



Dear Graduate Students and Post-Docs,

I am sending you all my best wishes for peace and rest this weekend at the end of one of the most worrisome weeks of many of our lives. No matter where you sit on the political spectrum and whether you were born in the US or not, your choice to live and study in the US no doubt had at least something to do with thinking of our nation as a stable democracy. We have not seen armed people breach the capital since the War of 1812, so these are indeed historic times. I hope you are taking a moment to reflect on both the shocking nature of these events but also the short and long-term actions of individuals and organizations that have led us to this point. We can all learn from history, from reflection, and from engagement with the world around us. I also hope that you are able to

step away from it when you want and need, to focus your efforts elsewhere, and to manage your own self-care.

In case you missed it, Chancellor Gillman released a statement on the events earlier this week <https://chancellor.uci.edu/engagement/campus-communications/2021/210106-events-washington-dc.php>

University of California President Drake issued a statement as well [https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-denounces-attack-american-democracy?utm\\_source=twitter-uofcalifornia](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-denounces-attack-american-democracy?utm_source=twitter-uofcalifornia)

### **Some Resources for Counseling Relief**

It's been a trying time for all of us, but below are some really great resources a colleague of mine shared with me that I have found helpful.

- Dealing with Stress and Anxiety - <https://myusf.usfca.edu/caps/self-help-resources/stress-anxiety>
- Covid mental health support - <https://www.covidmentalhealthsupport.org/>
- 40 things to do at home while self-isolating- <https://medium.com/psyberguide/40-things-to-do-at-home-while-youre-self-isolating-2253f52ad295>
- 44 Mental Health Resources for Black People Trying to Survive in This Country - <https://www.self.com/story/black-mental-health-resources>
- Black Healing Remixed - <https://www.beam.community/blackhealingremixed>

### **UCI Counseling Winter 2021 Therapy Groups**

All therapy groups start Week 3 of Winter Quarter. All Therapy Groups will be held via Telebehavioral Video Conferencing. Therapy Groups are intended for currently enrolled UCI students who are currently located in the state of California. Call the Counseling Center to learn more!

#### **Graduate Student Therapy Group**

*Tuesday 9:30am-11:00am*

This is a process-oriented therapy group for graduate students who would like to receive/provide support, learn about self and others, share their experiences, and discuss possible ways to cope with struggles in a safe space. The focus of

the group will be determined by the members; possible topics may include academic distress, personal growth, relationship concerns, and work-life balance.

### **Overcoming Social Anxiety**

*Tuesday 10:30am-12:00pm*

This skills-focused group is designed to help students overcome anxiety in a variety of social situations including public speaking, meeting new people, initiating and maintaining conversations. Call the counseling center at 949-824-6457 for more details.

### **Journey to Befriending Your Body**

*Thursday 9:30am-11:00am*

This is a process-oriented therapy group for students of ALL genders and sizes who would like to work on their concerns, discomfort, and discontent about their own bodies, shapes, weight, and appearance. This group will help members to begin or progress their journeys to healthy relationships with their bodies through exploring relevant feelings and thoughts, receiving/providing support, and discussing ways to cope in a safe space. Possible topics may include self-esteem, interpersonal insecurity, perfectionism, and cultural and familiar influences.

### **Authentic Connections**

*Thursday 1:00pm-2:30pm*

This group is for students interested in better understanding themselves and their relationships with others. It offers an environment where members can express their thoughts and feelings and provide support and feedback to one another.

### **Finding Peace in Family Chaos**

*Friday 10:00am-11:30am*

This support group aims to provide a safe and nonjudgmental space for participants to increase awareness of how their family dynamics impact their relational patterns and overall functioning during COVID and beyond. Through the interactive nature of the group members may engage in discussion and exploration of diverse topics including family and cultural expectations, spirituality, academics, career goals, and romantic relationships. Giving and receiving of interpersonal feedback is also an important component of this

group

### **COVID-19 Testing procedures for Graduate Students**

Many of you may have seen the daily UCI Forward email go out from Strategic Communications go out Monday. An attached chart seemed to indicate that graduate students are only required to test every other week. This is NOT the case, graduate students living on campus are still required to get tested weekly.

### **Immunizations**

You should all have received an email from the Provost earlier today. In the event you did not receive it or have already deleted it, here are some key excerpts:

- The state is currently only allowing vaccinations for health care workers and long-term care residents: <https://covid19.ca.gov/vaccines/#When-can-I-get-vaccinated>
- All vaccine supplies that have been allocated to UCI Health have been distributed.
- Main campus has no vaccine allocation at this time.
- As soon as we can, we will let you know what the priority list and distribution plans are for when we do have vaccine.

### **Save the Date: February Grad Division Townhall**

- We had our first Town Hall of 2020 today and the focus was Job Market Success and Survival During COVID-19 (For those who missed it you, you can watch the recorded version here: [https://www.facebook.com/UCIrvineGD/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/UCIrvineGD/videos/?ref=page_internal) )
- Our next Graduate Division Town Hall will be on **Friday, February 12th from 3 pm - 4 pm PT**
- A topic has not yet been set, so let us know if you have a panel you would like to see.

### **REMINDER: Regional Stay at Home Order**

You may by now know that we are at **0% capacity in Southern California ICUs**. We all need to stay home if at all possible. Some details:

UCI:

- Dashboard for latest cases at UCI:  
<https://uci.edu/coronavirus/dashboard/index.php>
- All in-person courses are moved to remote for at least the first two weeks in January. A very small number of graduate courses will be allowed in person by exception. That exception process is happening now and will be finalized by the end of week two.
- Graduate housing and student affairs are continuing to work on the Zot Bubble program for as soon as we are ready.

CALIFORNIA: <https://covid19.ca.gov/stay-home-except-for-essential-needs/>

- The Regional Stay Home Order allows access to critical services and allows outdoor activities to preserve Californians' physical and mental health.
- Under the order, the following sectors are allowed to remain open with safety precautions:
  - Critical infrastructure (when remote option is not possible)
  - Schools
  - Non-urgent medical and dental care
  - Child care and pre-K

### **Future of Graduate Education**

UCI hosted a panel with Song Richardson, Tyrus Miller, and me on where we see graduate education going. If you have some time to spare, check it out here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6J3Fd3cpnU&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6J3Fd3cpnU&feature=emb_title)

### **Office Hours**

We will continue to hold office hours in 2021 with myself and our Associate Deans. Our new Associate Deans are eager to meet and speak with you! Please pay them a visit, even if it's just to say hi. Of course, you can always come see me as well. All office hours are a half hour.

- **Monday January 11, 2021** - 10:30AM Dean Hayes  
- <https://uci.zoom.us/j/7277477057>
- **Tuesday January 12, 2021** - 4PM Dean Hayes -

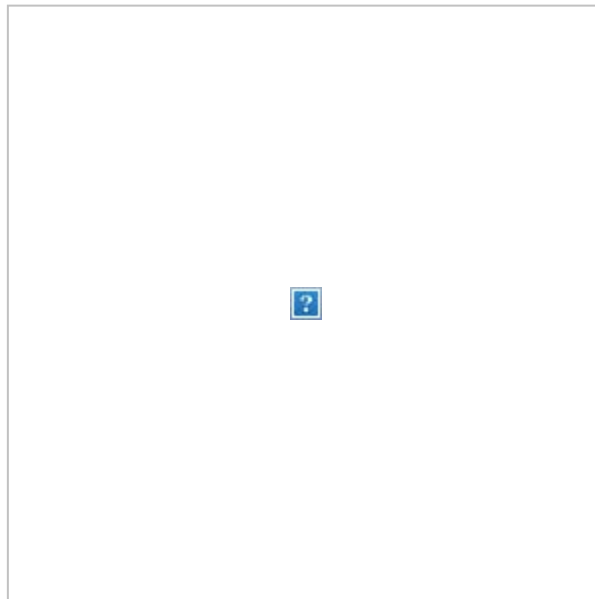
<https://uci.zoom.us/j/7277477057>

- **Wednesday January 13, 2021** - 1 PM, Assoc Dean Rodrigo Lazo -  
<https://uci.zoom.us/j/7277477057>
- **Thursday January 14, 2021** - Noon, Assoc Dean Jaymi Smith -  
<https://uci.zoom.us/j/4520706918>
- **Friday January 15, 2021**- 4PM Dean Hayes -  
<https://uci.zoom.us/j/7277477057>

### **In Closing**

You made it through the first week of 2021! Honestly, with this week, that is an accomplishment in and of itself. At our Grad Division staff meeting today, we talked a lot about how overwhelmed and stretched thin everyone is feeling. I wanted to share that with all of you, partly because I want you to be kind to staff on campus who are feeling as stressed as you but partly because sharing with each other really helped a lot of us. Sometimes just knowing you are not alone can help. It also means that our staff shared some things that I think might cheer you up a bit. Jokes I heard/read during our staff meeting today:

- I want to return my free seven day trial of 2021.
- This American 2021 season has jumped the shark. (Insert obligatory Happy Days plug if you don't know the origin of the phrase "jumped the shark" <https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/JumpingTheShark>)
- What if 2020 is just the trailer for 2021?



[alt text: A picture of Dwight from the American version of the Office that reads “Happy New Year!! WRONG: The happiness of the upcoming year has yet to be determined.”]

I hope you take some moments of levity where you can. We are continuing to work hard for you, and you give us the momentum we need to keep going. On behalf of all of Graduate Division,

Gillian Hayes  
Kleist Professor of Informatics  
Vice Provost for Graduate Education  
Dean of the Graduate Division



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