

Dear CS Seniors,

As you are all surely aware by now, the remainder of this academic year will be experiencing myriad disruptions due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The largest disruption, of course, will be the transition of all classes to virtual platforms and the need for many of you to return home. I know that you have been getting emails from many offices on campus over the last day or so, but **please read this all the way through** as I will do my best to answer as many questions as I can as well as address some CS-specific issues. We as faculty, students, and staff are going through this transition together. I do want to stress with you that faculty and staff receive UR communications at the same time as you do. The department is shocked, confused, and coming to terms on how we can deliver the UR educational experience to you remotely as well as other department functions.

Please Note: If you are returning to campus, please do not come to Wegmans Hall. **The Majors Lab is closed to all students. If you feel you have an extenuating circumstance you must email Sara or Dani explaining your reasoning. All Labs are closed unless given permission by the appropriate faculty member.**

Degree Requirements and Completion

With regards to your degrees, it is vital that you work expediently to resolve any outstanding emails/requests from either myself or the Hajim Dean's Office if you have degree requirements that need completing. This includes uncovering S/F grades, finalizing outstanding transfer or AP credit, declaring minors or clusters, etc...

If you have not properly declared your Social Sciences or Humanities divisions, or if you have undeclared minors or clusters it is essential that you work to resolve these issues ASAP. If you have any concerns about your degree audits, please email me with your questions first. Degree audits can be processed here:

<https://websvcs.its.rochester.edu/selfservice/general/login.html?src=userrequired>

Advising

All CS-advising will be moving to a virtual platform. Appointments made through the online booking calendar (<https://rochesterercsc.youcanbook.me/>) will now go through as requests rather than automatically confirmed bookings. When an appointment is accepted, you will then receive a follow-up email from me with a Zoom meeting invite.

Please be sure you have Zoom downloaded onto your phone or laptop as many professors and University staff will be conducting their business through this platform:

<https://tech.rochester.edu/tutorials/create-zoom-account/>

If you are unable to use Zoom for any reason, please indicate so in your meeting request so that we can determine an alternate platform of communication. Email advising remains the most expedient choice if you require quick answers, however, please ask your questions coherently and succinctly.

Signatures and Approvals

All signatures and approvals will be done online whether by fillable form, preexisting university online forms, or email approval.

- To uncover S/F courses:
<http://www.rochester.edu/college/ccas/assets/pdf/CCASPetitionForm.pdf>
- Withdrawal from a course: We are now passed the add/drop period. At this point if you wish to withdraw from a course please email your faculty advisor and copy me in (cc). I will ensure an add/drop form is completed and sent to CCAS to be processed. *The University is also working on a way to make this an electronic process, please stay attentive to your email.*

All university online forms can be found here:

<https://www.rochester.edu/registrar/requests/index.html>

As a Hajim Student, you need approval from your Faculty Advisor and Undergraduate Program Coordinator for most University forms. It is important when sending emails asking for approvals that both parties are included. This is paramount in making sure communication stays effective and inclusive.

Server Access and VPN

Regarding CS Server Access, there are 3 machines available for remote access to the CSUG instructional machines (cycle1.csug.rochester.edu, cycle2.csug.rochester.edu, and cycle3.csug.rochester.edu). Those are the only machines with access through the university firewall. Access is via ssh only. If you need access to other machines on the instructional network, you must first connect to one of the cycle machines and then connect to the desired destination.

Users may copy files to/from their instructional account using an ssh based tool such as sftp or scp. Graphical transfer programs are often easiest to use: for windows - winscp <https://winscp.net/eng/index.php>; for Mac - cyberduck <https://cyberduck.io/>. If you encounter issues with remote access to the servers, please contact labstaff@cs.rochester.edu

You will also need VPN access to the University network for other resources such as the library, so if you have not yet already set this up on your personal computers please do so ASAP: <https://tech.rochester.edu/remote-access-vpn-tutorials/>

Academic Resources

As we move to an all virtual platform, many of you may be wondering what academic resources will still be available to you. As of right now we do not have anything set in stone. We understand that this transition has come during an especially important time as we are in the midterm of our semester. We are working diligently with the appropriate parties to make tutoring and academic help available online.

- CCAS recently notified peer advisors that they are no longer in service so please do not email them. **This may change and we will let you know as soon as we have updates from CCAS.**
- CSUG Tutoring is currently suspended. We hope to have more updates for you in the coming weeks.

TA/WSLs

If you are currently a TA or WSL, you are still an active employee. The appropriate instructor will be in contact with you if not already to discuss your ability to continue working and what adjustments may be made to your duties.

All employed students should set up direct deposit if you are able to do so, as you will not be able to come pick-up your physical checks. If you have a paycheck in Jenna's office, we will mail it to the appropriate location; do not come to Wegmans Hall. Further instruction regarding paychecks will be forthcoming.

Commencement

On a more somber note, the newly planned Senior Banquet is, as of right now, cancelled due to University restrictions on large-scale social events. We will, of course, be monitoring the situation should things improve and such restrictions be lifted, but likely the event will not be held this year.

Regarding Commencement more generally, there has been no official word from the University on what will happen to this event. As with most things, travel plans for this should be postponed until we know more about how COVID-19 will progress in the United States and until the University's central offices make an official announcement. Please do not email me or Sara questions regarding commencement, we receive communications on this at the same time as you.

CS Department Events

The CSUG/WiC Town Hall will occur as scheduled on April 17th from 4:00-5:30 PM and we invite you all to participate. We will open a Zoom meeting for faculty and students to join the event and conduct the Town Hall virtually. As with previous Town Halls, a survey will precede the event in order for you to voice your input anonymously. More on this and a Zoom invitation will come next month.

Res Life

As per CCAS:

“Residential Life will be communicating directly with students about the criteria for those students who would like to remain on campus as well as the process for moving home, and any refunds that may be applicable.”

- For those living off campus, you should work with ResLife’s Off Campus Housing office if you decide you want to break your lease and return home:
(<https://www.rochester.edu/reslife/non/index.html>)
- U-Haul Self-Storage Promo: U-Haul is offering 30 days of free self-storage to college students who need to move due to coronavirus.
https://www.uhaul.com/Articles/About/20625/College-Students-U-Haul-Offers-30-Days-Free-Self-Storage-amid-Coronavirus-Outbreak/?utm_campaign=uhaulsm&utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=pr&utm_content=20200312-uhaulisoffering30

CS Question Inbox

We know that this is a scary, frustrating, and very confusing time with rapidly changing situations, but rest assured that the CS Department wants to do what it can in order to help everyone through this challenging transition. In order to expedite the question-answer process, we have established a CS Question Inbox where you can submit your more general questions and concerns. Sara and I will both be attending this inbox and will either answer your questions to the best of our ability or direct you to the correct contact. Please do not hesitate to submit anything to this inbox:

<https://forms.gle/JstSgYQLG1iZHXa46>

Additional Resources

UR COVID-19 Update Page: <https://www.rochester.edu/coronavirus-update/>

Department of Computer Science: <https://www.cs.rochester.edu>

CS Resource Page: <https://www.cs.rochester.edu/undergraduate/resources.html>

International Services Office: <https://iso.rochester.edu>

The CARE Network: <https://www.rochester.edu/care/>

It is imperative that you remain calm and rational during the changes to come. The greatest impetus behind the University's decisions is the reduction of risk related to a COVID-19 outbreak in our area. Your best line of defense currently is to exercise common sense and basic hygiene, and to arm yourself with the most up-to-date information through reliable news sources.

We know it is disheartening and, quite frankly, heartbreaking that these disruptions will be so greatly impacting your final semester here at UR, but now is a time to learn and stay vigilant. You all represent the next generations of decision makers and planners for our global community and it is vital that you carry with you the experiences and knowledge that we glean from this health crisis into the future. We live in diverse and exciting times, but we are also still human and must do whatever we can within our own contexts and perspectives to ensure that we learn from our past and our present so that we can embark into a tomorrow that is better than the yesterday we left behind.

Sara and I encourage you all to help and support one another through this challenging time, and to impress upon your peers the importance of staying calm and staying informed.

Please remain *especially* attentive to your emails as such communications will be crucial moving forward.

If you have any questions, you are more than welcome to email me directly or submit to the Question Inbox (see above).

Lastly, please note that I will be working remotely for the week of March 16th – March 20th.

Stay safe and stay healthy!

Best,
Dani and Sara

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Classes 2021 and 2020

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Classes 2022 and 2023, and prospective students