

**From:** Vice Provost and Dean Robin L. Garrell and Graduate Council Chair Andrea Kasko

**Sent:** Monday, March 09, 2020 2:16 PM

**Subject:** Campus Visits for Prospective Graduate Students

**UCLA**

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## **Graduate Division Graduate Council**

**To: Deans, Directors, Department Chairs, Management Services Officers, and Student Affairs Officers**

### **Spring 2020 Virtual Visits for Prospective Graduate Students**

Recognizing travel concerns relating to COVID-19, and to ensure that prospective graduate students are provided consistent experiences, **we strongly recommend that departments replace all upcoming in-person graduate student spring visits with virtual experiences.**

We understand that much of an on-campus visit involves meeting current students and potential faculty advisors, visiting classes, touring facilities, and attending panel discussions, informational sessions and socials, and that translating all these activities to a virtual format will prove challenging. At the same time, we don't wish to put undue pressure on prospective students who are, for various reasons, uncomfortable traveling at this time. We also recognize that CDC travel recommendations continue to evolve, and that visitors and departments may experience non-recoverable costs if events are canceled with little advance notice.

Below, we're suggesting campus resources and services that can help your department adapt its schedule to a fully accessible digital format.

- **Meetings with Current Students and Faculty**  
Consider allowing prospective students to schedule [Google Hangouts](#), Skype, or [Zoom](#) sessions with current graduate students and prospective faculty advisors in their fields of study.
- **Information Sessions, Panels or Lectures (*see notes below*)**  
If your school, department or interdepartmental degree program has video conferencing equipment, we encourage you to video stream your information sessions or panels. If you do not have the resources or technology to stream sessions, contact your CCLA coordinator or the Center for the Advancement of Teaching for support and to ensure all sessions are fully accessible.
- **Online Socials**  
Much of a prospective graduate student's spring visit to UCLA involves experiencing the vibrancy and culture of graduate life. While there's no ideal way to translate this experience to an online format, your department may want to consider using Slack, Facebook groups or Twitter to host virtual "town halls" or group discussions for prospective students.
- **Website Landing Page for Prospective Students**  
If you are able to do so, please create an accessible web page on your school, department or IDP website with an overview of the virtual spring visit and how prospective students can participate. Include digital versions of any print materials that would have been distributed in person.

- **Email Notification Template for Prospective Students**

We are offering [an e-mail template \(DOCX\)](#) to notify prospective graduate students of the change in plans. Please alter the language to suit your needs.

***Please also refer to the notes below, which contain important information about accessibility and permissions required to record sessions or reuse media.***

We appreciate that not all departments have the staff, resources or competencies to translate in-person visits to a virtual setting. Our primary goal is to ensure that students who are unable to travel for health, financial, personal or professional reasons are able to access the same information and resources as other students who are not experiencing the same challenges.

These are times of uncertainty and concern, and we thank you for your patience and flexibility. Should you have any ideas or concerns about visit day, please feel free to share them with the Graduate Division by emailing Assistant Dean Nickey Woods ([nwoods@grad.ucla.edu](mailto:nwoods@grad.ucla.edu)). We will do our utmost to respond in a timely manner and adopt your ideas if we believe they will be effective.

We understand that there will be financial impacts to cancelling travel and on-campus events. The campus is preparing FAQs to address questions about this.

Please forward this information to the staff and/or faculty in your department coordinating these spring visits.

With best wishes,

**Robin L. Garrell**

Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate Division

**Andrea M. Kasko**

Chair of the Graduate Council

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## **Important Notes about Accessibility and Recording Sessions**

### **Disability Access**

Individuals with disabilities must be able to participate and know they can receive accommodations to participate in the online meetings, sessions, panels, lectures and socials.

Please prominently include within communications concerning these opportunities the following notice: "If you require accommodations to take advantage of this opportunity, please let us know 7-10 days in advance. Contact us at [your department phone number], or [your department email address]."

The [Center for Accessible Education](#) can assist you in setting up desired accommodations, which may include Video Phone or Video Relay Services, CART/live captioning, or alternative media products.

### **Recording a session**

It is illegal to audio record anyone in California without their permission. **We advise departments to announce that a session is being recorded at the start.** We would also suggest that there be an area in the room where anyone who does not want to be video or audio recorded can sit without judgment.

### **Permission forms to facilitate reuse of media recordings**

We suggest departments [get media release and permission forms \(PDF\)](#) signed by the panelists so the university can use the recorded sessions again.