

Fifth Message from the President  
August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021

IMSA Colleagues,

It has been wonderful to open the school year over the past seven days, first with Community Day, then with Convocation, and now with you positively impacting students in your classrooms and through residential life activities. In our remarks at Community Day, we emphasized three priorities for this academic year: Well-being, Equity and Excellence and Impact ([see slidedeck for details](#)). I am interested to know where you would like to get more involved, so our priorities are a collaboration among a *United* community ([submit ideas here](#)). I so much appreciate your attention to these areas, and want to hear directly from you what you have been exploring and testing out in our laboratory for learning. We intend to be iterative in our approach, studying what works and refining what hasn't been working, and I welcome your feedback. Please don't hesitate to sign up for one of the upcoming office hours or consider sending a note.

[See Office Hours](#)

As we have been thinking about indicators of success this year, one in which I have struggled with is benchmarks for academic success. Looking at grades or a CWRA+ score doesn't reflect the unique enrichment opportunities and what students distinctly demonstrate. At the same time, we are particularly conscientious about student wellness, so I am not interested in establishing a metric that pushes students to do more than what they are ready to take on amidst our return to learn in person. So, I'd love to obtain your thoughts, in person or writing, about an academic indicator(s) that signifies our students are being challenged in a productive way. I recognize long term we should form a team that recommends a multifaceted approach.

I'd like to give you an update from our work on Community Day. During the breakout session, you explored questions pertaining to Colleague Engagement and Becoming *United*, Equity and Excellence and Student/Colleague well-being. The Senior Leadership Team has begun reviewing your remarks and is in the process of developing recommendations based on your input. I hope to share some of these next steps in my next update in two weeks so you feel ideas can be

put into action and your voice matters.

I want to take a moment and acknowledge challenges faced by some of our colleagues recently. We are not yet fully staffed, and as a result, some colleagues are experiencing additional stress, whether that is residential counselors taking on more students, some faculty teaching an extra section, supporting academic advising and lab setups. I want to express my gratitude to those shouldering the extra responsibility, and also to those covering -- just pitching in to lend a helping hand. If you are in a colleague-facing role, I ask you to think about how you can shift periodically to help for the welfare of our students. I think it's great to see messages like the one Andrea Stuiber sent to all colleagues about needing coverage support from across the academy. I also want to give a shout out to Student Affairs, Facilities and Office of Public Affairs/Advancement colleagues who have been stepping in to help with food service lines while we work with our contractor to improve those conditions.

I also want to take a moment and express a sincere apology to those who were accidentally left off our Convocation email distribution list. I learned there were some colleagues who did not receive an invitation, and I feel awful about that, because you all should be included. For those of you who missed our kickoff, you can see [the following video](#), featuring alumni Lacey Thomas '08 (keynote speaker) and Neil Wary '18 (musical performance). It was a terrific time to celebrate the return to learn and work in person, and please know I am grateful to each and every one of you for making this possible.

Titans Together,

Evan

Dr. Evan M. Glazer

*President*

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