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**Subject:** message to BME graduate students about partial reopening of research  
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Dear BME graduate students,

As you may be aware, UVA is preparing to partially reopen the research program. This is both exciting, as it will enable us to reengage in our work, and also potentially worrisome, as we need to carefully consider everyone's health and safety in the process. Please be assured that the BME department and the University's Vice President for Research (VPR) are preparing for partial reopening with safety first. The VPR's guidelines, which must be followed all across grounds, are provided here:

<https://research.virginia.edu/research-ramp-guidance>

I strongly recommend that you read these guidelines carefully. The BME department and each individual lab will also have their own research ramp-up plan (that adhere to the VPR's guidelines), and they also need to be followed closely.

Here is a quote from the preamble to the BME plan:

"Our goal is to reduce the risk of exposure to the novel coronavirus while ramping up BME research. Perhaps the most important aspect of our plan is BME-wide commitment of every individual to the safety of themselves and their colleagues. As the plan relies heavily on self-assessments and personal responsibility, the commitment of every member of the BME community is essential. If we don't demonstrate full commitment to this plan, we may return to phase 0 and we may increase the risk of exposure to the virus. So, we all need to all maintain a strong commitment to safety and act according to the plan and guidelines."

As you can see, we are balancing the needs for safety and research productivity, with a strong emphasis on safety. Once you read the VPR's guidance and your lab's reopening plan (you can ask your PI for this), please feel free to contact your PI, me or Shayn with any questions or concerns you may have. Once approved, I will also share the BME department research ramp-up plan with you.

Lastly, the date of partial reopening for research has yet to be determined, but I anticipate that it may be within the next few weeks.

Regards,  
Fred

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