



A Message from University of Kentucky
PRESIDENT ELI CAPILOUTO

Dear Colleagues,

As we enter the last month of the fall semester, we face a weekend that includes a home football game, Halloween celebrations and an upcoming national election. We want our students to be safe – physically, emotionally and psychologically – and we want them to know of the resources available to them. Today, Vice President for Student Success Kirsten Turner sent the message below to our students, encouraging them to care for themselves and each other. As you can see, it also lists the resources available to them now and in the coming days.

As important, faculty and staff can take advantage of similar well-being resources, particularly in advance of the coming week, along with resources for instructors to manage conversations in the classroom. These are listed below.

RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYEES

- All faculty and staff, as well as their spouses, sponsored dependents and unmarried children up to age 26, can make an appointment with [Work+Life Connections counselors](#). Our therapists offer confidential services including short-term counseling and referrals.
- Our [certified health coaches](#) with HR Health and Wellness can also consult with you if you're experiencing feelings of overwhelm, lack of control or worry.

RESOURCES FOR INSTRUCTORS

- The [Teaching Online in Times of Tension](#) workshop addresses pedagogical approaches to foster inclusion in an online environment with a specific focus on practices that allow a space for challenging conversations.
- [This infographic](#) outlines how faculty can respond to difficult moments in the classroom and navigate the perceived boundary between the classroom and the “real world.”
- [This guide](#) offers suggestions as to how faculty can diversity their curricula and learning activities to convey a more inclusive sense of the world while engaging more students.

We also encourage you to [refer students to this list of resources for mental health support](#). After all, we are a community committed to the success of our people. We are a community that cares.

The email students received today:

Dear Students,

Right now, we are living in unusual times.

Since last March, much has changed. But you have continually met the challenges in front of us. You've adapted to new methods of learning, new platforms for engaging with each other and new behavioral norms designed to protect others. It has been a period of intensity, anxiety, Zoom fatigue and emotional, physical and psychological stress. And, yet, we recognize there is still more in front of us.

Taking care of yourself—and taking care of each other—is vital right now. We encourage you to reach out to your support systems if you are feeling stressed. **But we also want to remind you of the resources on our campus designed to support your well-being.** [You can learn more about those here](#), and we plan to have even more staff from our Office of Student Success on campus, in person, in the coming weeks to support students.

Talking about your emotional and physical health during a time of such intensity—and asking for help when you need it—is a sign of strength.

We encourage you to remember this, especially as life in all its hurry and urgency moves on. This weekend, for example, a football game will be played on our campus. People in neighborhoods throughout this community, and so many like it across the country, will find ways to celebrate Halloween. And, of course, candidates and volunteers will make their final pitches for election in everything from local city council races all the way to the U.S. Presidency.

As we enter a weekend with so much activity—from the rites of passage in fall to the passing of another election cycle—we urge you to support and care for one another—in spaces where we normally have fun or in spaces where we might exchange ideas and find ways to agree or respectfully disagree.

Take care of each other this weekend. Continue making the good decisions you've been making: Avoid large gatherings, whether connected to the football game or Halloween; wear a face covering when around others; and continue to protect and respect those around you. We've made so much progress this fall. I know we can continue to keep each other safe this weekend and in the remaining weeks of this semester. Let's keep going.

After all, this is a community that cares about each other. This is a community committed to your success during all seasons, but particularly during periods that are understandably stressful. You play an essential role in that. If you see friends who are struggling, encourage them to seek support or [refer them to our Center for Support and Intervention](#). If you need support, please reach out to us at 218-SAFE.

Kirsten Turner, Vice President for Student Success

Eli Capilouto
President