Alexa, can you please skip to 2021?

It's starting to feel like deja vu. With COVID cases dramatically on the rise across the country, it's time to hunker down. Again. There's a lot of important COVID and academic news to digest this week, so let's get right to it...

Questions, comments or ideas for TeamMSE? Contact Kristen at krisfres@umich.edu.

We'd love to hear from you!

Countdown to Closing



Lauren Duke '22 collects data for her final design project in MSE 360. Due to a new state order, today is the last day the Van Vlack Lab will be open this semester.



State of Michigan implements three-week 'pause'

Due to an 'alarming' rise in COVID cases and deaths across the state, on Sunday Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced new restrictions for schools and business (see graphic below) that will go in effect tomorrow, Nov. 18.

What this means for CoE students

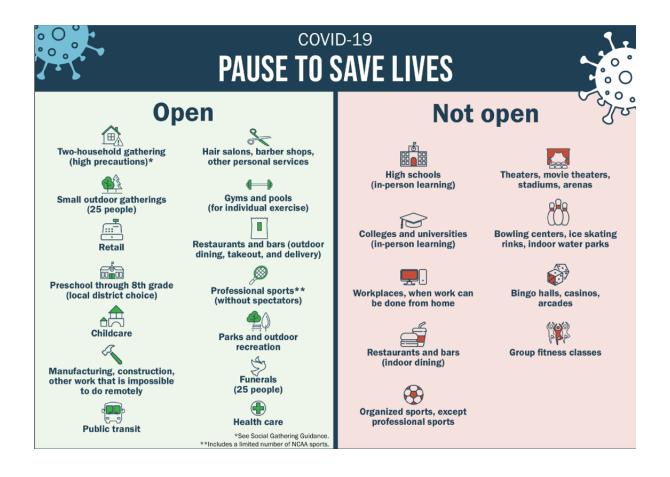
For the most part, this order just accelerates the adjustments planned for Nov. 20th by three days, which means all classes will move to remote instruction and instructional labs will close to students tomorrow (rather than on Friday). Research teams, however, can continue with their research. Research labs will remain at 60 percent density.

Other campus impacts include:

- The university's recently announced plan for the winter semester that begins Jan. 19
 calls for undergraduate students who don't need to live on campus to remain
 at their permanent residences to reduce density in U-M residence halls.
- Residence halls and dining facilities (take-out only) will remain open. Campus recreational facilities are limited to 25 percent capacity, and 12 feet of separation must be maintained at exercise stations.
- There also will be increased testing, mandatory each week for undergraduates who
 live on campus or attend in-person classes or activities, perform research, use
 facilities such as libraries, unions or Recreational Sports, or work on campus.
- Weekly asymptomatic testing will be available for all graduate, professional and undergraduate students who are not otherwise covered by a mandatory program, as well as staff and faculty working or teaching on campus.

Read more.

The graphic below illustrates what schools and businesses in Michigan are open as of tomorrow, November 18.



Click here for U-M's COVID-19 Dashboard

Additional grading options announced

In recognition that the pressures and stress brought on by the current circumstances may mean that students' performance in courses will not accurately reflect their abilities, U-M announced some modifications to grading for the Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 terms, as detailed below.

For Undergraduates

- All undergraduate students will have the option to change letter grades of A+ through C- to "Pass." This option is available for all classes.
- Students will make this decision after the letter grade is posted. The deadline for requesting a change from a letter grade to "Pass" is July 1, 2021 for the Fall 2020 term, and November 1, 2021 for the Winter 2021 term.
- Students who already elected a fall 2020 course grade as Pass/NRC will have the option to change to a letter grade.
- This decision will be a one-time election; in other words, a student cannot convert a letter grade to a P and later ask to go back to the letter grade, or vice versa.

- P grades can be used to satisfy requirements as long as the letter grades earned would meet the requirements. Other academic policies remain unchanged.
- The requirements for determining various academic honors such as Angell Scholars and University Honors remain unchanged.
- Students are strongly encouraged to work with their advisors <u>before</u> deciding to convert a letter grade to a "Pass" to ensure doing so does not cause any unintended consequences given degree requirements or future plans.

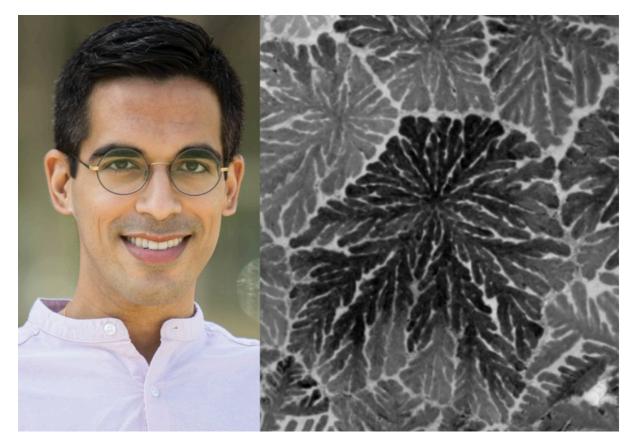
For Graduate Students

- Instructors will submit letter grades for all graduate students enrolled in Rackham programs. A modified grading system will award letter grades of A+ to B- and a notation of "NRC" (No Record COVID) for grades of C+ to E. Additionally, students will now have the one-time option to change any or all of their letter grades of A+ through B- to S (Satisfactory).
- Students will be able to view any letter grade recorded as NRC and decide whether
 to convert the notation. Students with grades of C-, C, or C+ may choose to earn
 course credit by converting the NRC to a letter grade. Letter grades of D or F do not
 receive Rackham credit.

Read Rackham academic policy.

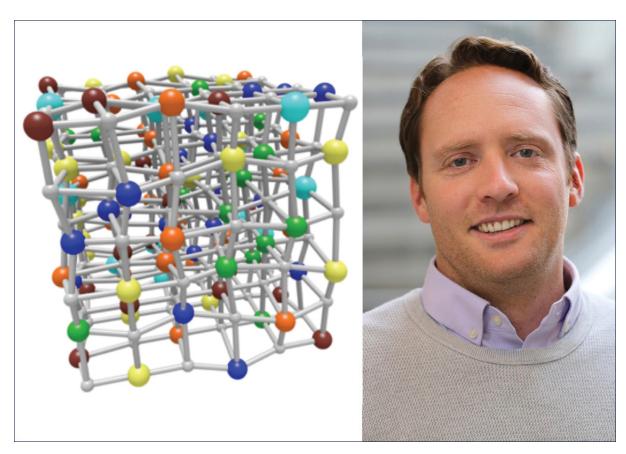


Discovery of 13-atom clusters could mean control in manufacturing materials far-from-equilibrium



In their latest research, the **Shahani group** upends conventional wisdom by showing that quasicrystals grow dendritically from a solid phase precursor, not just under a liquid-to-solid transition. **Read more.**

Three Heron group projects receive combined \$900k+ in funding



The new funding gives a boost to the **Heron group**'s goals of designing otherwise unstable complexes in correlated oxides, advancing transformative performance in memory and logic devices, and realizing chemically identical yet electronically distinct nanoscale thin film superlattices of materials. **Read more**.





Seminar speaker this Friday: Stanford's Kunal Mukherjee

Kunal Mukherjee, an assistant professor at Stanford, will present "Epitaxial integration of dissimilar semiconductors for infrared optoelectronics" this **Friday**, **Nov. 20**, at 10:30 a.m. Zoom link:

https://umich.zoom.us/j/91589913796

Passcode: 633466

MRS Virtual Conference

The Materials Research Society (MRS) virtual conference, Nov. 27-Dec. 4, is open to students to attend. Click <u>here</u> for registration information.

2020 Distinguished University Professorship Lectures - Dec. 4

Two of the three speakers of this prestigious event have courtesy appointments with MSE, **Professor Nicholas Kotov** and **Professor Victor Li.** The event will be held on Friday, December 4 from 3:00-4:30 p.m. Watch live at http://myumi.ch/lbDUP2020



Nicholas Kotov

Irving Langmuir Distinguished University
Professor of Chemical Sciences &
Engineering, Joseph B. and Florence V.
Cejka Professor of Engineering, Professor
of Chemical Engineering, Professor of
Materials Science & Engineering,
Professor of Macromolecular Science &
Engineering, College of Engineering

Nanostructures in Nature

In this lecture, Professor Kotov will address the role of organic and inorganic nanostructure in the world around us, as well as the technological and humanitarian impact of this knowledge.



Victor Li

James R. Rice Distinguished University
Professor of Engineering, E. Benjamin
Wylie Collegiate Professor of Civil
Engineering, Professor of Civil and
Environmental Engineering, Professor of
Materials Science & Engineering,
Professor of Macromolecular Science &
Engineering, College of Engineering

Harmonizing Our Built and Natural Environments with Bendable Concrete

As our economies grow, the disharmony between our built environment and our natural environment has also grown.

Concrete, for example, represents about 80% of all engineering materials consumed globally. As a building material, concrete has many advantages. However, the material embodied carbon and the operational carbon associated with repeated infrastructure repairs constitute a

significant portion of man-made greenhouse gas that threatens our everyday life through climate change impacts.



Thank you to everyone who submitted entries for our 2021 calendar contest! Winners will be announced in next week's TeamMSE.



You're invited to this special DEI Webinar on Tuesday, Dec. 1!



GASLIGHTING IN THE ACADEMYWill Black Lives Continue to Matter?

Tuesday, December 1, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

In light of the increased visibility of the killing of unarmed Black people by police, there is a movement happening in America to address racial inequities across multiple facets of life, and neither the Academy nor STEM researchers are immune.

Overlaying the disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on Black and Brown people has led to a tipping point driving activism nationwide. However, there is a risk that once the outrage passes, structures supporting systemic racism will remain, once again, gaslighting academics and students of color who thought that change was coming.

<u>Professor Platt</u> will uncover micro- to mega- activities that occur on a daily basis to sustain racial inequities, the toll it takes on recipients, and then suggest changes to be made from the personal to institutional level to promote anti-racist practices to transform the academic culture.

RSVP for webinar here

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