

Dear students, dear staff and faculty,

Let me thank everyone for the care you have taken so far this semester to ensure the health of the Bard College Berlin community. The good news is that our efforts and policies have been working. We have not yet had any cases of coronavirus in the community and courses have been taking place in person as planned.

The bad news that we may be reaching the end of this relative reprieve. Coronavirus numbers in Germany are on the rise. There are now more than 27,000 active cases; that is over 5,000 *more* than on March 21, the day before the country went into lockdown. At twice the national average, the increase here in Berlin is the fastest in Germany, with the city's [covid-19 "traffic light"](#) now at red.

This is the time for all of us to become especially vigilant again, and to be strict in observing precautions, as listed in our ["Special Policies and Procedures"](#). In particular, and as the colder weather moves more activity inside, please air out all rooms regularly, with windows fully open for about five minutes. *Please take the household rule seriously and do not visit other apartments or socialize indoors with members of other households.*

With the fall break coming up, *I urge you to stick around our campus or your home in Berlin as much as possible.* If you feel you need to "get out," please go to the countryside, spend time outdoors, and travel only with friends from your household. (Student Life will send out some recommendations for outings around Berlin soon.) College travel rules, as published in the ["Special Policies and Procedures"](#), have not changed: "Students should refrain from any unnecessary travel, especially international travel, during the semester and the fall break. Students should not travel to areas categorized as "risk areas" ("Risikogebiete") by the [Robert-Koch-Institut \(RKI\).](#)" Unfortunately the current risk areas encompass almost all of Europe. Anyone returning from a risk area is required by the State of Berlin to quarantine for 14 days or show proof of a negative covid-19 test taken within 48 hours of arrival; in addition, Bard College Berlin requires a seven-day quarantine even when a negative test is presented. As we do not have space in the residences to provide quarantine arrangements for returners from risk areas, anyone who does travel against the policy to such regions is required to find and responsible for finding their own quarantine housing.

Finally, let me remind you that anyone who may have been exposed to coronavirus or who has symptoms associated with covid-19 (i.e., beyond normal cold symptoms) should *not* attend class or work and should *first* contact Brian Gallagher and their instructors (for students), Florian Becker (for staff), or Andy Butler, cc-ing Florian and Catherine Toal (for faculty) and *then* call their doctor or the [Berlin Coronavirus Hotline](#) (+49-30-90 282828) for further instructions. Faculty members will work with students to ensure the least disruption possible to academic progress.

Best wishes,

Florian

