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Subject: Friday, March 20
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Dear Arts Colleagues (AFIW Deans, please forward to everyone?),

It's the end of what has been a pretty extraordinary week, and I wanted to reach out and touch base with you all. I hope that you'll all have received the communications from the centre by now (it's a bit ironic that UW's communications pathways have been stumbling a bit now when we really need them). You should know by now that we'll be looking at a Spring term that will be starting a week late (May 11), and in which all courses and exams will take place online. The term will still be 12 weeks long, with teaching ending on August 4, followed by a limited one-week exam period.

I want to thank you all, both faculty and staff, for all the hard work you have been doing this week. People have been adjusting to some pretty challenging and unprecedented circumstances, coping with working from home, converting their teaching to online formats at more or less the last minute, and in general pulling together to support each other and our students. As things ramp up again next week, with the students back "in class", new challenges may arise, so please let us know what issues you might be having so that we can help out. I'd like to pass along an idea that I got earlier today from the Director of our School of Accounting and Finance, Steve Fortin (thanks, Steve!) – as part of the preparation for Spring term, SAF has had its instructors pair up in a "buddy" system, so that in case anyone gets sick, they will have a colleague who knows where they are and what they're doing at all times in their courses.

Everyone has really been wonderful in their thoughtful, committed, and unselfish willingness to step up to the plate and do what needs to be done. But I do want to give a special shout-out to our Associate Deans, who have been absolutely crucial to the planning that has gone on for the past several weeks, and who have worked so hard to find viable solutions. I also want to send a special thank you to the staff – in the ACO, the AUO, the individual units across the Faculty, and the Dean's Office – for all the cheerful support you've given to keeping our academic mission on track.

And finally, with so many of us working in a new atmosphere of isolation and uncertainty, please remember to look after yourselves and each other – stay well and do things that feed the soul. I heard a new word today: "quarentainment". If there was ever an opportunity for some binge-watching, that time is now. I've got a lot of *Poldark* to catch up on, and am perfectly happy to wander through the yesteryear of *I, Claudius*, *Pride & Prejudice*, and *Game of Thrones* (alas, that the latter is now in the category of "yesteryear"). Or I may indulge in a retrospective of giant-bug movies from the 1950s. So many choices...

Please take care, everyone, and all my best,

Sheila

We are all here on earth to help others; what on earth the others are here for I don't know. (W.H. Auden)

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The Faculty of Arts acknowledges that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.