



November 15th, 2021

Dear Faculty of Hamilton College,

We hope this letter finds you well as you prepare for the upcoming break. We write out of considerable concern for the mental health of students, including ourselves. After two years of a deadly pandemic that has taken countless lives in our community, all of us are feeling deeply fatigued. While restrictions may not be what they once were, we cannot ignore the gravity of the pandemic's long-term effects. We want to give our best work in our classes, and the only way for us to do that is to have a healthy work-life balance. At this point in the semester, many of us have long since lost that, and find ourselves short on sleep, skipping meals, and neglecting social opportunities to instead focus on our studies and academic responsibilities. Many of us face anxiety, depression, and now, seasonal affective disorder. We feel that the current mental health crisis on campus is not primarily a matter of individual responsibility, but collective and structural responsibility.

Many students have expressed that their Fall Break was not, in fact, a break, as they utilized it as extra time to complete significant quantities of coursework. When we as students are burned out, it makes it extremely difficult to uphold your expectations as professors for quality work.

For the well-being of our student body, we politely request you take some or all of the following steps as we approach Thanksgiving break:

- Ensure that no assignments are due in the first three days following break (11/29-12/1) and to offer extensions to assignments that were due during those three days.
- Be flexible with assignment due dates for the end of this week.
- Reach out to SA's Student Health Committee to discuss long-term solutions to mental health for the Spring Semester (contact [ahagan@hamilton.edu](mailto:ahagan@hamilton.edu)).

We appreciate you being open to hearing and acting on students' needs and/or concerns, and for communicating with each of your classes this week about whatever support you and the greater community can offer.

Thank you in advance for any and all help you can offer, as well as for all you've done already to see students succeed. We hope you, too, are taking breaks.

Sincerely,  
Hamilton College Student Assembly