

January 6, 2021

Dear new and returning students of Bard College Berlin,

Happy New Year to all of you!

I am writing to share information about the remainder of the winter break and the spring semester of 2021.

We can look back with pride on how our students and community navigated the year 2020. With Covid-19 vaccinations having commenced in Berlin and elsewhere, there is justified hope that the coming semester will be the last one under the sign of the coronavirus pandemic. However, and as you are likely aware, Germany and other places are currently experiencing the most serious phase of the pandemic to date. We will have to be more vigilant than ever in protecting ourselves and our community.

As we expected, the national shutdown Germany entered at the end of the Fall Semester, on December 16, 2020, was extended yesterday until January 31, 2021. Those of you who left campus for the break and are returning or to Berlin this month will thus find the same legal and general rules in place as when you left. Nevertheless, we ask all returning and new students to consult Bard College Berlin's updated [Special Policies and Procedures During the Coronavirus Pandemic, Spring Semester 2021](#), since they contain a number of modifications.

Bard College Berlin remains committed to conducting as many course sessions in person as is safe and legally allowable. On the basis of the current regulations, we expect that, from February 1 to March 31, 2021, we will be able to conduct only seminars in the practicing arts, Foundational Modules and First-Year Core in person, and that all other courses will have to remain online until April 1, 2021. Please note that regulations may change in either direction, however, and we all have to be prepared to make adjustments quickly as needed.

The college has an obligation to safeguard the community's health and our students' academic progress to the best of our ability. For this reason, we strongly recommend that all students—including those of you who are not registered in any courses expected to begin in-person sessions in the first week of the semester—arrive in Berlin before the beginning of the semester.

As you arrive in Germany, there is a legally mandated ten-day quarantine. It can be reduced to a minimum of five days if you take a PCR test on or shortly before arrival and a second PCR test no sooner than the fifth day of the quarantine period (provided that both test results are negative). Student Life will provide guidance on how to register your entry to Germany, report to the local health department and obtain a testing slot. The college has quarantining facilities and services in place on campus from January 13 until February 1, 2021. Beyond this date, we can provide the aforementioned staff support and facilities only for students whose arrival is delayed by legal reasons or other factors that are demonstrably beyond their control. Aside from these exceptional cases, we will not be able to support the quarantining needs of students who arrive after the specified period.

To allow for a smooth transition to in-person sessions and minimize any further disruption, all seminars will take place in the time slots previously scheduled. Allowances for divergent time zones, poor internet connectivity, difficult working conditions or lacking academic resources away from the college cannot be made. In Berlin, you will have safe access to all necessary college facilities and services. Off-campus students may contact the Registrar's Office about reserving a space on campus in which to participate in online courses, if needed.

Thank you in advance for your attention to the details of this message. I wish you all the best for the remaining weeks of the winter break and hope for a safe and smooth return to Bard College Berlin for all of you.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Florian N. Becker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'F'.

Dr. Florian N. Becker  
Managing Director