

Mark Ligas:

Good afternoon and welcome to the parents, to the guardians, and most importantly, to the class of 2024. We're thrilled to have you join us here for The Heart of Fairfield Education, a focus on the Magis Core and Academic Support. My name is Mark Ligas, and I'm the university's Vice Provost for Undergraduate Excellent. It's my honor and my pleasure, on behalf of the academic division, to welcome all of you to learn more about Fairfield University.

As you can see, we have a number of topics that we'd like to cover with you today and we're very fortunate to have a number of my esteemed colleagues who'll be able to talk to you about everything from the Magis Core Curriculum to accessibility and studying abroad at Fairfield University. Unfortunately, because there is so much information to be covered, we're going to have to use the first part of our time together here to cover all these topics because we know that there are a lot of questions that you might have, and we want to make sure that we provide you as much detail as possible so that you better understand what's going to be waiting for you when you join us here in the community come September. So let's get started.

The first thing that I'd like to talk to you about is our Magis Core Curriculum. I know, as do each of you, that you chose Fairfield University for your undergraduate education for a very specific reason. That reason has to do with our Jesuit identity and our mission. We believe in informing the student to be men and women for others in today's society. One of the ways in which we do that well is through our general education requirement or what we affectionately refer to as the Magis Core Curriculum.

I understand students that a number of you are in the Dolan School of Business. Many of you are in the Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies. Some of you are in our School of Engineering and of course, a number of you are going to be pursuing a variety of majors in our College of Arts and Sciences. The one thing that binds all of you together as members of the class of 2024 at Fairfield University, is the fact that you will all go through the Magis Core Curriculum.

Every one of you will have an English Writing and Rhetoric class, every one of you will have the opportunity to take foundational courses as well as advanced ones in history, in religious studies and in philosophy. Each one of you will be required to take at least a semester of a language. Each one of you will be required to take at least a semester of mathematics, and depending on the major you choose and your interests and your desires and ultimately your vocations, you will choose the path of taking another language or another math.

Every one of you will take a natural science choosing from among courses in history, and physics, and chemistry and biology, and even behavioral neuroscience in psychology. All of you will have the opportunity to take social science classes out of our departments of communication, economics, sociology, and anthropology, psychology and of course politics.

We require a literature course of every student. Now the interesting thing is that many of you will opt to take literature through English, but we also offer literature courses through our modern languages department, as well as through our Classical Studies area. Of course, to well round each and every one of you, we require a visual Performing Arts course from every student. When we talk about visual and performing arts at Fairfield University, we're talking about studio art, art history, radio, film production, music and or theater.

Those disciplines comprise our Magis Core Curriculum, and they help from a Fairfield perspective to mark each and every one of you, so that you can signal your distinctive undergraduate upbringing through your time here with us. In addition to the discipline courses, we require every student to complete what we call signature elements, certain courses that cover and help develop the student in interesting ways.

So every one of you will have a course that's interdisciplinary in nature, which means in one course, you're going to look at perspectives and topics from at least two, if not more disciplinary areas. Every one of you will be required to take three courses in social justice, and one of those three courses will focus specifically on racial issues. As you can see at Fairfield, given our Jesuit heritage, we are very much about focusing on the larger society and what's going on in current times, and we believe that through the signature elements, we can make use more aware and more educated and more confident to help deal with these issues that we're facing in today's society.

Every one of you will be required to complete three writing intensive courses. We know that you're very smart students, you've done very well, and you've been accepted here at Fairfield, but we want to make sure specifically with your written communication skills, that you will be able to not only analyze information, but you'll be able to convey it and to think critically, and to make sure that you can explain yourself and your thoughts and ideas in the best ways possible.

Please keep in mind that these signature elements are not intended to be seven additional courses above and beyond those discipline courses that I just talked about. You can cover these signature elements in the Magis Core courses, as well as in your major courses. As you can see on the right side of this slide, the point of the Magis Core Curriculum is to further broaden your academic perspectives, to open your eyes to a larger society, through the various disciplines that you study, so that again, you'll be able to make those changes that we know that you're capable of doing, as young men and women for others.

In terms of declaring a program of study, after you leave us this afternoon, you're going to have the opportunity or perhaps you already have had the opportunity to meet with your specific schools. Those of you who are in the College of Arts and Sciences, you will have a session with the dean from the college and the assistant and the associate deans to learn more about that curriculum, and so on and so forth for other undergraduate schools.

Please know that at that time, you'll be able to ask very specific questions about your major area of study and what's required within the major. Among our session now and the sessions with each of the schools, you will hopefully have a complete picture of undergraduate academic life at Fairfield, but before I move off the slide, I want to point out the last two bullet points.

I know that a number of you are already thinking about the idea of law school, medical school, dental school, veterinary school and that's wonderful. Please know here at Fairfield, we have a pre med advisor, we have a pre law advisor that you'll be able to meet with even as early as your first year to talk about these plans, these goals and aspirations.

We're very proud of the fact that we launched many of our students into these professional areas of study, as well as onto graduate school and doctoral programs. The other bullet, please also keep in mind that although each of you is identifying with or chooses to identify with a major in one of those four schools, we have a number of cross school collaboration opportunities in terms of individualized learning and creating programs of study that best suit your needs and your interests.

A few examples that I'd like to bring to your attention are as follows. We have studies in peace and justice, in black studies, in Latin American and Caribbean studies, in women gender and sexuality studies. As you can see, very topical, very timely, and very socially relevant areas in which each of you can immerse yourself perhaps above and beyond your majors, so that you can be best prepared, as we said before, to move out of Fairfield and make a difference in society and help to make the world truly the world from the Jesuit perspective that is better for all of us.

The last thing that I want to say before I turn this over to my colleagues is, I want to talk to you about academic advising in Fairfield. From those prior two slides, as you can see there, there's a lot of

information and a lot of decisions that you will be asked to make throughout your four years with regard to what it is you want to study, when you want to study it, and how best to get to your ultimate goal of majoring in x or earning a degree in y.

Please know that you're not alone. Faculty advising is but one way in which each and every one of you will have the opportunity to talk about what it is that interests you, and where you'd like to go next in terms of your curriculum in your time at Fairfield, but that is not the only place you can turn to. In addition to having an assigned faculty advisor, every undergraduate student has the privilege and the opportunity to walk into a dean's office and speak to one of our assistant or associate deans to talk about academic issues.

We also have peer advisors. As you're going to find out when you hear from many of my colleagues in a few minutes, we use the peer advising model in a variety of ways. Our upper class students are always here for you, that's part of our community at Fairfield, and that's one of the most important ways, we find, that underclass students like yourselves feel much more confident about the decisions they make, especially in terms of areas in which they want to focus their studies.

Of course, we have the department chairs of the various departments throughout campus that you can always make an appointment with to find out more. Last, but certainly not least, one of the biggest benefits we have at Fairfield University is our devoted office to academic support and retention. This is an office that provides a wealth of information and services. So to end on this slide, and to start on the next, I would like to introduce Miss Kristen Zimmerman, our Director of the Office of Academic Support and Retention, who can talk to you about these various resources in more detail. Kristen.

Kristen Zimmerman:

Hello, good afternoon to the class of 2024 and your families and friends. It is so nice to be here this afternoon to discuss the office that is very close and dear to my heart and takes up so much of my time, which I enjoy so, so much in trying to assist you in your journeys here at Fairfield, and the academic process that you have to go through, whether that's changing a major, whether that's peer tutoring, whether that's just having a conversation.

As you can see here on the slide on your screen, these are just some of the initiatives that our office puts forth to assist students in their journey here at Fairfield, academically. We collaborate so much with not just the faculty and staff here on campus, but across campus and Student Affairs, whether it's through orientation, whether it's through clubs and organizations, whether it's just through mentorship within your residence hall.

We work also with the dean's office in collaborating these high impact educational practices and offering opportunities for students to have those difficult conversations and have those tough conversations about, maybe this isn't the right path for me, and what do I do, or maybe I'm on the right path, but I just need, maybe I need to minor in something as Mark alluded to earlier in this presentation.

So if I seem as though I'm skimming over some of these things, and not going into detail, I just want to make sure that you get all the information. So please bear with me as I try to go so I can have my other colleagues have their time as well. As you can see in our office, we also offer study skills workshops. These workshops will be offered this upcoming semester.

We have such a wide variety but they're mostly concentrating on the in class experience. Whether you're changing your major, whether you're adding a major, whether you're adding a minor, how to actually communicate effectively with your professors, with your peers in a group setting, and also time management. Time management is a huge deal and last, but certainly not least, is the stress management and talking about mindfulness.

We do approach the student in a full approach. It's not just in the mind. We have the mind, body and spirit approach here at Fairfield in all of our offices. The other huge component to our office is peer tutoring. So we offer tutoring through our office, but we also collaborate with the math Center at the Writing Center, Project Excel, athletics, peer tutoring, and the library research support which will be talked a little bit more about later on in this presentation.

As you can see, the tutoring that is offered through our office ranges from languages to math courses to computer science and engineering courses all the way up to your science, sorry, excuse me, chemistry and physics. So we have a wide range of tutoring that happens on campus, but we are like to be the central hub of being able to direct students in the appropriate way.

So again, we are a resource for all students at Fairfield University. So on the next slide, Megan Buxton, who's the Director of Office of Accessibility could not be with us today, but just so you know this office will work with students on, you can go on to the next slide. Will work with students, sorry, with academic and campus life experiences for equal access. Students with the disability can request accommodations through the task portal in my.fairfield. If you're not familiar, not comfortable with it, feel free to email them at ooa@fairfield.edu.

Mark Ligas:

Thank you so much, Kristen and as Kristen said, and as you can all imagine, the Office of Academic Support and Retention and the Office of Accessibility work very closely together. As Kristen pointed out, Megan could not join us because she's already working on intakes and working with a number of your peers and a number of your families so that our students are best set up for the fall semester.

So please do not hesitate to reach out via the email that Kristen shared with you, if you'd like to certainly avail yourself of that service. What I'd like to do now is I'd like to turn our attention to career and professional development. I'm very pleased to introduce to Miss Kath Borgman, our Director of the University Career Center. Kath, take it away.

Kath Borgman:

Thanks, Mark. Let me begin by saying we're delighted that your student, you, have selected Fairfield as the school they will be calling theirs as their second home for the next four years. The career process has really changed significantly over the years. So it's a little bit different than maybe when you went to school or your parents would school. What we try to do is teach students and equip them with the knowledge they need, the skills, so that when they leave Fairfield, they will be able to secure a position from then on in.

What you have to keep in mind, at Fairfield, once a Stag, always a Stag. So regardless of how many years out, we will still be a resource should you need us. We do encourage students to begin this process in the first year. Now we realize that first you have to figure out what's happening, what classes you're taking, where everything is, but even something as simple as scheduling an appointment with a career counselor is an important first step just to start to figure out what you need to do over those four years.

Now, the career work resource is available at Fairfield, the Career Center, which is where I'm housed, we offer on campus recruitment, employer engagement activities, the main career fairs, Stags4Hire, which is our job is database, programs such as Stags in the City, where you can go and find out what it's like at various companies. We're in the process of modifying it so we can do it virtually.

We do job shadow, employer and industry events. We also have all sorts of workshops that we encourage students to take advantage of on a regular basis. The career counselors offer one on one

assistance so that they can sit down and really understand What the student is thinking, what they'd like to test out, maybe some things they hadn't considered, but based on say the assessments that they take, the personality or interest inventories, or strengths, they can be guided to follow the way their brain is wired.

Sometimes people think I would love to do this, but they're really not talented in that area, and have these conversations. Resume development, cover letters, all of those things. The schools will also work with the student when it comes to internships and possibility of interviewing techniques, school specific programs, and just general guidance and support.

One thing that we do offer is career peer advisors and we will be having them next year as well, regardless of what direction we go, and these are students who are trained to work with their peers to help them get the first step in developing a resume, doing the cover ladder, so that if someone's not really comfortable coming to a counselor first off, the career peer advisors are there.

Now, the schools have counselors broken down. So in the College of Arts and Sciences, we have Steph Gallo and Kim Nickolenko, very talented individuals who, know your students in great hands. In the Dolan School of Business, we have Sarah Bollinger and John Hottinger. Also very talented. Little inside scoop, if you want to know something about finance, John Hottinger's your man. Then the School of Engineering is Sue Quinlivan and the Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies would be me, and alumni come and visit me as well.

So, the other thing I'd like to discuss with you that you might be thinking is internships. Now internships, you can do them for credit or not for credit. If you look to do it for credit, you need to begin working with your internship coordinator or your counselor in the School of Business to work on the paperwork before you accept it.

Typical for credit internships are 10 to 15 hours, and during the summer, you can actually take on a full load of 40 hours. You can see what it's really like to be working a full work week. No, there is definitely a correlation between the number of internships students have, and their ability to secure a position down the road, and also the number of internships that help students progress to various graduate school programs.

So if anything, experience translates over. Keep in mind that we encourage students as early as possible to start getting experiences. So maybe they're not getting academic credit, but employers don't necessarily know the difference, nor do they care was it for credit or not. What they do care about is the skills you've developed and how you use those skills, and are they transferable?

So students are often surprised to find out the types of things that can be transferable into the workforce, and that's really where working with a counselor or peer advisor will help you. So thanks and we look forward to seeing you in the fall.

Mark Ligas:

Thank you so much, Kath. I'd now like to turn our attention to study abroad, and it's my pleasure at this point in time to introduce all of you to Miss Nicole Moffa, our external relations manager for our Office of Global Fairfield. Nicole, welcome.

Nicole Moffa:

Thank you, Mark. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm pleased to be here speaking with you to share with you global Fairfield experiences available to you or your student and look forward to working with you in the future. To start with proper planning, students at Fairfield have the opportunity to study abroad, that's

every major. So whether you're nursing, engineering, pre med or literature, the opportunities are available and we are here to support you.

Fairfield's global opportunities are best and are specifically designed to support students in their academic plan of study. Our programs are highly collaborative with an emphasis on academic rigor and our judgment values. As you can see here, we have center programs as well as strategic partners, and those are in seven countries.

Those are Spain, France, Italy, the UK, Ireland, Australia and Greece. We've worked with our partners in these locations to create tailored programming to help our students achieve a specific international experience. Students on all of those programs earn pure Fairfield credit in grade. We also have affiliate or partner programs in Africa, the Americas, and Asia, many of which are with our general partners around the world in areas of study ranging from engineering to international studies.

Many of our programs offer internships or practicums, which are directed in the student's field of study and professional development. As you'll see next, we have our faculty led programs and as our associate director who manages our faculty led programs would say, these programs are when our Fairfield faculty here take a cohort of students on the road with a course of their design.

The course is designed to be a very interactive experience and provides the students with a deep and cultural perspective. The students travel with that faculty member and earn three credits for that academic experience. Courses in the past have been core courses or have been upper level coursework specific to a student's major. As our faculty and their experiences are very diverse, they have brought our students to Brazil, Russia, Italy and beyond.

We also have programs offered for various lengths of time. So whether that's a one week program during spring break to a full year abroad, we have program options that are available to all students with flexibility, especially for those who are student athletes, who may be working either part time or full time or who aren't ready yet for an extended period abroad.

For our semester program, students are supported by paying their Fairfield tuition room and board fees with the support part of their financial aid, and for short term program students are charged a program fee. While abroad as you can see, our students are engaged across four days a week and a full time course load to provide students with an exceptional academic experience with a focus on academic rigor, while still making sure that students have ample time for travel to explore on the weekends.

We've worked closely and will continue to work closely with our academic departments across all four schools on campus, from nursing, engineering, College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Business to identify programs abroad to best support each academic discipline here at Fairfield. This is important as we really want to make sure that our students are progressing academically in these programs, and that these programs are complementing and supplementing the strong academic program here that Fairfield has.

While abroad, our students will study in local universities and live and serve within those communities. Our programs abroad provides students with a quality experiences in what we call our V.I.E.W.S., which are volunteering, internships, experiential learning, worker research, and service which all come together to support our students across their academic areas of study.

As previously mentioned, with proper planning, students in every major have the opportunity to study abroad, but as many of my colleagues earlier have suggested, proper planning does begin at the first semester of your first year to optimize students opportunities.

During the fall semester, we'll be providing informational sessions to discuss program options, academic planning, as well as next steps. Details about all of the information sessions are going to be

coming in the coming month as we're planning accordingly for fall, and they'll be found on our website, as well as online at Fairfield. Thank you very much for your time, and I'll send it back over to Mark.

Mark Ligas:

Thank you so much, Nicole. At this point, I just like to take a brief pause. Hearing both from Miss Borgman and Miss Moffa. Again, it may seem a bit much to think about professional development and or global opportunities, but as they both stressed, those offices and the resources contained in those offices are available for you as first year students. It is never too early to plan or even to start dreaming about or even hypothesizing what it might be like to have an internship with x, or to go abroad to country or city or state yeah.

So please heed their words seriously, make yourself available to these offices so that they can help you from the get go and really helped to shape your time here at Fairfield. With that said, I'd now like to turn our attention to another wonderful resource we have on campus and in fact, this is a federally funded resource that we're very proud of, as it serves a number of very high achieving end students who are of need to do well academically, Project Excel. So I'd like to turn this over to Miss Caridad Rivera, our Director of Project Excel. Carrie.

Caridad Rivera:

Good afternoon. Good afternoon, everyone. Good afternoon class of 2024, any transfer students that are here and of course your guardians. As Dr. Ligas did share, I do work for the Office of Project Excel. Project Excel is a TRIO Student Support Services program, and it is funded by the federal government. What we do is we provide support services for students who meet certain criteria. The criteria at Fairfield is that they're first generation to college.

For us, that means that their parent or guardian has not completed a four year degree. They may or may not also meet guidelines for family income, that's set by the federal government and that changes every year. Normally, Pell-Grant recipients are eligible and meet our guidelines for a family income. That would be checked through priors year family taxes.

We also work with students that are individuals with a disability. Now, once students start with our program, they're with us for their whole four years while they're here and many of our students do come back as alum and visit us as well. During their time, we try to make sure that we tailor our services for where they are at any particular time, whether they're a freshman, whether they're about to graduate.

In general, our services include academic tutoring and skill development. We do assist with financial aid in understanding the jargon with that, understanding how to get more scholarships and potentially increase your financial aid package. We do help with information and assistance with navigating university opportunities and outside opportunities such as careers, internships, graduate programs, et cetera.

Like I just mentioned, we do look at graduate and professional school once a student is further along. We help students with financial and economic literacy. We help them to understand their bill. We help them to understand the difference between their bill and their financial aid and how to make ends meet. We do have a small lending library for student participants, which include textbooks that they borrow on a semester by semester basis.

We also have calculators that are graphing. We also have some lab equipment as well. In the actual office, we're located in the Barone Campus Center. We have computer and study areas for students as well. They can come in and make an appointment to meet with staff as well for one on one

appointments. One of our big partnerships that we do have is with the office that we share office space with in the Barone Campus Center, they're the student diversity and cultural affairs office.

Our main program that we do with these folks is the Academic Immersion program. Now this is a program for select underrepresented students, including those that are first generation, including those that meet certain income criteria and including those with disabilities. This summer, we are moving forward with our Academic Immersion summer program. For this year and potentially this year only it will be virtual.

That is going on from August 3 through August 28. This is a credit bearing program, the grades will go on to university transcripts. So although we are virtual, we are still making sure that we have a multi layered support system for students and to help them with their transitions of college. So that will include a teaching assistant for each student, a program assistant which is considered like a virtual RA.

We will also have GSEAP interns which are students that are studying to be mental health counselors and from the masters of school, social work, excuse me, and also professional staff. This application is currently open. We have extended it for students that are in the orientation if they would like. If you would like to participate in this program, We are asking that you complete the application by Thursday because it's Getting close to the time that we'll be notifying.

Students will be notified of their acceptance or their waitlisting at the end of June, June 30. During the academic year, we also work with students that are part of the summer program. So in the fall when you guys come back you'll be able to see us. Included in the academic year is one on one academic support. Students are matched with a staff member to go over academic coaching, time management, et cetera. We do have skill building workshops for our students, and we also have community engagement opportunities.

We will be having a AI retreat in the fall and also a [walkup 00:32:38] social once you guys come back, and we look forward to working with you. If you have any questions, please feel free to put it into the question and answer box, but if you have a more complicated or personal question, you can email us at ai@fairfield.edu. If it's about Academic Immersion, if it's about Project Excel, it's crivera@fairfield.edu. Thank you so much, and welcome.

Mark Ligas:

Thank you so much, Carrie. As you saw when Carrie was speaking, we are putting Academic Immersion virtual for this summer. Unfortunately, for those of you who live in the state of Connecticut or hail from the state, we are very much tied into the state guidelines as well as of course, the federal guidelines and the health guidelines. We just don't know, come August, how many folks will be allowed to bring together physically.

So we didn't want to take chances. So we plan for having Academic Immersion virtually. We do know that come September, we're going to be welcoming you all back and we'll finally all be back here physically on campus, but for the AI experience, so that we can get it up and running and best prepared and equipped for our students, we did decide to go virtual for that.

I'd now like to turn our attention to the DiMenna-Nyselius library. Truly, the intellectual heart of Fairfield University's campus, and to talk a bit more about our wonderful library and its myriad of services, we have Miss Lisa Thornell, our student engagement and outreach librarian. So Lisa, take it away.

Lisa Thornell:

Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm one of the research librarians and I've been at the university for about eight years, and I really enjoy getting a chance to speak to all of you about the library. The DiMenna-Nyselius library is the academic hub of campus and we look forward to welcoming you in the fall. The library is much more than stacks of books. I think you will find we offer great atmosphere to focus to study, to collaborate and to connect to the support that you need to do your best work, whether you're going to be on campus or working remotely.

On the main level of the library, there are several student support services and what we refer to as our academic commons. This includes the Writing Center, Math Center, ITS Help Desk, Office of Academic Support and Retention, Office of Accessibility and the Frederickson Family Innovation Lab, which provides workshops and help utilizing various software and technology.

There's also rooms for peer tutoring on the main level of the library. Research librarians like myself, provide one on one research help through a number of ways, including virtually through Zoom appointments. We also have a 24/7 chat service. So if you are a night owl like I was in college, and let's say you need help finding scholarly articles that one or 2 AM, you can get the help you need instantly through the instant messenger on our homepage.

The Personal Librarian program that we offer for first year students and new transfer students pairs each FYE section, so that's each First Year Experience section that you probably already heard about this week. You're paired with a librarian and we will message you monthly with resources and research tips and we will encourage you to set up appointments with us and we can work with you on things like topic exploration, generating keywords and search strategies, identifying databases, and locating quality sources or assisting with citation.

Librarians are familiar with many of the services on campus too, so we can refer you to other support if needed. So don't hesitate to ask us literally anything. We work with many academic classes, including your first year English classes that you'll take some time during the first or second semester. So you'll see us in those courses. On our library website, you can find our research guides. These are curated guides for every major and minor at Fairfield with the best databases and resources.

We also have online citation guides and citation management software. You will have access to well over 1 million books and E-books, over 200 databases of academic articles and streaming media, in addition to free digital subscriptions to the New York Times, Wall Street Journal and The Chronicle of Higher Education. I'd also like to mention that the university provides access to LinkedIn learning, which is a database of video courses taught by industry experts in software, creative and business skills.

We also have a relatively new but growing student donated textbook collection and these books can be borrowed for small periods of time for in library use, and some faculty will put their books on reserve for you as well. If you're seeking articles or books that we don't own, we can get those for you. No problem. This is through interlibrary loan, which is of course every service. On all three levels of library, there are reservable spaces to conduct group work, and you can book them from our website.

We also have a virtual reality viewing room. With your Stag card, you will be able to gain entry to our cafe or the Innovation Lab when the library closes. These are 24 hour spaces that you'll find when you enter into our lobby. So if you need a place to focus to do your paper, or if your laptop crashes late night, you can count on a place to come to to use desktop computers and also to have access to a printer.

That brings me to technical equipment. We also offer desktop computers as I mentioned, laptops to borrow, chargers, various cords and adapters, scanners and printers. We also have other useful items in what we refer to as our library of things. So this can be items such as umbrellas, book stands, lap desks, whiteboards, et cetera. There's an opportunity to apply for our annual library research

prize, where we award \$1,000 to an undergraduate student or team, and you also have an opportunity to apply to be on our student library advisory board, which is a great professional development opportunity.

In addition, while on the topic of professional development, we have students work with us to curate exhibits and displays, or to plan events related to their major of study or a topic that they're passionate about. Special events are held throughout the year. So it's just research and writing workshops where we partner with the Writing Center and other support services, the Human Library which creates a safe space for one on one dialogue to challenge prejudices and stereotypes and during finals week, we offer many de-stress activities.

In closing, I'd just like to plug our website, fairfield.edu/library. You can find links on our website to other academic comments support services that were mentioned earlier and there's also a link at the top of the slide to our library updates page, the [bit.ly](#) link. Please do follow us on Instagram @fairfieldulib. Thank you. I'll turn it back over to Mark.

Mark Ligas:

Thank you so much, Lisa. As you can see, we are indeed a modern Jesuit institution, and we even have a library that focuses on all of the social and digital mediums, softwares and hardwares that enable us to propel your education into the 21st century. So Lisa, I very much appreciate that comprehensive review. Really, for all of my colleagues who just had the opportunity to introduce themselves and speak to you, I want to thank them again. Parents, guardians, class of 2024, before I offer some closing thoughts, and then we turn it over to question and answer, I do just want to reiterate this point.

I know thus far, you've heard a lot. We've done a lot of talking at you with a lot of information that I realized many of you were hungry for answers to. Please keep in mind that in addition to this session being recorded and put up on our website, the students all received the first year guidebook, and within that guidebook is information about each and every one of these offices and services, and more importantly, contact information, whether a phone number or more importantly, a general email account.

So everything you've heard, you do have access to to ask further questions and to follow up on and please know as each of my colleagues said, and certainly as I'm about to state again here too, we welcome the opportunity to hear from you. This has not been a typical year. This is certainly not a typical orientation, but the reality is, you've all worked very hard to achieve this goal to start your college careers and we want to make sure that you have all the information available to you. So do not hesitate to be in touch.

Now, in terms of some closing thoughts, some logistics I'd like to go through with you here. I'm sure each and every one of you is asking about, what about my fall semester schedule? Typically aren't schedules created at orientation? Yes, you're absolutely right, but as you know, this is not a typical orientation. So here's how this is going to work. The month of July is devoted specifically to scheduling of the class of 2024.

Miss Kristen Zimmerman and I will be working hand in hand with the assistant and associate deans of each of the schools to construct schedules for the first semester for each and every one of you. So your question is likely, how in the world, Mark will you know, will Mr. Zimmerman know what my schedule should be for the fall semester?

Well, we have a lot of information at our disposal. The first thing you need to know, if you were here physically on campus with us, we would be constructing your schedules with you knowing full well, that is first year, first semester students in the fall, there is a somewhat prescribed curriculum, whether

you're a future nurse, a future mechanical engineer, a future financier, or a future history major. The five courses that you take, we know which ones they are and which ones are most appropriate to start you off on the right academic foot.

In addition, as you will recall students, you were asked to complete that lengthy academic interest questionnaire, and for those of you who haven't had a chance to do that yet, please I urge you to get that information turned in because that provides a wealth of knowledge for us, so that we can better construct a schedule for you. Everything from math placement information, to of course, personal interest information is available through that questionnaire, and that helps us tremendously.

In terms of our post orientation initiatives with regard to developing the schedules, we will also be turning to the language placement exam. If you've not taken the placement exam yet, please, please, please do sit for the online placement exam. Even if you're not intending to continue with the language, we'd like to have a score on record for you. Because with 20 years at Fairfield, I can tell you, every year there is undoubtedly some students who say I've studied this in middle school and high school and now I want to study something different when I met Fairfield.

Once they arrive at Fairfield, they say, wait a minute, I've spent a good deal of time and a number years you're studying this language back in high school. I really want to go back to that, and that's wonderful. We're happy to assist with that. However, we need to have a placement exam on file. So please do take that placement exam if you haven't already.

AP/IB and college credit issues. Very important. We know that you're very smart, you've done very well and you've challenged yourself throughout your high school curricula especially. For those of you who've taken the AP and IB exams, please be certain that your official score reports are sent to Fairfield University. The mailing information can be found in that first year guidebook. With regard to APs specifically and given this rather unique year that we've had, we know that some AP exams were delayed, and in some cases, students were given the opportunity to retake AP exams.

As a result, some exam scores may not reach us until the very end of the summer or even the beginning of the fall semester. Please know that we're well aware of this and we will work with this information as we receive it to make sure that your schedule is most up to date, and also acknowledges any credits that you might receive. In terms of college credit, some of you have likely taken college classes, while in high school, and perhaps you're thinking about trying to get college credit for that coursework.

We have some very clearly articulated policies that you can find on both the website as well as in the student guidebook. The big points to remember are these, if you took a college level class while in high school, and you needed that class to count for high school graduation requirements, we can't unfortunately double dip it. It either counts for high school or for college. However, for those of you who've taken college level classes above and beyond what you needed for your high school graduation requirements, we are happy to look over those credits to determine whether or not we can apply the credit at the college level.

Some of the things we will be looking for, did you take this class in a college environment? Was it taught by someone who has the credentials to teach in college, whether a university professor, or someone in your high school or boarding school, who also adjuncts at the collegiate level? We will also be seeking, from your high school, from your principal, from your headmaster, from your counselor, formal statement explaining that this work was done above and beyond the high school requirement and this work wasn't de-taught at the level and in the atmosphere of a typical college environment.

That's what we utilize in order to make a determination of whether or not those credits can count for you. Once these schedules are created, it is our plan at the beginning of August to email each

and every one of you an electronic copy of your false schedule. Of course, we know you're going to have questions, we hope you're going to have questions. So in August we are going to Set up virtual Zoom advising sessions.

Miss Zimmerman is working very hard with all of the chairs of all of the departments and the faculty members to identify faculty advisors for every major. For those of you who are undeclared, that's okay, too. People like myself, Miss Zimmerman and our assistant deans will also be available to talk to you about your schedule. You will be able to set up a one on one Zoom appointment so you can talk confidently and confidentially about what we're asking you to do over the fall, and you can question what you're doing over the fall and you can even make changes.

You're going to have the opportunity to make those changes on your own, but only after you've had an advising meeting in August because we want to make sure that whatever changes you make are verified by us so that we keep you on track and in your cases, set you off on a very strong start.

Another point that I'd like to bring up is the Magis Core course that's available to you this summer. Over 780 of you have identified a sincere interest and have set your preferences in to take one of the Magis Core classes from July 6 to August 7, we're thrilled about that. We couldn't be more excited that you're ready to engage in your Fairfield education. We know that it has been a long spring semester for you, a spring semester unlike any other and we know that you're very anxious to move on to your college careers, and we are here for you.

I do want to make something very clear students. This will be, for most of you, your first college class. This will be a college class, and three credits that will count towards your undergraduate degree. Given everything that you've been through, I know that you're all very eager to start socializing, to get out there. I know your families want opportunities to celebrate with you and to vacation and I know a number of you are needing to work or wanting to work this summer and those are all wonderful things.

At Fairfield, we certainly want incoming students to use the summer prior to immersing themselves at Fairfield as a time to decompress and prepare. So while we are making this class available to you and we're so excited to engage with you in another two weeks in these classes, please make sure, please honestly ask yourself, if you're ready to do this at this point in time. No harm, no foul, if you originally thought you wanted to be in the class, and then you find out it's not going to work for your schedule. We simply make it disappear like it's never happened.

Now, we can't do that over the four years, but this summer, we can do that. So just be honest with yourself, because this is your college class that you're going to be involved with. I do also want to briefly remind you about FERPA, and for those of you who have siblings or other family members have been to college, certainly your guardians and your parents know about this, but I just want to state it very clear to you.

Many people are excited about, and as a result are sacrificing for this incredible educational opportunity for you students, and we couldn't be happier, but your education is your right and it is a private issue. Parents, guardians, other family members perhaps would like to be in touch with any of the people on this presentation, and certainly any of the academic divisions, at any point time to want to talk about how you're doing.

Well, we would like to oblige. You have a right to privacy. There is going to be information coming out if it hasn't already, discussing FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. There are certain documentation that you and your family will have to have a serious discussion about in terms of signing it so that you can determine whether or not it's most appropriate for certain family members to talk to folks like us about your academic progress.

Please keep in mind even with a signed FERPA, there's only so much that we can discuss and it can only be a robust discussion if you're part of it. So I just ask you to consider that as this is a very important component, especially for an incoming first year student.

In terms of navigating virtual learning options and opportunities, you know what you went through when you had to do the 180 pivot as your high school drastically, dramatically changed from a face to face environment to a virtual learning environment. I'm so sorry that that's happened and I'm so sorry that this pandemic has affected your class in so many ways, ways in which I'm sure you would like to soon forget, but it is a reality and it definitely affected us here at Fairfield too.

We are ready and willing and set up to welcome you all back, face to face this fall and we couldn't be more excited, but back the second week in March, we had to pivot just as you did and we had to go online virtual. That was unexpected, but it was a reality, a reality mandated by the state as well as the federal government. As a result, if this pandemic starts to create another outbreak again, if it gets to a point where the state and or the federal government tells us, or educational institutions overall, that we will have to pivot completely online, we want you to be as prepared as possible.

So one of the things that I want you to be aware of, for every member of the class of 2024, there is a class that is currently being constructed that will be available in our course management system for each and every one of you, and it will open up, God willing, on July 6, when the summer class opens up for those of you who will be taking that. This class will really be a resource account, talking to you about what it means to be successful if you have to be in an online college learning environment.

There will be videos, there will be Self Help tutorials, there will be opportunities for you to ask questions. Even if you're not taking the summer class with us, I encourage each and every one of you to utilize this resource, to open this course up and find out what it has to offer so that you will be best prepared and you won't be taken by surprise, as perhaps you were back in March in high school, as many of our existing students were when we had to pivot back in March here at Fairfield.

We want to give you the resources, not because we in any way intend to be online virtual, but because we know the larger environment and the health crisis may indeed force our hand and put us back into that environment. It is our number one goal to keep academic continuity and to continue to deliver the high quality and rigorous Fairfield education, even in the virtual environment. So we want you to be prepared to succeed and do well in it.

The last thing I want to say before we get to the question and answer is that when you come back to campus, one of the first things we do as really the first book end of your undergraduate academic experience is we have something called the First Year Gathering. There's going to be more information rolling out to you over the coming weeks and months about this. This is where we have a faculty member who will speak to you and provide a keynote address with a certain theme.

Our theme this year is, as you can imagine, going to be about community and resilience and everything that you've gone through at high school, and what we hope you will bring as your strength and your capacity for understanding when you come to Fairfield. Dr. Linda Roney, Professor in our Egan School of Nursing will be offering that keynote address and we couldn't be more excited.

This First Year Gathering will also give the president an opportunity to officially welcome you. The president of [inaudible 00:54:55], which is our Student Government Association will have the opportunity to welcome you and you will also be presented with your class gift on behalf of Fairfield University. Now for the First Year Gathering, just to let you know, this will be virtual, because there are over 1,150 view and then with faculty administration who participate in this, we do not believe that the state of Connecticut is going to clear that large number for social gatherings by September 1.

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So that will indeed be a virtual opportunity, but nonetheless, the sentiment and the passion and the welcome will be there. So, that's it for closing thoughts. Again, on behalf of all of us, congratulations on everything you've accomplished in this unprecedented year class of 2024.