

Dear Member of the Class of 2024,

We write to welcome you to Penn and to the College of Arts and Sciences. While we are excited to get in touch with you, we know that current events are very much on your mind, as they are on ours. Please know that our hearts go out to the many who have lost loved ones and livelihoods in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and that we stand in solidarity against the racism in America exposed most recently this spring by the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor. We want to assure you that you are joining an inclusive and diverse community at Penn and that your future teachers, advisors, and mentors are here to affirm and uphold the dignity of everyone in that community and the wider world.

In this difficult moment, we find hope in welcoming you to our community. It is our core belief that the liberal arts education you receive in the College of Arts and Sciences will prepare you for a life that helps make a better world for us all, and so we want to get you started on that journey in the best possible way.

Your primary guide for academic information and next steps in the College can be found online in Compass which is in Penn's learning management system, Canvas. Canvas is a tool you will eventually use for many of your classes. Compass will answer many of your initial questions and present new ideas that you will want to incorporate into your academic plans. You will need to work your way through Compass, complete the Advising Questionnaire, take the Math Diagnostic which you will access in Compass, and speak with your pre-major advisor in order to request fall courses by July 17th.

You will have many decisions to make this summer and throughout your time at Penn; please be assured that you will not have to make them alone.

In mid-June, you will receive another email from the College Office with contact information for your peer and pre-major advisors. Your peer advisor will be able to give you the student perspective on many things in the College and at Penn. Your pre-major advisor will help you plan your academic path this summer and over the next two years.

Once again, welcome to the College of Arts and Sciences. We genuinely look forward to working with you in the coming years. We will be back in touch in mid-June. Until then, do take care.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Sniegowski
Dean of the College, Professor of Biology

Janet Tighe
Dean of First-Year Students and Director of Academic Advising