

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

Over the past weeks, we have all come to expect the unexpected, manage new and evolving issues each day, and quickly respond to changing directives and plans. We continue to pivot as needed to continue to keep our faculty and staff actively employed and our students engaged in their continued education. Our entire campus community is still functioning very well...at a distance.

Last week I had a faculty member ask when they would be teaching in a lecture hall. It is a great question, but right now, all we can do is reflect on data from our local authorities and public health officials and continue with our contingency plans. This afternoon, the Governor of the State of Arizona announced additional openings, including salons as of May 8, 2020 and restaurants can begin dining room service as of May 11, 2020. The Executive Order makes it very clear that face masks, social distancing practices and all Centers for Disease and Prevention guidelines must be enacted.

Today, May 4, 2020 the COVID-19 Response Team met to discuss our plans for summer and fall academic quarters.

Announcements

- At this time we are planning that the summer quarter will begin with online learning, and transition to in-person campus classes, simulation laboratories and clinic experiences once we can safely return to campus while maintaining our social distancing practices and using face masks.
- For our fall quarter, which begins as early as July 29, 2020 for some colleges, and as late as August 26, 2020 for the majority of students, we are planning to resume in-person classes with enhanced safety measures and health protocols needed to keep our students, faculty and staff safe.
- Our driving force is your well-being and the safety and security of our entire community. We are already planning new protocols to encourage the use of face masks, greater social distancing, and will delay any large social gatherings.
- For any faculty, staff or student with underlying health conditions that will impact their ability to return to campus, each case will be individually reviewed and accommodations and alternative plans will be considered, including any leave of absence request.

I would love to tell all of you the actual date we can begin our new normal. All of us are ready for this public health crisis to be over. I truly understand the frustration all of you are feeling at this time; I hear of families feeling very strained; children are missing their friends and playmates, and all of us want to get back together. I share this frustration as I miss the interaction with so many of you, the spring events that are special to me, and seeing my family and friends.

The only prediction I can make is that when we are finally back together, it will be a real joy to walk the campus and see students, faculty and staff. It will be my chance to share with all of you a personal, face-to-face thank you for being part of a flexible, dedicated campus community, and personally share my pride in everything that has taken place during the national crisis. Thank you.

Be well.

Dr. G.