your ability or willingness to attend classes, we want to know about it. We are here to help you be successful in law school. If the attendance forms mentioned above don’t capture what’s on your mind, then please reach out to Dean Sklut or any other teacher or administrator.

2. **Studying in the Law School Building.** As we all know by now, life inside the law school building is going to be different this fall. Three building issues have come up rather often, however: (1) Where can students study?, (2) Will there be enough space to study? and (3) What is the proper study etiquette?
   - **Where can you study?** First, students can study in library carrels and at library tables. These spaces are all first-come, first-served, so if you see an empty seat in the common area of the
library, you can use it. Second, you can reserve time in library study rooms (as well as the conference room in the DownUnder). To do so, go here. Third, you can study in common areas (e.g., Davis Room and Atrium) as long as you follow the physical distancing rules that apply to those spaces. Fourth, if you are a member of a student organization with an office, you can study in the organization’s office, provided you follow the organization’s own rules for allocating that space.

- **Will this be enough space?** We think so, but we will find more space if need be. The spaces described above will accommodate approximately 150 students at a time. Even in a normal year, this would likely be sufficient because many students do not come to school every day of the week and, when students do come to school, most students do not spend the entire day. This year, however, we expect less use of the building because a significant number of students have indicated that they will be attending classes remotely. Nonetheless, beginning on the first day of classes, we will be closely monitoring study space to be sure we have enough spaces during the times of highest demand. If need be, we will find additional space and make it available in short order.

- **What is the proper study etiquette?** First and foremost, all students should take care to keep study spaces clean. Wipes are located in close proximity to all study areas so students can wipe them down before and after use. Second, as you would at any other time, be considerate of others studying nearby. This means using headphones if you plan on listening to audio. If you need to attend a class via zoom when you are in the building, you should reserve a room rather do so in common study areas. (If you need to attend a class remotely while in the building for the entire semester, please contact me and I will assist you with that.)

I hope this email answers any questions you might have. As we continue to receive questions, we will follow up with additional emails and update the Law School’s COVID Webpage accordingly. Thank you all for your patience and good will as we start a new semester in these difficult times.

JFP.

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