



Monday, March 9, 2020

*Office of the Director*

Dear friends,

I write with a new update on COVID-19 response, in light of MIT's decision to move more classes online, and the revelation of positive tests for the virus in communities where some MKI members live. We have been in touch with colloquium speakers and organizers, and many are uneasy at the idea of travel at this time, or are restricted by their employers. As a principle, we do not want to ask our visitors to engage in travel that would not be approved by MIT if one of our employees were the one traveling. With that in mind, we are making the following updates:

1. Astrophysics colloquia are cancelled, starting with Claude-Andre Faucher Giguere tomorrow (3/10) and extending until the next non-international speaker is scheduled on 14 April. We will evaluate at that time whether to remain in paused mode, or commence with talks once again.
2. MKI Journal Club meetings are also cancelled until 17 April, at which point we will evaluate whether to recommence based on current health advice. While JC was well-attended last week, there was a large amount of food left, suggesting that our community is concerned about this gathering.
3. In this time of physical isolation, we want to maintain as much emotional connection as possible. To that end, I am using the slot of our cancelled colloquium tomorrow (3/10) from 4-5 PM to meet in the Marlar Lounge, discuss MIT and MKI's position with respect to COVID-19, and talk. We will make a Webex conference line available for those who wish to listen in but cannot attend in person. This is also an opportunity to test these technologies if they are new (or rusty) to you.
4. For smaller group gatherings (e.g. group meetings, postdoc lunch, etc) that normally involve communal food, we ask that attendees either bring their own lunch/snack, or that organizers make arrangements to have individually wrapped items rather than buffet-style servings.
5. We will be copying or linking all COVID-19 announcements from both MIT and MKI on the Kavli wiki ([spacebook.mit.edu](https://spacebook.mit.edu)), which is also linked from the main MKI webpage. This will henceforth serve as a clearinghouse for all official MKI communications on this topic.

The MKI headquarters team and I will continue to update you on our situation as it develops. As before, we send best wishes to you all and to your loved ones for continued health.

Sincerely,  
Rob