

January 12 2021

Dear students,

The first semester of the 2020-2021 academic year ends this week, though like its predecessor, it too was under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We were prepared ahead of time, based on lessons learned in the previous year, to provide you knowledge and the optimal academic experience through online teaching, and based in part on the feedback we received from you. I am convinced we successfully completed this challenging task.

It is nevertheless clear that the difficulties the pandemic has caused, in all aspects of life, have had implications for the teaching experience as well, particularly given that we have endured this crisis for an entire calendar year. Unfortunately, we were unable to carry out the learning plan for new students, which was intended to provide them with a sampling of academic life and campus studies. We did, however, provide a solution for students through virtual introductions and meetings with department chairs and advisors.

We would like to thank the TAU Student Union, who has been representing you devoutly and constantly keeping us up to date, working with us to ensure studies continue regularly, and that all students receive full assistance in accordance with their needs and requests.

It is important to emphasize that the University is not resting on its laurels. We are carefully overseeing the development of our teaching plans and opening new ones as well. The digital component, which some of us experienced in the context of online learning, is also being refined and integrated into our future teaching plans. We are also taking action to promote international academic collaboration, campus diversity and more.

We now stand at the threshold of the semester's final exams period.

We did our best to make pre-exam evaluations as light as possible, while at the same time maintaining exam integrity in order to ensure their reliability and credibility. I know this is important to you, and is even a top priority, and that you wish to express your achievements and abilities and receive recognition of those achievements, in a way that will serve you in the future.

We hope that the light we see at the end of the tunnel indicates an impending end to the crisis and a return to routine. We are as yet unable to specify when and if this will happen, whether it will be during the current school year (towards its end) or towards the summer semester and the next school year. We will of course keep you updated as matters are clarified, and upon receiving guidelines and permissions from state authorities.



We wish you good luck with your exams, and a fruitful and most importantly healthy rest of the school year.

Sincerely,
Prof. Mark Shtaif, Rector
Prof. Eyal Zisser, Vice Rector