

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

We are living through profoundly trying times as we have heard the number of positive COVID-19 cases are rising in areas around the country, and challenges fill the news daily as individuals have become lax following the Centers for Disease and Prevention guidelines. In contrast however, at Midwestern University all of us have witnessed our campus community slowly and safely come back to life as faculty and staff have come together to provide lectures, laboratory sessions and simulation experiences with small groups of students. Our remarkable faculty have put forth great effort and care to engage and teach all of our students in a hybrid manner while working to get to know and mentor all the new and returning students. This is not an easy task, but it is being accomplished through hard work and dedication to our mission.

I have been especially impressed with how departments and teams of individuals have engaged the strengths and unique talents of each member to come together to find new and creative ideas to the challenges we face each day. Whether it is finding ways to decorate the office in preparation of Halloween or Thanksgiving, or serving on a Wellness or Diversity Committee, people are coming together to make a difference in our community. Some profound changes are happening in our diversity and inclusion efforts that have been initiated through the willingness of faculty, staff and students to effect change, promote greater diversity and establish a culture of inclusivity while celebrating our diversity.

This past week we have a limited number of new COVID-19 cases on our campuses. Midwestern University's Downers Grove campus had two faculty and staff cases, and five student cases. These cases are not related. The students have been on clinical rotations or in areas not impacted by the two reported positive cases of faculty and staff. On the Glendale campus, we have had only one student cases and no faculty and staff cases. If you have been in contact with any member of our community that tests positive for COVID-19, you will be notified and placed on quarantine. If you are not contacted, then you have no exposure to any infected person. Please remember to wear your mask at all times on campus unless you are alone in an office.

Campus Announcements

- Midwestern University continues to be committed to supporting our faculty and staff impacted by COVID-19, and we understand that there continue to be many challenges resulting from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to work together with our faculty and staff, management, and Human Resources to find ways to reasonably accommodate these challenges. The Temporary Job Modification Process was developed to assist when you or a household member has a serious health condition, or when you face other challenges such as involuntary school closures, hybrid school schedules, or remote learning support for dependent children. Applications for temporary job modification can be obtained through Human Resources for staff members, and faculty members need to request modifications through Ms. Angela Marty, Vice President of Administration and Human Resources.
- On the Glendale campus, a new, temporary faculty and staff breakroom / lunchroom is now available on Level 1 of the Companion Animal Clinic (CAC). All Glendale faculty and staff will have a link in their Message Center on the homepage of their employee portal at <https://online.midwestern.edu> with additional information about this new breakroom. At this time, it is reserved for faculty and staff, however, if capacity allows we will open it for

students later this month. Please note, many temporary study and break room areas have been established to allow for proper distancing when gathering or sharing a meal on both campuses. Please remember the 6ft social distancing policy on campus.

- As a reminder, you can order lunch for pickup or delivery and pay online using your Midwestern University Identification Card. Meal pick up is available from our cafeterias in the Downers Grove Commons and Glendale's Barrel II. In Downers Grove, delivery is provided to the Multispecialty Clinic (both the 1st floor and the 6th floor) and to the Hyde Atrium. In Glendale, delivery is provided to the Dental Institute and Companion Animal Clinic. Cafeteria menus and online ordering are available from the MWU portal.
- All faculty and staff are reminded that open enrollment for benefit plans will be available in two weeks. Each year, everyone eligible for our benefit plans must re-enroll to assure continuation of their benefits. Midwestern University annually reviews all plans and budgets accordingly to provide you and your family comprehensive health care and many other benefits.
- Planning for the winter quarter courses is underway. The Response Team has been focused on scheduling rooms, laboratories, halls and classes to maintain all of our safety and security precautions. Once the planning for the quarter is completed, the information will be shared with our entire community.

5 Step Plan for Diversity and Inclusion

- I encourage all faculty, staff and students to visit the new Diversity and Inclusion Web Site, located at <https://www.midwestern.edu/about/diversity-equity-and-inclusion.xml>. I am especially moved by the many testimonials provided by members of our wonderful campus community. If you would like submit a statement, faculty and staff should contact the Office of Communication and students should contact Student Services. Reading the comments from our students and colleagues as they share their experiences about our campus community is very uplifting.
- Yesterday, October 15, the application period for our new Diversity Scholarship closed. I am happy to announce we received 32 applications from the Downers Grove campus, and 43 from the Glendale Campus. The Financial Aid Committees on both campuses will complete the application grading period by November 13th, 2020, and students selected to receive the scholarship awards will be notified by November 20th, 2020.

Tomorrow, October 17, 2020 is considered Sweetest Day and while many of you may just consider it another "Hallmark holiday", it is a reminder to be kind, considerate, cherish those around you, and of course, enjoy some chocolate.

Thank you for the energy, engagement and service to each other, whether in conversation and small kindnesses or bold gestures; you are caring for the welfare of our entire community.

Be well.

Dr. G.