

Dear Students:

I wanted to say hello and give you an update on all we're doing to prepare for welcoming you back to campus. It's been a whirlwind of activity, all with the safety of you, our faculty and staff foremost in our minds. We're all working as hard as we can to ensure that we're taking every precaution, thinking through every scenario, and working collaboratively to make this work for you and everyone at the College.

To give you a peek behind the scenes, in the past two months we have measured every space in the college for social distancing, reconfiguring a number of classrooms and meeting areas to enhance safety. We've rearranged furniture in all common areas to meet social distancing requirements. We've measured every classroom and meeting space in the building and determined how many socially distanced people can safely fit in each, and now your instructors are working with us to design plans for every class we teach so we can all learn and teach in an environment that is safe. Every class will allow for the possibility of pivoting online entirely, should the need arise.

We've also worked really hard to further hone our online instruction, as we know that almost all of our classes will include some distance learning. Many of your instructors have spent the summer in the university's specialized course on online instruction, further honing their course plans and adding new digital skills to their repertoire.

The goal, where feasible, is to offer face-to-face instruction. This is going to look quite a bit different, though, with HyFlex teaching approaches. In many classrooms, we've installed plexiglass partitions to better protect instructors and students. Some classes, based on room limitations and the health concerns of instructors, will go online, but the vast majority of our classes are being designed with face-to-face components. We're also repurposing several spaces as conference rooms so instructors can meet, socially distanced, one-on-one for office hours, mentoring and meetings.

Many of our classes will combine face-to-face and distance learning. In some classes, a socially distanced cohort of students may attend classes in-person one day, online the next, so the other half of the class can attend in person. There is no one model: each of our instructors have worked to design an instructional plan tailored to every class they teach.

Meanwhile, the task of cleaning and maintaining social distance will become everyone's responsibility this fall – including each of you. We're going to need your help in maintaining social distance, in ensuring that furniture stays in place, in sitting in your assigned seat in class – it's these little things that will make an enormous difference in keeping us all safe.

We've invested in cleaning kits for all classrooms and office suites, so we'll all be pitching in to clean throughout the day, and we will have a plan for who is responsible between classes. We've purchased extra masks, antibacterial wipes, gloves, and sanitization stations for every entrance in the building. All students and staff will wear their face coverings in areas outside

the building where social distancing is not possible, in the building and in class. We must take care of each other.

There's still a ton of work to do, but we're pleased with our progress thus far. On August 10, we're expecting all faculty and staff to return to the college. Then, a few short days later...you arrive!

I can't tell you how much you are missed. We're going to need all of your help to make this work. Wear your mask, keep your social distancing game strong, and stay safe.

See you soon!

Dean Davis