

7.23.20 Message from Wendy Raymond

Friends,

As we continue to make our individual and collective ways into and through twin pandemics, I thank you once again for all you are investing in coming together in September to teach and learn at Haverford. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni fill my days with spirited ideas, perspectives, questions, and solutions. And I know that is the tip of the proverbial iceberg, for you are each engaged in so much more than I know about! Thank you for all you are doing and for keeping in touch.

Anti-Racism action plan. Our ongoing work in anti-racism includes actions and action planning that are happening in large and small ways across faculty, staff, students, alumni, the Board of Managers, and the Corporation of Haverford College. As I stated in my [response](#) to the [open letter from Black Students Refusing Further Inaction \(BSRFI\)](#), we are seizing this historic moment in order to dismantle the consequences of systemic racism and come to terms with the legacy of racism at Haverford and its impact on generations of Black students, other students of color, and Black faculty and staff. I appreciate our students and alumni, including our Athletes of Color Coalition, who have used social media or direct outreach to share their painful experiences of being Black at Haverford in order to engage me (and you) in self-reflection and to contribute to real, positive change. My Senior Staff colleagues and I, with input from many, are building an anti-racism action plan, with implementation to follow. When will the process be complete? At one level, the answer needs to be “never”, for anti-racism work is everlasting. With much common ground and commitment, we will make significant progress in both our action plan and communication about it before courses begin on September 8.

COVID-19 Planning. Colleges and universities nationwide are releasing—and, in some cases, revising—their plans for the fall semester. Many have a plan, much like ours, to offer both in-person courses and remote-only courses. Some others are moving to all-remote instruction (with few, if any, students living on-campus) after having previously announced a semester similar to what we envision for Haverford.

While every college and university has its own reasons for its chosen path, I thought it would be worthwhile to identify key considerations that influence this decision-making across the nation, and how we at Haverford regard them during this summer of intense and detailed planning:

- **Size of student population.** As you likely know, Haverford is among the smaller colleges, both in our academic peer group and in this geographic region. When it comes to COVID-19, the number of students impacts a campus across multiple registers, beginning with the absolute number of potential infections and the resulting accommodations and contingencies that are required in the event of an outbreak. In short, a smaller size provides flexibility and a reduced impact on everything from housing to food to learning environments.

- **Housing options.** Haverford has always had an atypically large number of singles in our residence halls, and we have expanded their number by reconfiguring units in the Haverford College Apartments (HCA). As a result, and based upon the results of our recent survey of student plans, we are able to house every student in a single in order to prioritize their health and safety.
- **Facilities for quarantine, if necessary.** The College is setting aside quarantine spaces that will equal approximately 5% of on-campus enrollment. Each quarantine space, which has an individual bathroom and bedroom, will be for a single student for the length of the required quarantine. These dedicated quarantine units will be available to COVID-positive students and to students who were in contact with COVID-positive students, pending a negative COVID test result. Dining Services will deliver meals to students in quarantine.
- **Classroom experience.** Haverford faculty members and students have the option of participating online or in person, with faculty committed to teaching every student who enrolls, regardless of modality. So even if all but one member of a course attend in-person, that faculty member will provide an online experience for the sole remote student. That represents a huge commitment to teaching and learning, and offers a foundational flexibility that would be extremely helpful in the event of changing circumstances for any student, or the possibility of external circumstances that result in students again moving away from campus (e.g. a new government directive barring colleges and universities from continuing in residence, regional public health conditions).
- **Screening and testing.** The College has invested in our internal testing and screening capacities and in partnerships with third-party healthcare providers. We have expanded Health Services staffing in order to provide testing as students arrive and then throughout the semester. These capabilities will allow us to monitor COVID-19 prevalence within the overall asymptomatic student population and provide testing for symptomatic students so they may learn quickly whether common symptoms of illness are from COVID-19 or a cold, flu, or other illness.
- **Ongoing consultation with experts.** Haverford is fortunate to be in direct communication with infectious disease and public health experts in the Philadelphia region and within our alumni who are generously contributing to the work of the College's COVID-19 Health Protocols Group and Senior Staff.
- **Regional conditions.** We remain in close contact with local public health officials and health care providers to ensure that our reopening plans reflect current best practice and that key partners have the ability to meet the foreseeable healthcare needs of our campus community. Should COVID rates and trends in the greater Philadelphia area change alarmingly, as they have elsewhere in the country, we will be prepared to pivot away from our current plans for an on-campus semester.
- **Campus culture.** "Trust, concern, and respect" is foundational to Haverfordians' sense of self in community. Our campus is inclined by nature and habit of mind to think of others as we make choices for ourselves. Yet even as we stress, again, the importance of face masks, social distancing, hand-washing, and awareness of [early symptoms](#), I also want students in particular to know that we acknowledge the enormity of the

challenge we all face in coming to campus. We are social beings and togetherness matters; I feel deeply the absence of life in close proximity to students and colleagues; this is going to be hard. Prior to the pandemic, I didn't think I could become more impressed and appreciative of our students than I already was. But you quickly showed me what it means to be our best selves at the worst of times. And I am inclined to think that you will rise to even greater heights as the term begins, and you show the world how to live, love, and matter for the betterment of all.

- **Continuing adaptation.** As the summer progresses and we continue to adapt to COVID-19, a few of the changes we've made for the benefit of health and safety have disrupted some students' housing or curricular plans. Receiving information that requires unwelcome change can result in feelings of sadness, grief, anger, and disappointment, even if the change makes intellectual sense. I regret that we again find ourselves dealing with loss: loss of being able to live in a double with a beloved friend, loss of being able to hold a full group of friends together in a housing unit, and loss of some curricular planning due to changes in our course schedule. And yet as we absorb these losses, I hope that we will each experience all kinds of gains as we come together across the miles, whether we return to campus or connect at a distance.

Haverford bookstore. The Haverford College bookstore is now open for business as a member of the Barnes & Noble College bookstore family. Our friends Lydia Whitelaw and Stefanie Delaney continue to manage and staff the shop, which is now literally the best of both bookstore worlds: the B&N network puts more than two million titles from 6,000 publishers at readers' fingertips; meanwhile, we all can enjoy the flexibility and convenience of an in-store experience right here on campus. Check it out at www.HaverfordBookstore.com

A new role for an old friend. Ann Figueredo '84 is one of our most loyal and active alums. She graduated from Haverford in 1984 and returned to campus a dozen years ago to work in our Office of Institutional Advancement (IA), which stewards fundraising and alumni relations activities. Ann rose through the ranks and has led the division as vice president of institutional advancement since 2014; among her many and inspiring accomplishments was the record-setting 'Lives That Speak' fundraising campaign. Over the past year, Ann led an outstanding fundraising effort in support of key priorities including financial aid, LIFTFAR, and other diversity, equity, inclusion, and thriving areas. It is with profoundly mixed feelings that I share the news that Ann is moving on to the next chapter in her work life and will be stepping down from her position at year's end. Her interim successor will be our colleague, Assistant Vice President of Individual Giving Deb Strecker; a national search for a permanent successor begins this fall. Few have done more for Haverford than Ann, and though she will no longer be on staff, as a Ford for life she'll remain connected—and contributing to our mission—for years to come. Thank you, Ann!

I hope you and your loved ones are able to stay healthy and safe. You all are much on my mind, whether I am working on my laptop, eating lunch on the porch at 1 College Circle, or getting

caught in a hot and humid downpour while walking the Nature Trail (as happened this morning).
The campus looks gorgeous and sends you its green summer embrace.

With gratitude,
Wendy