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Physics Department : message to students

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Hi everyone,

3/23/2020

What a time we're living through! The last time such a scenario was effecting the globe on this scale was during the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic and none of the physics department were around for that, not even Dennis! So this is a situation that none of us have experienced before.

We as faculty and staff of the department of physics have been working hard over the spring break to prepare for remote learning and the life of social distancing. Each faculty member is approaching the problem of remote learning in their own way but with the same goal; giving you an opportunity to learn in these challenging times.

Some of you may wonder why we should continue to learn during the pandemic; the reason we want to continue teaching is that you are the future engineers, doctors, lawyers, pharmacologists, opticians, industrial scientists, food scientists... all people who will be needed for the future of this and other countries. To halt your education for the remainder of the pandemic would be a disservice to you and our society because you have the skills and ability and will have even more skills and ability to help lead this World out of this chaos. Our World needs you to be educated so that you can be part of the solution to this pandemic and the problems it causes.

When [Isaac Newton was social distancing from the plague in 1665 he came up with calculus, his universal law of gravitation, some of his optics studies...](#) you don't need to be a Newton, you don't need to come up with Nobel Prize work, but we ask you to put effort into your studying.

Remote learning on this scale is something we couldn't have dreamt of, but we're going to try to make it work and for it to work we need your help. We'll try to make it work from our side but we need you to try to make it work from your side and to ask questions when you have questions, watch videos, attend Zoom sessions, submit your work on time, try your best, but feel comfortable in acknowledging when you stumble.

You will probably go through moments of self-doubt, fear, isolation, boredom, and a bunch of other emotions; we get that! To let you into a secret, we may feel the same sometimes over the coming months. If you need to talk to someone please don't bottle up your feelings; maybe the next few links will help so please check out [Xavier's Mental Health during the pandemic page](#), and/or [Free Telephone Counselling services](#).

Here's some words for us to hold on to for our future as the family of the physics department;

*May we all come through this pandemic with renewed spirit
May we become the scientists and engineers that we strive to be
May we always attend face-to-face lectures
May we revel in the hands-on experiments
May we ask all our questions in class and office hours
May we enjoy the laughter of our class mates and the lame jokes of our professors
May we take part in physics clubs activities
May we always thank Marca and Dennis for their help
May we embrace the health and happiness of ourselves, our friends, our family, our local community, and
our global community and never take it for granted
May we head into the world after we graduate with pride, hope, empathy, and determination
May we all thrive in being Xavier Musketeers*

Whatever the future brings please listen to the scientists and doctors. Wash your hands (properly!) and keep social distance to help reduce the demand on our health services.

Strive to be a Newton and if, like most of us, you can't be a Newton then be the best you can be!

The physics department