

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Human action can be modified to some extent, but human nature cannot be changed." There is so much truth in this quote today as we confront once again the unknown in the months to come. As a campus community, we have spent the last five months planning, preparing and protecting our students, faculty and staff while greatly enhancing and investing in our facilities and technology. Like other universities around the country, we have anticipated more faculty, staff and students on campus, but with new and very strict guidelines.

While many states around the country continue to see increases in the number of COVID-19 positive cases, Northwestern University is fortunate that we have a relatively low infection rate, compared to our surrounding communities. Since we began COVID-19 tracking in early March 2020, we have reported a total of 20 faculty and staff cases and 48 student cases in a total population of more than 10,000 individuals on our two campuses combined. We have carefully followed protocols when conducting contact tracing of each positive case; as of this week, we have not identified a single positive case that was transmitted on Northwestern University campuses between faculty, staff and students. These outcomes are due to the extensive cleaning, sanitizing and cooperation by all of us to keep each other safe. As of this week, we have one new positive faculty/staff case from our Downers Grove campus and four positive student cases, two from each campus. These individuals have not been with their colleagues or faculty over the past fourteen days.

Over the past five months, due to the limited number of faculty, staff and students on campus, we have only shared confidential COVID-19 information with individuals who were identified as coming in contact with someone who tested positive. As we increase the overall population on campuses, we will initiate expanded contact tracing protocols. In order to effectively manage this function, Northwestern University is developing an Office of COVID-19 Tracing that will report directly to Ms. Angela Marty, Vice President, Administration and Human Resources. Once available, instructional materials will be provided all faculty, staff and students.

Northwestern University Guidelines when on Campus

For your protection, and the health of others, the following guidelines must be followed, when on our campuses.

- All faculty, staff and students must wear a face covering, stand at least six feet from any member of the community and not hold in-person meetings with colleagues and students in an enclosed office.
- If you are alone in your office, or walking by yourself outside, a face covering is not required.
- Clinic protocols must be followed at all times, and appropriate Personal Protective Equipment must be worn.
- In order to adhere to these standards, Northwestern University is establishing an online "Hotline to Report Non-Compliance to our COVID-19 Standards." This is under development and should be an active site prior to additional faculty, staff and students returning to campus. Once available, you will be notified. It is all of our responsibility to kindly remind members of the campus community of our standards.

This past week the Northwestern University Response Team met with many Program Directors, faculty and staff members. There continues to be concern about the safety of returning to campus, as many

faculty and staff have not been on campus for many months. At the same time we have many students who when surveyed, want and need to be on campus and attend classes in person. Graduate health care education depends on a teaching model that has prescribed curriculums, hands-on education, and active instruction. To balance these needs, we are implementing a hybrid instructional delivery model. Some lectures will be on campus with limited student attendance, others will be live lectures, broadcasted remotely, and some classes and educational materials will be online. Initially we are trying to plan campus classroom and lab space for classes to be on campus, as needed. We know from our past experience that we can pivot very rapidly to all-online temporary model should the spread of COVID-19 increase.

Midwestern University is committed to supporting faculty and staff impacted by COVID-19 and understands that some employees may have circumstances other than personal health issues that necessitate temporary job modifications to their regular work schedule. The Response Team, in conjunction with Human Resources, has developed a process to assist you if you, or a household member has health issue and face other challenges such as a lack of available childcare, school closures, hybrid school schedules, or remote learning support for dependent children. The policy and details will be shared next week. Please review these policies and apply for accommodations or temporary job modifications, if needed.

Update on the Five-Step Plan for Greater Diversity and Accountability

- The College of Veterinary Medicine has four active Task Forces, comprising of faculty, staff and students. They have accomplished a great deal in the past month by developing a Faculty and Staff Development Program to teach diversity, anti-racism and bias, and began a detailed curriculum review, establishing a new curriculum in diversity and mental health, which has already been approved by the Curriculum Committee. The College also established a new Facebook page for its Chapter of the National Veterinary Pride Association at Midwestern University. The CVM Task Force on Community Outreach is developing a program to introduce children from kindergarten to fourth grade to the biomedical sciences.
- Members of the Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine Admissions Task Force have developed a new program entitled Bridges, which links students in the Biomedical Science Masters Programs directly to medical school. Once the program is implemented, additional information will become available.

Our human nature is to be fearful of all the information and news related to COVID-19. To help alleviate your concerns, I invite any of you who have not been on campus to come see the lecture halls, classrooms and laboratories. See first-hand that our campus has been greatly modified and transformed. In the weeks to come, we will be presenting video tours of our campus community to showcase the University's efforts to create safe and enhanced spaces.

We can all work toward modifying our actions, by caring for each other, teaching and mentoring our students and remembering our call to service.

Be well.

Dr. G.