

John F. Manning
Dean, Harvard Law School
Harvard Law School
1585 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138 US

President Lawrence Bacow
President, Harvard University

Dear Dean Manning and President Bacow,

This letter is submitted on behalf of the undersigned members of the Harvard Law School (HLS) 2020-21 community, as well as our fellow HLS alumni. We write to you in appeal of your decision to be online-only for Fall 2020, and urge you to implement a hybrid semester. Our argument is laid out below, but it can be expressed in simple terms.

1. Even the best virtual learning cannot replicate the opportunities that come with in-person learning. Although students in all years and of all backgrounds will be negatively affected by a solely virtual semester, for some members of our community, including international students and those with learning disabilities, in-person education is even more important. These students will suffer from immediate and lasting effects on their career and living situation, including being barred from all employment opportunities and not even being allowed to remain in or enter the United States.
2. In recognition of these facts and the feasibility of hybrid semesters, Harvard Law School's (HLS) peer institutions across America have committed to hybrid semesters as the best balance of every member of their communities' physical, mental, and emotional health. This includes law schools and universities in the hardest-hit areas of the United States, such as New York City. In light of dropping case counts across Massachusetts, the developed plans by HLS's peer institutions, and the well-known creativity, expertise, and compassion of Harvard professors and administration, we ask that HLS do the same.
3. We understand that this semester will not look exactly like previous semesters, but our wish is clear. In a recent survey open to all HLS students, reconsidering a hybrid option was the second-most supported initiative, behind only tuition reduction.¹ Over 80% of those polled indicated they planned to defer if changes were not made to HLS's approach.²

¹ See Appendix 5

² *Id.*

4. We are willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure a high-quality, community-driven legal education that we will take with us when we leave HLS and become leaders across the US and world. We ask that the administration similarly choose courage in the face of uncertainty, creativity in the face of challenge. We ask that HLS work with students, faculty, and experts to design a hybrid approach that will maximize student wellbeing and the opportunity to learn.

I. In-Person Learning, Even When in Hybrid Form, Provides Opportunities for All Students That No Virtual Education Can Replicate.

In-person learning is central to a high-quality legal education. We urge Harvard Law School to recognize the benefits that even a hybrid semester would provide far exceed the possibilities of a solely virtual semester.

A. 1Ls

The foundations of a legal education cannot be taught remotely. 1L students need peer support and advising in order to excel academically and socially. Recognizing that rising 1Ls will benefit from in-person instruction to build the necessary foundations, schools such as the University of California Davis and the University of California Berkeley have prioritized offering in-person classes for rising 1Ls. In-person learning is also important for 1Ls, as it is their first opportunity to connect with their classmates, faculty, and career advisors. These opportunities to meet with career advisors are crucial in ensuring that 1Ls will know how to look for summer employment. Moreover, the 1L experience is largely contained, as students take classes solely with the same members in their sections and their involvement in extracurriculars, including journals, is largely limited.

B. 2Ls

Being on campus while taking the necessary precautions to minimize the spread of COVID-19 is also important for 2Ls, as this is the last graded semester before they apply to firm jobs in an economy with the highest unemployment rate since the Great Depression.³ HLS's decision deprives 2Ls not only of the ability to have the best learning experience, but also of critical opportunities for advising, mock interviews, and other career support in preparation for EIP, which will now take place following an entirely online semester. Thus, 2Ls must choose between a semester without the resources that they planned for when choosing HLS and deferring for an uncertain amount of time and without guidance as to HLS's plans for helping them find employment. A hybrid semester would allow them critical access to professors who can serve as references, career advisors who can walk them through options and provide advice, and in-person classes if they have difficulty learning in a virtual environment.

³ [Sarah Hansen, "April Was The Worst Month For Jobs Since The Great Depression—Here's What The Numbers Tell Us About Recovery," Forbes, 8 May 2020.](#)

C. 3Ls

3L year is the final chance for students to bond with peers, participate in meaningful activities, and connect with faculty who will be vital to their success in the workforce. They also do not have a realistic option to take a leave of absence, even if they highly desire one. Most 3Ls already have jobs lined up that they have worked incredibly hard to obtain and will be jeopardized if they do not graduate on time. Many 3Ls are currently applying for clerkships for the 2021-2022 term, which would also be jeopardized if students took a leave of absence. If Harvard Law School follows the example of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and does not reopen for the spring semester, the final half of all 3L's legal education will have been remote, and thus plagued by the lack of community, friendship, and most importantly opportunities, that come along with remote learning. This is not the law school experience for which Harvard Law School is known.

D. International Students

Having in-person classes is of tremendous importance to international students. In-person classes offer an additional venue to alleviate the extreme inequality in employment opportunities that currently exists for international JD and LLM students.

Under current rules relevant to student visas, all but a few incoming international LLM and JD students will lose employment opportunities in the US after graduation and during 1L summer, respectively, as a result of the switch to online instruction, per HIO guidance (Appendix 1). This is because the current visa rules require international students to maintain active student visa status for two semesters before gaining the ability to work in the US. However, currently new students will not be able to count the incoming online fall semester towards active student status because this status puts limits on the amount of online classes students can take and thus will lose all employment opportunities in the US during the 2021 summer. This will tremendously disadvantage international LLM and JD in their immediate job search and long-term career against other HLS students or the larger pool of all job seekers. If HLS offers a hybrid option like many other peer schools do, however, it will be more likely for relevant authorities to grant international students active student visa status fall 2020 and thus future employment opportunities.

While under the current plan of remote instruction HLS has promised that "Students living in locations with significant time zone differences will be placed in sections that best align with those schedules", 1L classes will be held between "8:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m" and upper-level classes will be held between "8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m" and "students will be expected to participate in classes at the times they are offered", per HLS Fall 2020 FAQ. For a significant portion of international LLM and JD students expecting to take classes from Asia, for example, with up to 12 hrs of time difference from EST it's impossible to fit all classes even before midnight local time. This makes it extremely challenging to learn effectively and greatly disadvantages international students while being graded on the same scale with classmates taking the classes during normal hours (the only feasible alternative would be to assign all international students to the same section but it's very unlikely HLS will have enough international students not in EST zone to even make up such a section based on the usual

percentage of international students not to mention that such a plan would create unacceptable problems with regard to class diversity for not just international students but everyone else). To complicate this even further, North Hall is not big enough to accommodate all international students who have issues with their visas.

*Amended 06/10/2020: We urge HLS to do what is in their power to facilitate the entry of especially 1L international students on student visas for fall 2020 to the U.S. This includes, but is not limited to, considering a quasi-hybrid model in which students who move to campus will still abide by social distancing measures and have limited access to in-person meetings with students and/or faculty; providing the bare minimum of in-person instruction/enrollment and participation to comply with student visa requirements so they will be eligible to seek U.S. employment the summer of 2021.

E. Students with Disabilities

For students with learning disabilities, a hybrid semester offers a saving grace - a last hope at salvaging an education benefit from the semester.⁴ A fully online semester would create additional challenges and exacerbate existing inequality for these students. By providing a hybrid semester, HLS can continue to provide these students with the opportunities and support that no online education can match.

F. Harvard Law School's Announced Support Measures are Welcome Yet Insufficient

While we recognize that the technology stipend and limited on-campus housing that HLS has offered will help mitigate some of the problems that come with remote learning, these measures are not nearly enough to ensure that all students have the best opportunity to succeed. Many students have home environments that are not conducive to learning and that detract students' focus from the rigorous material. Given that HLS has decided to go entirely remote, many of these students feel like they have no option but to live at home.

Furthermore, by signing leases many students have already committed themselves in significant financial ways to in-person instruction in Cambridge. These students are effectively precluded from deferring, unless they are willing to either pay the remainder of their rent or remain living in Cambridge regardless of employment opportunities, family location, or other considerations. Students in Harvard-owned apartments face the opposite problem, where if they wish to retain housing in Cambridge they must continue in virtual classes. No student should have to choose between a subpar learning environment and their housing stability.

The on-campus housing HLS offers is also lacking in important ways. In an email sent to Harvard Law students on Friday, June 5 at 7:07 pm EST, HLS communicated that "a limited number of North Hall dorm rooms" would be available to those who could "include a detailed explanation of the technological or other circumstances that will make it difficult to engage in online learning in the living arrangements currently available to them."⁵ However, the terms

⁴ [Greta Anderson, "Accessibility Suffers During Pandemic," insidehighered.com, 6 April 2020.](#)

⁵ See Appendix 3

under which such rooms will be available, notably that students will not be allowed to use the dorm kitchen or have microwaves in their rooms, will force students to opt for takeout or delivery for any warm meal. This will be especially detrimental to low-income students whose only option is to live in North Hall but will have to pay exorbitant prices to eat. North Hall is additionally insufficient to house the number of international students who will be negatively affected.

II. Implementing Hybrid Learning Would Align Harvard Law School with its Peer Institutions in Boston and Across America

Almost all of Harvard Law School's peer institutions, including those in the most hard-hit areas of the United States, have already committed to hybrid semesters. These institutions acknowledge that being in-person is necessary for a high-quality legal education, including not only the free exchange of ideas, the ability to engage with professors, and access to alumni, but also the mental and emotional health of students, without which learning cannot exist and which no online education can replicate. These institutions also acknowledge how crucial it is to offer in-person opportunities to mitigate the inherent inequities of online learning that cannot be remedied with a technology stipend, including students being forced to stay in disruptive home environments and those with learning disabilities for whom online instruction would simply not work. These institutions, including Stanford, Columbia, New York University, Northeastern, the University of California system, Boston University, the University of Southern California, and many others have been able to offer hybrid terms while also keeping their commitment to preserving the health and safety of their communities in light of COVID-19.

A. Peer Institutions Are Opting For Hybrid Semesters

Stanford Law School has been working to resume in-person activities, despite being located in Santa Clara County, one of the earliest U.S. hotspots for COVID-19. Stanford is planning on having online classes "supplemented by in-person instruction as much as is safe and feasible for students and faculty who are present on campus"⁶

The University of California at Berkeley is similarly planning on prioritizing in-person instruction for first year students and for upper-level classes with a limit on how many people can be in the classroom at once. To make the buildings as safe as possible, Berkeley has studied its room capacity with social distancing, HVAC system, plans for ingress and egress, restrooms, cleaning capacity, and other facilities.⁷

In New York City, the most hard-hit area of the United States, Columbia University and New York University (NYU) will both be open and in-person in the fall. NYU will ensure student's health and safety through common-sense public health measures "including coronavirus and antibody tests, reducing housing density, and offering some courses remotely."

⁸ They have done so even though they host by far the nations' largest contingent of international students, out of an awareness of the importance of maximizing in-person

⁶ [A message from President Marc Tessier-Lavigne and Provost Persis Drell on academic planning for the fall quarter and 2020-21 academic year](#)

⁷ See Appendix 2

⁸ [Juliana Kaplan, "NYU will reopen in the fall for in-person classes." Business Insider, 20 May 2020.](#)

education.⁹ Columbia intends to bring faculty and graduate students back as early as this month, and has expressed a desire to return to in-person learning as soon as possible.¹⁰

These four peer institutions serve as examples of a broad trend in higher education: to return students as close as possible to in-person instruction with an awareness of the enhanced learning ability and mental health that provides, coupled with sensible protections for physical health and the option to take classes remote. Simply put, this is the best outcome for all community members. We urge HLS to follow their example.

B. Case Counts in Boston are Low and Dropping

As of Wednesday, June 3rd, the 3 day moving average of deaths in Massachusetts dropped by 66%, from 137 at the start of May to now 53.¹¹ Daily infections in the entire state of Massachusetts are projected to be under 300 and daily deaths between two and eight on August 1st, three weeks prior to the start of classes.¹²

In recognition of this fact, schools in the Boston area including Boston University and Northeastern University have expressed that they will be holding as much in-person instruction as possible. Northeastern's "NUFlex" plan involves in-person classes with synchronous online delivery, and automatic recording that allows any student to watch lectures at any time.¹³ By providing a multitude of options, NUFlex allows students to learn in whatever way they feel most comfortable and productive. HLS could easily adopt this approach, as it mirrors the measures put in place last semester. Moreover, doing so would acknowledge, as Northeastern does, that education which "empowers lifelong learners" is one that is flexible and is "personalized for each student's needs, whether they are on campus or joining the class from a remote location."¹⁴ We urge HLS to do the same.

III. Conclusion

Harvard employs experts, administrators, and professors at the top of their respective fields. We urge these experts to use their creativity, expertise, and compassion in designing a hybrid approach that fits the needs of our community. In so doing, they can follow the model of peer institutions that have already begun efforts to address all members of their communities' physical, mental, and emotional health while encouraging learning and growth in extraordinary times. We understand that this semester will not look exactly like previous semesters, but are willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure that we continue to receive a high-quality, community-driven legal education that we will take with us when we leave HLS and become leaders across the US and world. We are asking that the administration similarly be courageous, creative, and work with students and experts to design a hybrid approach that will maximize student wellbeing and learning opportunities.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ [Elizabeth Kimand and Jake Offenhartz, "Coronavirus Updates: NYU, Columbia Plan To Resume In-Person Classes As Early As Fall," gothamist.com, 19 May 2020.](#)

¹¹ [Alexi Cohani, "Massachusetts coronavirus deaths increase by 68, but many trends show improvement," Boston Herald, 3 Jun. 2020](#)

¹² [Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, COVID-19 Projections in Massachusetts.](#)

¹³ See Appendix 4.

¹⁴ *Id.*

For the foregoing reasons, we ask that Harvard Law School fight for us the way that the administrations of many other top law schools have agreed to. We do not ask HLS to make any promises other than to do their absolute best to maximize in-person instruction as much as possible.

IV. Resources

In order to ease implementation of a hybrid semester, we have provided some suggestions for how to structure campus life. They are presented below. We also encourage you to look at peer institutions for resources and plans.

- All classes should offer an online/recorded option for those members of our community who are immunocompromised and for international students who cannot move to the area.
- The first two weeks of class could be completely online to allow all students to self-isolate to ensure that they did not become infected during travel.
- Consider providing at minimum some in-person classes while implementing safety measures.
- Classes could be extended from 8am to 8pm to make the best use of classroom space.
- Face coverings should be required in the classroom and in all public spaces. If necessary, HLS could follow the models of MIT and UVA and provide PPE for students.
- 15
- Physical distancing protocols should be in place for all common spaces and campus buildings.
- Implement testing when available. Cambridge is offering free testing to all Cambridge residents at several locations, so students could agree to get tested and provide proof of negative results before returning to campus.
- At the very least, reading groups, seminars, potentially even classes of up to 40 people should be available for all students to participate in in person (while maintaining an online option, of course). Creative solutions could be developed, including having these small courses meet outside during the first half of the semester, meeting in larger classrooms than would typically be used, having all students agree to periodic testing before coming back to campus, requiring and/or providing high-functioning masks, etc.
- All classes should offer an online/recorded option for those members of our community who are immunocompromised and for international students who cannot move to the area.
- Classes of 80 people or larger could be split into 2 groups, with those two groups alternating which day they attend class in-person and which day they attend class online.
- Physical distancing protocols should be in place for all common spaces and campus buildings.

¹⁵ [Zach Rosenthal, "U.Va. to supply returning students with personal protective equipment," *The Cavalier Daily*, 4 Jun. 2020.](#)

- Students who become sick could be asked to quarantine for 14 days before attending in-person classes.
- If HLS cannot provide any in person opportunities for students, then it should create a program for students to complete a visiting semester at another ABA-accredited law school that has chosen to take a hybrid approach.

V. Limitations

The drafting of this petition was made possible by the efforts of various students with differing points of view. Notwithstanding, this petition does NOT intend to represent the views of all HLS students, should not be interpreted as the only viable set of solutions to the diverse issues our HLS students/staff/faculty and society at-large are facing, and is part of a larger student-led movement to demand transparency and commitment from HLS as an institution to those whom it is promised to serve (society, communities, students, staff, and faculty).

The HLS student body has expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of communication from the institution, the pressure from the institution for students to make decisions about their academic futures as the institution withholds key information from students, and the falsehood of the institution's "attempts" to provide information via information sessions and webinars where student voices are silenced (muted/not available chat boxes, arbitrary fielding of questions submitted by students) and student concerns are not addressed (no real commitment by HLS to address concerns regarding deferring, grading, housing, etc), among other concerns not presented here.

Despite the diverse and challenging student-led efforts that led to this petition, most HLS students agree that they do not feel heard by the institution. As the organizers of this student-led effort, we demand a greater commitment by HLS to its student body. In particular, we highlight the fact that the pandemic has underscored the inequities existent in the educational system. We call on HLS to openly, directly, and immediately address the ways these inequities are impacting our student body. Doing so would begin to rebuild rapport with the student body and allow students to focus their energy and time where they would rather be focusing it - their legal education - instead of organizing to demand change from HLS.

Appendix 1: HIO guidance to international students

Dear Students,

Congratulations on your admission to Harvard Law School (HLS) and welcome to the Harvard community. We know this is a difficult and confusing time and we at the Harvard International Office (HIO) assume you will have many questions regarding HLS's decision to offer online teaching for the fall semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. There are some key points we would like to make about the impact of this decision on international students, specifically those who will be **starting** their programs at Harvard this fall.

1. While current federal government guidance allows continuing international students and students in F-1 or J-1 status transferring from another U.S. institution to continue their studies remotely and remain in valid visa status, the current guidance does not apply to NEW students coming from overseas.

Prior to this emergency situation, international students were only permitted to take one on-line class per semester. It was a huge exception for the government to allow international students to study fully remotely either from within the U.S. or from outside the U.S. and still maintain their visa status during the spring semester 2020. This current exception will still apply to continuing students in summer and fall 2020; however, it does not apply to new students starting new programs. While we expect additional government guidance in the coming months, at this time we must assume that incoming international students will not be afforded the same flexibility in online learning as continuing students.

2. It is therefore our recommendation that international students starting new programs, who are not transfers from other academic programs in the U.S., should not plan to come to the U.S. this fall, even if they are successful in getting a visa appointment and receive a visa, but should instead plan to begin their studies remotely outside the U.S.

3. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. embassies and consulates around the world remain closed to all but emergency services, and the suspension of processing routine visas, including F-1 and J-1 student visas, remains in effect

It is our understanding that this suspension is likely to last into the summer (and perhaps beyond), and that the vast majority of newly admitted international students will experience considerable difficulty and delay in scheduling visa interviews. In addition, there remains in place a complex set of travel restrictions and bans in the U.S. and around the world, and airlines are offering far fewer flights than normal.

You may have already received your Form I-20/DS-2019 and initiated your visa application with the U.S. embassy/consulate. You may have even scheduled an appointment. To our knowledge no incoming Harvard student has actually received a visa so far. If you have, please share that [information with us](#). We will be amending the start dates of these forms to the orientation date (January 4, 2021) and you will receive an electronic (I-20) or physical

(DS-2019) copy. This amended document will not require an additional SEVIS fee if you have already paid it. If you have not received your Form I-20/DS-2019, you will be receiving the original document with the appropriate dates. It will be possible for you to enter the U.S. as early as 30 days prior to this date to get yourself settled before starting classes on January 5, 2021.

4. It is important that you understand that you should not plan to come to the U.S. this fall to begin your studies since your program at HLS will be done remotely. While you may study full-time from outside the U.S., as a new student you will violate the terms of your student visa status if you enter the U.S. to study remotely this fall.

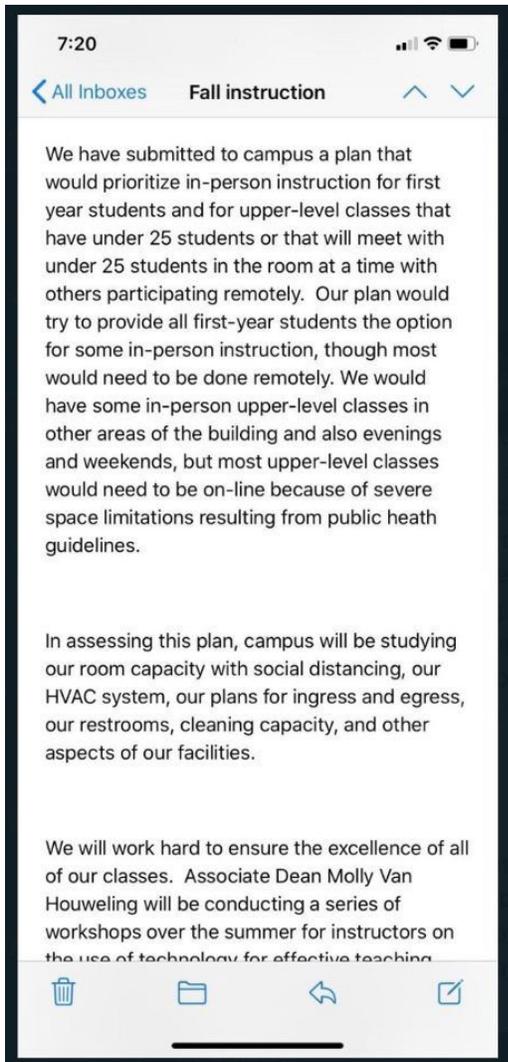
If you are accepted to the LL.M. program:

- Your program is a one-year program, and you will only be able to attend in-person classes for one semester. If you choose the F-1 student visa, you will not be eligible to apply for optional practical training (OPT) following your program as that benefit only applies to those who accrue nine months of student visa status in the U.S. If the guidance on this issue changes, we will let you know as soon as possible.
- You may want to consider a J-1 student visa if you have significant funding from a source other than personal or family funds. Students in J-1 status in the LL.M. would qualify for 5 months of Academic Training (AT). This is enough time to get additional training in the U.S. before returning home. You can find more information about J-1 versus F-1 visas here. If you have questions about whether your funding would qualify you for a J-1 student visa, please contact the Graduate Program financial aid office at gpfinaid@law.harvard.edu.

If you are accepted to the JD program:

- Since you will only be able to attend in-person classes for one semester next year, if you choose the F-1 student visa, you will not qualify for curricular practical training (CPT) or optional practical training (OPT) for internships during the summer of 2021. If the guidance on this issue changes, we will let you know as soon as possible. (You would still be eligible for OPT after completion of your three-year academic program.)
- You may want to consider a J-1 student visa if you have significant funding from a source other than personal or family funds. You can find more information about J-1 versus F-1 visas here.

Appendix 2: Berkeley Plan



Appendix 3: HLS Email

Dear HLS Students,

I write to update you on our plans for Fall Term 2020. We have all hoped these past few months that the upcoming academic year could begin, at least in part, on campus. However, in light of the daily news about the continuing health risks of the pandemic, advice from public health experts, and the very real concern that testing will not yet be available on the scale or frequency needed to adequately monitor COVID-19-related illness in the Harvard community, we have found it necessary to conclude that Fall Term 2020 will be online.

This is not the announcement we'd hoped to make. But our first priority is, and must continue to be, the health and safety of our community, and we cannot reliably conclude at this time that we can safely provide an effective on-campus program this fall. We recognize that the public health

situation may evolve between now and the end of August, and we dearly hope, as everyone does, that scientific developments with respect to COVID-19 will allow greater in-person activity, here and elsewhere, very soon. We also recognize, however, that you must be able to make appropriate plans for the coming semester and year, and that we owe it to you to communicate a decision sufficiently far in advance to enable you to do so. So, while we will keep you apprised as we learn more, we must now turn our focus fully to developing the best, most robust, highest-quality online academic, clinical, and extracurricular programming we can for the coming term.

We look forward to teaching – and learning from – you and to forming with you, as we do each year, an active and engaged community of learning and service. The Harvard Law School faculty is already hard at work adapting their teaching plans in order to offer the best online courses and clinics possible. In order to be prepared in the event it proved necessary again to teach and learn online, we have been busy, in recent weeks, studying and absorbing the latest research about how students best learn online and identifying the range of tools, techniques, and approaches that create excellent, engaging online courses. And we have extensively surveyed our faculty and (as you know) our students to gain insights from last spring's online teaching experience, with an eye toward tailoring best practices in online learning to the distinctive pedagogy of the law school classroom. We have also learned from last spring's experience that our clinics can successfully design and offer compelling, meaningful online opportunities for learning and for service to communities in need. It is an exciting process, with much to be learned and much new to try in our virtual classrooms and clinics. I'm inspired by the creativity and dedication with which faculty are planning for the fall as we work to nurture a vibrant, connected online community.

We also have been working to identify and develop channels for creating meaningful interactions and connections outside the classroom and for supporting the extracurriculars that are an integral part of your law school experience. As part of this programming, we are creating additional opportunities for advising and career planning, as well as a robust set of online events. We look forward to engaging student organization leadership in the coming weeks to learn more about – and to find ways we can support – their plans for fostering student engagement in the coming year. For incoming students, we are planning comprehensive orientation programs, with a particular focus on small group meetings so that you can get to know your classmates and our staff and faculty better before the term begins. Incoming JD students will have the opportunity to meet your section leaders and classmates not only during orientation, but in small groups beforehand, and LL.M students will be able to connect with classmates, Graduate Program leadership, and faculty members prior to the start of the term.

With the news that Fall Term 2020 will be online, you will have many specific questions about what to expect. Given rapidly changing circumstances, we will not be able to answer all of these questions here, but hope that these [FAQs](#) will begin to answer many of the most important ones. We very much want to learn more about the concerns you may have, and the circumstances you may face, as you prepare for the months ahead – including where you are,

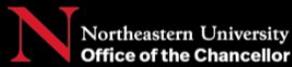
or are likely to be, physically located in the fall and which of your specific questions we have not yet addressed. To that end, we will soon circulate a brief survey that will help us as we plan an engaging and enriching fall program and as we advise you about how to navigate the educational challenges created by this pandemic. We will ask that you please respond by 5:00 p.m. Friday, June 5, so that we can take your specific questions into account in our planning. We will continue to update the FAQs as we learn more in the days and weeks ahead.

In the meantime, we are working hard to address the fact that the shift to a full semester of online learning will pose particular challenges for some – for example, those who face difficult learning environments at home, those who have technological challenges, or those in time zones remote from that of Cambridge who may find it difficult to participate in classes in real-time, as is required by the active-learning approach to law school pedagogy. We are seeking ways to mitigate those challenges, for example, by supplementing existing grant aid with the development of a new Technology Assistance Fund that will provide up to \$1 million to help our students address technological obstacles to participating fully in online learning; by giving priority in the allocation of limited HLS dormitory housing to those facing technological or other circumstances that make it difficult to engage in online learning at home; and by working to identify, if possible, ways to increase the courses available in time slots that are easier for students in remote time zones.

We realize that, for a variety of reasons, an online learning experience may not be optimal for all of you and that international students, in particular, may face some unexpected challenges relating to travel and to visa status this coming year. Accordingly, we will offer an additional deferral period for our newly admitted JD and LL.M students. The new period will run from June 15 through June 19. We will also extend from June 15 to June 19 the deadline for returning students to opt for a fall-semester or full-year leave during Academic Year 2020-2021. To help you make your decision, our faculty and student services staff will be available to advise you. We will also continue to update our FAQs as we learn more. We very much hope that you choose to remain in what we expect to be an exciting and enriching online academic and social program. But we want to be sure that you have a fair opportunity to make a decision that is right for you based on the best information we can provide you at this time.

Last spring, we had to adapt quickly to new formats and unexpected locations for learning and teaching. The fact that this unprecedented transformation was achieved with so little time to plan was a testament to our community. I am grateful to everyone – our students, faculty, and staff – for all they did to create an effective and enriching learning experience in challenging circumstances. This coming semester, though, asks something different of us – to use technology to design even more creative, exciting, and excellent experiences in support of learning, building community, and engaging in the service that helps those most in need and that is fundamental to the work lawyers do. This is our work now, as we take this next important step together. I look forward to working with all in this extraordinary community as we embrace new opportunities and challenges.

Appendix 4: NUFlex



To all members of the Northeastern University community:

On June 1, Northeastern University started a phased reopening of research labs and administrative offices with a small number of faculty and staff returning to our campuses. As we have discussed before, following President Aoun's May 8th message, the university's intent is to reopen our campuses this fall, including on-site instruction and with a residential experience for our students—while maintaining a healthy and safe environment for our community. We have been planning innovatively—informed by public health guidelines—for reducing density on our campuses, including in residence halls and in classrooms.

Today, we are announcing NUFlex, an exciting hybrid-flexible learning experience available for Northeastern classes this fall. NUFlex will provide a learning experience that is personalized for each student's needs, whether they are on campus or joining the class from a remote location.

NUFlex classes will meet in a physical location at a scheduled class time. Some students may attend class in person while others will be connected virtually through innovative technology that allows for communication by audio, chat, or video. This synchronous delivery will allow remote students to see and hear the instructor, interact in real-time with the instructor and their classmates, and access the teaching tools—such as a whiteboard or projection screen—that the faculty member is using in the classroom. In addition, NUFlex classes will be recorded and available for students to watch on their own schedule.

This flexible learning model will provide students at any location with the ability to reduce their time in the classroom, to begin the academic term remotely, or to return home to complete courses remotely before the end of the academic term. Northeastern has invested in state-of-the-art classroom technology and in enhanced faculty training to support the highest quality learning experience for students. A Northeastern team is currently outfitting classrooms across our campuses to be ready for the fall. The fall term will follow the [planned academic calendar](#), with classes starting on September 9 for undergraduate students and ending December 9.

In the weeks ahead, we will be providing updates on housing and dining density control plans, testing and tracing operations, travel guidance, and safety protocols. As always, we encourage you to check the [university's COVID-19 website](#) frequently for the latest information.

With the health and safety of our community as our first concern, we have developed a plan for learning that is uniquely Northeastern—powered by innovative research, by boundary-crossing networks, and by learning that empowers lifelong learners to reshape our human communities.

Appendix 5

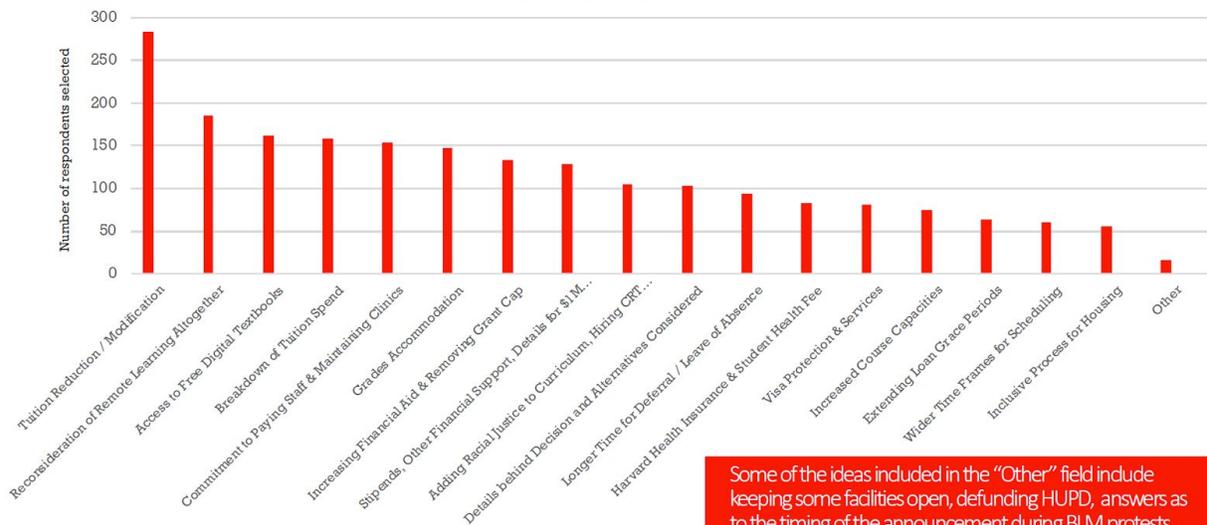
HLS VIRTUAL FALL STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

- nearly **400 responses** to the student survey as of June 7 5pm ET
- open to all would-be HLS fall 2020 enrollees, nearly even split between would-be 1Ls, 2Ls, 3Ls
- **72% support tuition reduction** without reservations
- **84% do not support the return to standard grading** without any accommodations
- **33% anticipate that time zones will present an obstacle** to adequate learning
- 31% will not defer / take a leave, 18% will if HLS does not change policies, 39% maybe will defer, 21% willing to start deferral/leave process

The survey is still open at bit.ly/hlsfall20

HLS VIRTUAL FALL STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Student Demands



Some of the ideas included in the "Other" field include keeping some facilities open, defunding HUPD, answers as to the timing of the announcement during BLM protests, divestment from private prisons immediately.