

GUIRR Resilience of the Research Enterprise during COVID 19: The Universities

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Traditional Universities and COVID

Will we survive?

Yes (at least for now). We are still the model university system for the world.

Will we all survive?

Some people think maybe not. What is the value proposition?

Will we be the same?

I hope not. We have the chance to grow and learn.



The bad stuff

All the students went home.

We reimbursed students for housing and lost multiple other revenue streams simultaneously.

On campus research was shut down, access to human subjects for research was shut down, access to unique instrumentation was shut down. How much ground did we lose?

Collaboration was severely crippled while we adapted to a new way of interacting.



The good stuff- we learned some things

We can get a lot of things done efficiently without occupying campus real estate.

Meetings don't actually have to be an hour long.

You don't have to have huge conference rooms to accommodate large meetings.

You can use online tools like surveys to engage people in a big boring meeting online.

You can get really big names to show up at conferences and commencements because they don't have to fly or drive there and take so much time out of their day .

Creativity ruled the day. Our faculty actually seemed to have time to think and churn out grant proposal ideas.

You can fit 4 more meetings or extra work time in a day if you get rid of your 2 h commute.



What changed in university administration?

More deliberate about bringing staff together.

Moved informal conversations to Slack and other tools to lower email traffic.

We were able to reach many more people in training and education activities.

We have an intentional focus on building community within our offices, with our faculty, and with our companies in our Discovery District.



How are we leaning forward in academics?

We set a goal to Establish Maryland as a national leader in the creative and effective use of educational technologies that enhance our students' learning and engagement.

An unprecedented transformative effort has been put forward this summer

Funded 270 Teaching Innovation Grants that will permanently enhance our students' learning experience and engagement on campus.

Faculty working to reimagine their courses and using this Summer to refine innovative ways to use new instructional technologies .

Expanding our technology infrastructure (hardware/software) necessary to improve course delivery moving forward including the creation of about 15 new [One-Button Studios](#).

Procured new collaborative digital tools for whiteboarding, coding, music performance, game-based learning, etc.

Expanded our course design support services on [Keep-teaching.umd.edu](https://keep-teaching.umd.edu)



How are we leaning forward in academics?

Partnered with faculty to investigate and determine instructional technologies, strategy, and operations for teaching labs, performance classes, studios, and other experiential instruction.

Created The Breakthrough Incubator, a place to experiment and pilot creative, radical ideas for how we will operate in the fall as well as how we will operate in the future



How are we leaning forward in Research?

Growing and supporting research related to the pandemic

Leading system-wide task force for research and innovation

Developing partnerships with state

Developing partnerships with local industry

Looking at new ways to do our work



COVID 19 Seed Grants

Research:

University of Maryland College Park launched COVID research seed grant program and [awarded 9 projects](#) across a variety of disciplines.

University of Maryland College Park and Baltimore launched a 500K seed grant program to fund joint projects between the professional school campus (Medicine, Law etc) and the flagship campus, modeled after a program launched at U Wisconsin.

Technology Development:

University of Maryland College Park and Baltimore partnered to pivot a medical device development fund to support [medical devices related to COVID response](#).



Supporting research related to COVID 19 and inequities related to race

These two global pandemics occurring simultaneously

We have a wealth of research related to COVID 19
We have depth in our research regarding race and racism

It is imperative that we use these strengths to study racial disparities and health inequities associated with COVID 19



How do we work differently in research?

New models for collaboration and outreach

Collaborative group tools in virtual environment-digital tools for whiteboarding, coding, music performance, game-based learning, etc.

More opportunities to give talks around the world virtually

Group meetings in a virtual environment may bring out more voices



Where to go from here....

Can we move away from defining our value with respect to the space and location that we occupy in the university campus?

Can we move administrative functions and other support functions from campus to allow expansion of facilities for those who need that space to function like research and experiential learning environments?

Is there a better way to spend our money?

Can some things be taught more effectively in a virtual environment?

Can we keep connected and build community in a mostly virtual environment?

