

Letter to New M.A. Students:

Congratulations on your recent admission to the GTU and the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University. We look forward to welcoming you as you begin your studies this fall as a GTU Common M.A. student affiliated with JST.

Interim Dean Alison Benders sent out [this announcement](#) on Wednesday, communicating that JST will offer all courses and cultivate community life virtually this fall, in order to promote the health and safety of all, and to ensure that JST courses and programming are accessible to all students, both residential and distance learners. As a part of this process, JST is committed to offering asynchronous courses, in which course content, lectures, and discussions can be accessed and completed at a student's convenience, as opposed to synchronous courses that require student participation at specific times.

Academic Advising: You may have already been contacted by your academic advisor. In either case, you will receive an e-mail soon from Mey Saechao (msaechao@scu.edu) informing you of the JST faculty member who will be your academic advisor.

Orientation: JST will conduct orientation primarily through virtual delivery. The purpose of orientation will be to guide new students in preparing for study at JST, and welcome and initiate you into the JST community. This month, I will begin sending regular communications on the orientation process and any steps you need to complete. Starting in mid-July, new students will access orientation modules and sessions via Moodle, the online course management platform utilized at JST and throughout the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) consortium.

Matriculation, Registration, and Billing: The GTU will send out communications regarding these areas.

Moodle: The GTU will send instructions for accessing Moodle, the online course management platform utilized at JST and throughout the Graduate Theological Union (GTU). Once you have logged in, you will be able to begin the modules comprising our virtual orientation.

Housing: Although classes will be online, you are welcome to live in Berkeley if you are able and wish to do so. At this point, students who would like to live in Berkeley in the fall semester may apply for JST Housing. For more information, contact Tanisha Sparks, JST Director of Finance and Administration, at tsparks@scu.edu.

Please look for further communications from my office in the coming days and weeks. As I send these, they will also be posted on the [JST Orientation page](#). Please let me know if you have any questions as you enter into the orientation process.

Peace and blessings as you prepare for study and formation at JST and the GTU,

Paul Kircher
Assistant Dean of Students
Jesuit School of Theology