

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

I think the one thing about the COVID-19 health care crisis is certain: it will have far-reaching effects on us that will last for many years. The way we work, the way we shop, and the way we congregate may be different in the future. This virus has certainly sparked new uses of technology, new products, and services.

I think we need to look at the positive changes this will bring about and not fret over what we have lost. Even the skeptics may now embrace online banking, online shopping and have a new appreciation of virtual tools. Yes, a few of us will grieve the old days, where it was fun to brainstorm in small groups, spend hours in a crowded restaurant, or roam through Costco to enjoy the “marketing snacks”, but these will return in time, maybe in a different form and maybe with more caution, but life will find its new normal.

What has a profound impact on all of us is the new use of technology. Just think of the rapid rise in telemedicine! In our own clinics, we have rapidly addressed our patients needs with WebEx appointments. Our virtual health check appointments and other forms of remote tracking have already mitigated the use of Emergency Rooms. This is indeed a positive development during this pandemic, and may encourage more patient’s to connect with their Primary Care Physician prior to visiting an ER. Just today, the Governor of the State of Arizona approved telemedicine for pets and animals, also acknowledging the importance of our companion animal friends and the importance of veterinaries in this health care crisis.

I am very proud of the Information Technology Team that has rapidly deployed tools that are making it possible to teach online, offer our curriculum in measurable modules and contribute to our students’ progress in this spring quarter. I have used Microsoft Teams for conferences, meetings, communication and staying connected with those off campus. It is a tool that has become invaluable in just 10 days. And just look at what our amazing faculty have accomplished in a short time. Do I find empty classrooms and offices terribly sad? Yes, of course. The beauty of our campus community is the collaboration we share in our One Health environment that sustains our students and faculty. I believe we will return to campus life with a greater appreciation of what we offer to our students, faculty and staff.

During these stressful weeks, I think we all need to acknowledge all the lessons we are learning. We need to continue to emulate our best practices of caring for each other as we look toward better days. Each day I log a “lessons learned” moment to remind myself of the journey we have been on over the past many weeks and continue to prepare us for the future.

Today, April 1, 2020, the COVID-19 Response Team met to discuss a number of key issues. The key issues we addressed are posted below.

Ongoing Sanitization of Our Campuses

- We are still aggressively cleaning and sanitizing the campus buildings. This is an ongoing effort to maintain a clean and safe environment.
- In classrooms that are not in use, we are cleaning carpets, furniture and all hard surfaces.

- In areas still open to students, faculty and staff on campus, such as the Cafeteria, we are cleaning these facilities throughout the day.
- All Clinics open to treat emergency and critical patients are being cleaned throughout the day.

Student 24-Hour Study Rooms

- While the Cafeteria is open for study, many students have requested access to the 24-Hour Study Rooms on both the Glendale and Downers Grove Campuses.
- To accommodate this request, the Downers Grove Campus 24-hour Study Hall located in White Oak Hall will be made available as of April 2, 2020.
- On the Glendale Campus, the 24-hour Study Hall in Barrell I will also be made available on April 2, 2020.
- To honor the social distancing standards, only every other study carrell will be available. Please be respectful of the separation of a minimum of 6 feet apart with your fellow students.
- Security will be walking through the 24-hour study rooms on a regular basis to assure students feel safe and secure.

Departmental Reports

- I am pleased to report that our key business services, financial aid, admissions, and payroll departments are successfully working either on campus or at home and all functions are still operational to all our faculty, staff and students.
- Remember to contact a support department if you have questions; they are available to you.
- Students seeking counseling should reach out to the Counseling Centers. Advising is being effectively conducted via WebEx.

The world and our country are facing challenges never before anticipated. Midwestern University is a strong and healthy institution. We can weather this storm together as we keep a focus on what is important...our mission, students and each other. The past weeks have proven to me that all of you have the strength to serve, whatever conditions arise.

Be well.

Dr. G.