



Message from Provost and SVP for Academic Affairs Linda Essig

provost.baruch.cuny.edu

August 25, 2021

Baruch Forward: Greetings for the Fall '21 Term

Dear Baruch Colleagues,

Welcome to the first day of the Fall 2021 semester. In some ways, this term is even more complex than the preceding two because we are in a truly hybridized teaching and learning environment: approximately one-third of classes are fully remote, one-third are hybrid, and one-third are in-person. Despite the challenges the situation presents to you and our students, it is also a semester filled with hope and potential:

- We are welcoming more than 2,500 new first-year students, more than 1,500 new transfers, and more than 1,200 new graduate students.
- I had the pleasure of greeting 29 new full-time faculty members at Faculty Orientation.
- A majority of our students are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. For anyone who is not, there is a mobile van administering vaccines, no appointment necessary, on the Clivner=Field Plaza today, tomorrow, and potentially next week.
- We have three major campus milestones to celebrate: completion of our outdoor campus space, the Clivner=Field Plaza along 25th Street between Lexington and Third avenues; a grand new lobby and various infrastructure improvements to the historic Field Building at 17 Lexington Avenue; and the opening of the Aaronson Student Center, located across from the Newman Vertical Campus.
- In September, we celebrate [Latinx Heritage Month](#) with a calendar of virtual events organized by various partners around the College.

New and Upcoming Resources for Faculty and Staff

I am very excited to announce new programs to support faculty innovation and interschool, cross-College collaborations in research, teaching, and engagement:

- **Provost's Innovation Fellows** will work directly with me on core strategic priorities. Fellows may lead faculty working groups, design or implement programs, develop community partnerships, or other projects as determined in collaboration with myself and the provost's office. Learn more [here](#).
- **Faculty Innovation Seed Grants** will support the early-stage development of cross-College (i.e., interschool) interdisciplinary research proposals. Up to three

seed grants will be awarded to three project teams to develop research or creative endeavors that cross traditional school and disciplinary boundaries. These efforts must have the potential for garnering additional external funding, or otherwise have lasting impact on a field/fields or on Baruch College itself. Proposals that engage undergraduate students in research and/or integrate research with teaching are particularly welcome. Learn more [here](#).

- **The inaugural CUNY Professional Development Conference** for staff and faculty is calling for ideas and presentation proposals designed to share best practices and enhance workplace skills. Topics can range from technology to career development, conflict resolution, and project management. I encourage staff and faculty to [submit a conference session proposal](#) by this Friday, August 27. The conference will be held in early November.

Transitioning Back to Campus

Many of our faculty and staff are just now returning to campus after a significant time away. To facilitate the transition back and maintain a campus density that aligns with public health guidance, most of our staff are working some days on campus and some days remotely each week. Faculty, depending on their teaching schedule, may be able to do the same.

As with any change, this transition may feel like a “shock to the system” —because it is. I personally manage that in several ways, including vigorous walking and a brief daily meditation practice. Please find strategies that work for *you* and check out the resources available on the Office of Human Resources [Wellness Corner](#) page.

An Opportunity for Thanks

Returning to campus will allow me to meet many more of you face to face—and it gives all of us the opportunity to thank the College’s essential personnel in person. Our colleagues in Public Safety, Buildings and Grounds, the Mailroom, BCTC, and the Newman Library worked onsite throughout the pandemic to maintain our physical campus and support our virtual campus environment. This historic era would not have been so successful without them.

I look forward to seeing you soon and will continue to be in touch with updates as this dynamic situation evolves.

Sincerely,

Linda Essig

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

