

Boston University Office of the Provost

Professor Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer



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TO: Boston University Faculty and Staff

FROM: Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer
Robert A. Brown, President

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "R.A.".

DATE: February 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Looking Ahead as a Residential Research University

Throughout the past year, while working to safely ensure the continuity of our students' educational progress, we have also been focused on the future. For the last seven months, we have been deeply engaged in finalizing the implementation plans for BU's new [strategic plan](#). In thinking about the future, the element that continues to rise to the very top of BU's defining characteristics is that we are a *residential* research university with the corpus of our work done in person – in classrooms, studios, laboratories, residence halls, conference rooms – and in community with one another.

All of us look forward to a time when the worst of the pandemic is past us and we can return to some semblance of normalcy in both our personal and professional lives. While we do not yet know exactly when that will be, we are heartened to see the daily increase in vaccination numbers across the country, a sign that there is a light at the end of this long and painful tunnel.

We envision that the summer terms will operate very much like this spring, with the same protocols for frequent testing, attestation, and other public health measures in place. However, as we look ahead to the fall of 2021, we believe that we will be in the position to return, by and large, to in-person teaching, learning, and working. While it is still too early to make final decisions about teaching modality for the fall, we hope that by the end of the summer we will be able to move beyond endless Zoom meetings and safely return to a bustling Commonwealth Avenue.

We will continue to monitor the pandemic and listen to our medical professionals, and will keep you informed as plans for the fall take shape in the coming months. In the meantime, we will continue to set our sights high for the future and work together to make Boston University an even better residential research university. Thank you once again for your patience, persistence, and dedication during this trying time.