March 26, 2020 - Campuswide email

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff:

I write to you from a campus that continues to operate, though you can be sure there is a haunting quietness. Susie and I miss all of you and the almost constant sounds of life that are associated with living across the street from campus, and we think daily about everyone’s health and safety.

As we forge ahead in this new reality, please know how much I appreciate the many ways in which we are all pressing on in service to this College we have come to love so very much.

The greatest activity still occurs in the Campus Center, as Sodexo continues to feed (via take-out) the small number of us helping to assist life-sustaining activity. Beginning today, both Brockman and Pearl will be more active as well, since the 92 students remaining on campus due to special and unique circumstances will make these residence halls their homes through the remainder of the term. They will be ably assisted by 3 RDs and 5 RAs, and student health staff will also be available by appointment.

Our senior team, plus several others in key positions who have been added in, continue to meet by Zoom conference on a daily basis. You can be assured that this C19 Crisis Management Task Force is working to make smart and timely decisions about both short- and long-term issues associated with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Regarding that work, I have attached an 8-page status report compiled by members of this task force. While it doesn’t cover everything, it is fairly comprehensive of work to date. Expect updated versions in the coming weeks.

Finally, I’d note that we are working to keep President-elect Milton Moreland apprised of the important choices and decisions being discussed or made to guarantee a smooth transition as we look ahead to his arrival in July.

If you have any questions, please write or call me or any relevant task force member, whose names are listed at the end of the attached report. In the meantime, let’s all keep calm and carry on.

My best,

John – P. Roush
Given the serious matters at hand, the Crisis Management Task Force has been meeting on a daily basis to address issues associated with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and to plan for future changes and actions. These meetings, conducted by teleconference, will continue for the foreseeable future. A complete list of task force members can be found at the end of this report.

The following is an update that documents to date all the work we have done, the decisions we have made, and the significant work ahead of us.

**Initial Decisions and Announcements:**

- **Friday, March 13.** Based on the situation at the time:
  - We would continue our regular schedule of classes through the following week, March 16-20.
  - From there, Spring Break will occur as scheduled and also be extended for an additional week. This will allow faculty to be fully prepared to shift to online instruction, which will begin Monday, April 6, and continue until the end of the academic term.
  - The last day of classes will remain May 12, followed by finals.

- **Sunday, March 15.** Based on the additional actions taken at the national, state, and local levels:
  - We will take a different course of action and begin an extended, two-week Spring Break starting, Monday, March 16.
  - All coursework will be suspended until remote, online learning starts on Monday, March 30, continuing through the remainder of the academic term, which will end on May 12, followed by finals.
  - Students should make plans to leave campus as soon as possible, taking their things with them if at all possible. Our expectation is that all students able to leave will be away no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17.
  - Students will receive an email message from the Office of Housing and Residence Life with information about checking out of their campus housing. Students requesting special permission to remain on campus will find a link to an online form in this message.
  - No current plans to close the campus. Food service will remain available, along with other essential services. Supervisors will be in touch with their staff regarding next steps in their areas.
  - The College remains committed to a meaningful graduation experience for our seniors based on circumstances in late May that would allow this to be safe and enjoyable. Details to follow on this schedule.
Communications:

- National, state and local media updates are provided daily at our task force meetings.
- Information from Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear, who provides a daily 5 p.m. briefing, is available at: https://governor.ky.gov/news
- On-going meetings are scheduled with emergency management leaders for Boyle County, the City of Danville, and Ephraim McDowell Regional medical Center to discuss short- and long-term strategies to support our students and the broader community.
- Communication Strategy and FAQ Sheets have been implemented.
  - A #StayCentred social media campaign has been launched to keep the campus community connected during our new-found remote academic experience. Visit often to see updated content at: https://www.centre.edu/stay-centred/.
- General information about Centre’s coronavirus efforts can be found at: https://www.centre.edu/coronavirus/.

Student Life:

- A high percentage of our on-campus students were able leave the campus by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17, with some leaving as early as Sunday afternoon. While we are still determining how many will remain on campus due to special or unique circumstances, we are estimating that 100 students will remain for the remainder of the semester. An additional 60 students needed to stay past Tuesday, March 17, and an additional 60 students required a partial move-out and will return to retrieve the remainder of their items at a later date.
- Health and safety were the decisive factors in determining that these students will be housed in our townhouses (Brockman) and suite-style housing (Pearl). This action allows us to provide every student with a single room and access to a bathroom shared with only one other person.
- The main dining hall moved from self-service dining and retail options to individually served options on Thursday, March 12, removing the options for students to serve themselves. Service moved to carry-out only on March 17, and the dining hall seating area was closed. This has allowed students to find a place in the Campus Center to eat with healthy social distancing or elsewhere that is safe. Special dinners and other meals are being planned to provide additional variety.
- Health and Mental Health Services have been monitoring best practices to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff. No one on campus has yet to receive a COVID-19 test, though we have the capability to administer. We remain in touch with local, state, and national health officials, providing daily updates to the task force. A process for off-campus testing and self-isolation is being documented by student health staff.
- While laws regarding licensing and physical location limit traditional therapy services that can be offered by our counseling staff, virtual support is being pursued. The counseling staff has attended tele-therapy training and is working to formulate a plan on what they can provide now that this training is complete. In the short term, counselors will provide support through email and/or phone, and, in some high-risk or high-need cases, in person for those students on campus. Informational pamphlets have also been distributed electronically.
- The College Bookstore is managed through our partnership with Follett. Based on closures and limitations of services at downtown restaurants, hours have been limited, and based on
the Governor’s orders will be closed for retail operations starting March 23. Processes are in place for rentals, purchases, and return of text books.

- Locally, free storage for the remainder of March is being provided by Self Service Storage. Lock Box Storage is providing summer storage rates beginning now. Central Storage is offering a pay for two months, get one-month free discount.

**Study Abroad and Away:**

- All but one of our students studying abroad and away from campus have now returned, with the remaining student still abroad in a safe location (an international student who is in Glasgow waiting to return home to India). The Center for Global Citizenship has been on the phone with every parent or family member of our students abroad, checking in and helping them return home safely. We remain in close contact with the remaining student to assist with a safe return home as conditions allow.
- We monitored national recommendation and requirements as far as travel restrictions. Initially, no action was recommended, but any student that felt it was necessary to leave was allowed to.
- In total, we had 94 students studying in six countries and four with our Washington D.C. program. Placement included London, England (36); Strasbourg, France (22); Merida/Marista, Mexico (24); Glasgow, Scotland (9); Ireland (1); and Segovia, Spain (2).
- On Thursday, March 19, the U.S. State Department issued a Level-4 warning (“do not travel”). At that point, several students had tickets to return on Sunday, March 22. We assisted them in re-booking to come home as soon as possible. By Saturday night, all students abroad but one, as noted, had returned.
- Many students had to rebook flights. A process for proving a credit or partial credit for rebooking fees has been developed.

**Planning for Remote, Online Learning and Work Environments:**

- The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Information Technology Services (ITS) staff have been working with faculty to prepare for remote learning, and ITS will be increasing the College’s site licenses to accommodate additional teleconferencing and use of other technology tools.
- Coordinated access has been arranged between vendors and faculty/students for laboratory and classroom software (STATA, SPCSS, MATLAB, and Creative Cloud). Most vendors are either making their online versions available to us or allowing us to download personal copies.
- In coordination with CTL, we doubled the number of Zoom licenses available to the faculty (and staff) to host online courses and meetings.
- We worked with staff to ensure that they could work from home. While most of the Centre technology ecosystem is in the Cloud and/or web enabled, there are still some applications (particularly in areas such as Finance, HR, Registrar, etc.) that require dedicated applications and VPN access.
Faculty and Staff:

- Implemented a telecommuting policy for those staff members able or needing to work remotely. We developed this policy to help all those who may be temporarily working remotely to have an understanding of the expectations between the College and each individual involved in an alternative work arrangement.
- We shared the guidance from the Kentucky Department for Public Health on when to seek medical care and promoted the College’s health insurance plan’s Live Health Online telehealth service to those as an alternative to office visits.
- We worked with those staff members with compromised immune systems, child care issues, and school closures who have jobs not lending themselves to work at home to provide accommodations for these special needs.
- We are currently reviewing the new federal law that was signed on the evening of March 18 to see how it will impact us in terms of employee welfare.

Athletics:

- On Thursday, March 12, the Southern Athletic Association (SAA) held a 3 p.m. conference call of the Presidents’ Council to discuss league competition moving forward. At the time, a majority of schools indicated they were moving to remote learning, sending students home, and ending spring athletic seasons. The SAA voted to cancel all league games and championships beginning March 20.
- At 4:15 p.m. on Thursday, March 12, the NCAA announced that it was ending all winter and spring championships, at all levels, effective immediately.
- On Friday, March 13, Centre Athletics ceased athletic competition and ended the seasons of its remaining spring teams.
- Athletics is currently reviewing its robust summer camp offerings and determining timelines on when decisions will need to be made on their future.
- Coaches and support staff have been working with student-athletes who have returned to their homes for general support, as well as finding creative ways to help with academic success, emotional adjustment, and continued engagement with their teams.

Admission:

- We have moved our premier scholarship interviews online, with interviews beginning Wednesday, March 25, and continuing through Friday, April 3. To encourage connection, finalists are also being matched with virtual student hosts from each scholarship program and sent a box containing a Centre mug, an Old Centre shortbread cookie, a tin of bicentennial tea, and a card with their host’s details.
- Without campus visits or events, we are pursuing a variety of ways to connect with admitted students remotely. Counselors are scheduling individual Zoom appointments with students to handle questions, particularly related to financial aid. We are offering them the chance to connect online with current students and with faculty. (Over 60 professors have volunteered to connect with admitted students.) We are convening Zoom events for parents of admitted students. We are developing three different remote tour options (virtual reality, Guidebook, and individual Zoom tours), as well as online info sessions similar to our campus
sessions. We are also sending swag: a custom Centre College coloring book, developed from photos of campus life, as well as Centre-branded VR viewers for those who want to tour that way.

- We are adjusting our timeline and processes, joining over 200 other colleges in moving our candidate’s reply date from the traditional May 1 to June 1, in recognition that many families will need more time to figure out a college choice and not all of them have enough college guidance to ask for an extension. (Brown Fellows and Grissom and Lincoln Scholars will be expected to respond on the traditional May 1 timeline, however, out of consideration to alternates.) We will open our financial aid appeals process more broadly, to respond to changing family circumstances, and have boosted grant assistance to those who have the greatest financial need.

- Most aspects of daily work are being managed remotely, with individual staff members coming in separately to work on specific projects, such as mailings.

**Academics and Academic Services:**

- **Grading policy:** Students have been notified about the faculty’s decision regarding the grading policy for the rest of the term. This policy states that students may choose to take any of their classes on a P/D/U basis. Students will have until the last day of classes to make the determination of whether to change a grade of A through U to a grade of P/D/U. More guidance for advising, which will be extremely important in helping students think through the impact of their decisions, is being developed and will be shared with faculty and staff advisors no later than April 6.

- **Convocation Credits:** The Convocation Committee will be posting a series of virtual convocations (films, TedTalks, virtual art tours, etc.) so that all students have the opportunity to complete at least three (reduced from the regular six) convocations this term in order to earn their A for this requirement. Failure to compete this work will, as always, result in the student earning a U grade.

- **On-campus students:** Currently, approximately 100 students plan to remain on campus for the duration of the term, with the majority made up of international students. Please note that Young Hall room 134, a computer lab with 24 work stations, will be open for student use daily from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Students will gain access to Young with their ID card, and there will be instructions posted for students to maintain social distance, wipe down keyboards, etc. Sodexo continues to make and serve food for on-campus students.

- **Student Workers:** Although the details are still being worked out, Centre will not be able to pay student workers who are no longer able to perform their jobs. Please note that most students will be receiving reimbursement (proportional to their contribution) for room and board, which will relieve some financial stress. Online tutoring may still be possible, and some on-campus students may still be paid if they can continue working. More on this soon.

- **Further Update to Annual Course Evaluations:** We have extended the deadline from March 31 to May 1 for faculty members to “opt in” to having courses evaluated as part of their 2020 annual review. This extended timeline will allow each person to get a better sense of how their online courses are unfolding. The “personal evaluation” option is not available for this term to avoid survey fatigue among students. We plan to ask students to reflect on their overall online experience in a single evaluation at the end of the term, and
their feedback will inform ways to improve our online efforts. This will be especially important if we are still teaching remotely this fall due to COVID-19. Of course, you are welcome to get course feedback from your students through a different mechanism, and CTL is happy to help.

- **Revised Syllabi:** Robyn Cutright has created a [Template Language for Syllabus Updates for On-line Learning](#) document, with sample language on attendance, academic honesty, accommodations, and intellectual property. Feel free to add your own suggestions to the bottom of the document.

- **Online Instruction:** The CTL’s [guidelines and ideas for on-line teaching](#) are continuously being updated, and this information was posted on the Moodle page and circulated this past Friday. Please contact CTL staff with questions about Moodle, Zoom, instructional technology, or other support needs. We plan to announce a few other tutorials and learning opportunities, such as the one below, this week. Feel free to post questions or ideas for your colleagues in the Community Forum of our [Moodle Resource Guide](#), and look there for updated resources.
  
  - Please join the CTL for a Zoom webinar hosted by Lee Ann Dickerson, an expert on online distance education. She is currently an Academic Systems Coordinator at Wiley Education Services and has two decades of instructional design experience. She has won awards for her online English and technical writing classes. Lee Ann has volunteered to help Centre faculty transition to online teaching. She created a short, research-based guide ([posted on Moodle](#)) for us and will be on Zoom this Wednesday, March 25, at 7 p.m. to answer your questions about effective course design for online learning. Click on this link to join the Zoom session: [https://centre.zoom.us/j/145493454](https://centre.zoom.us/j/145493454).

- **Library Resources:** Although the facility itself is closed to foot traffic, the librarians are busy responding to requests for materials, including ordering films that can be streamed via Kanopy, digitizing print media, and more. Be sure to get your requests to them right away.

- **Proposed Welcome to Newly-declared Majors:** The deadline for students to declare a major is March 27, and we hope each program will find ways to welcome their new majors. We suggest each program produces a single, short “low tech” video welcome (like those you’ve seen at #StayCentred). Videos can be uploaded to: [https://video.centre.edu/Dropbox/NewMajorsWelcome](https://video.centre.edu/Dropbox/NewMajorsWelcome). Matt Baker in Communications is willing to help edit, as needed. Links to finished videos will be sent to program chairs to circulate to their students during the week of March 30. “Welcome to the major” video clips should be uploaded by March 26.

- **Centre Cares:** We donated goggles and gloves from our chemistry and biology labs to the hospital, and Matthew Hallock has initiated a project to produce face masks for the hospital according to their specifications. People interested in helping (e.g., you are handy with a sewing machine) should contact him.

- **Career support:** CCPD has moved to online scheduling and will still be meeting with students via Zoom. Below are the links for each career counselor:
  
  - Mindy Wilson, Division I – [www.picktime.com/mindywilson](http://www.picktime.com/mindywilson)
  - Kirk Knott, Division II – [www.picktime.com/kirkknott](http://www.picktime.com/kirkknott)
  - Joy Asher, Division III – [www.picktime.com/joyasher](http://www.picktime.com/joyasher)
• If students aren’t sure whom they should meet with, they can simply email the CCPD at careers@centre.edu and they will be sent the appropriate link.

• The CCPD will also continue to host events and employer information sessions virtually. Some will be live-streamed on Instagram, others posted as videos to all of our social media channels. All videos for all events and information sessions will be posted to our new YouTube channel, available from our website or directly here: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCln3ig2KbMO-p2WnL_T5DNA. A weekly schedule of events will, as always, be sent to students on Sunday nights and forwarded to all of you on Mondays. Events will also continue to be posted on our webpage.

• **General Education Implementation:** CCAS and the General Education Implementation Committee continues their work through videoconference. A revised version of the Gen Ed model has been presented to and approved by CCAS. It will be presented to the faculty for a faculty vote. A series of proposals for new DLM I & II courses along with Exploration courses have been approved by CCAS, and will be presented to the faculty for final approval.

• **Canceled faculty positions:** Three visiting assistant professor positions, which had not yet progressed to the campus visit stage, were discontinued in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

**Finance and Fiscal Matters:**

• A policy for a prorated room and board credit is being created. Communication to students and parents was sent on Friday, March 20. Additional details will follow over the next several weeks. Many campuses across the country and commonwealth have not communicated their plans for credits.

• We have initiated a **COVID-19 Relief Fund** for those who wish to support members of our campus community negatively impacted by the pandemic. If you wish to make a gift to the fund, please do so by selecting “COVID-19 Relief Fund” from the menu of gift designations at: http://gifts.centre.edu.

• We have reviewed all budgets as well as faculty and staff openings, and have taken actions to reduce spending for the remainder of this fiscal year.

• All of our buildings have been locked, with key card access available as required for faculty, staff, and vendors. In addition, we implemented our Energy Conservation Policy, used during the winter shutdown.

• We are establishing options for longer term planning.

**Campus Events:**

• All campus events have been cancelled through April. This includes public events and student convocations at the Norton Center.

• Commencement weekend scheduled for May 23-24 has not been cancelled at this time.

• A review and discussions with leaders of other summer campus events are under review. This includes the Great American Brass Band Festival, the Governor’s Scholars Program, and all sports and summer camps.
Other Business:

- Organizers of the annual year-end yard sale are coordinating with the Bluebird Market to sort through items students left behind, working in an offsite warehouse location and planning for a sale at some future time.

Our number one priority remains centered on the health and safety of our entire campus community, along with a passionate dedication to prevent this crisis from diminishing our focus on preparing our students for meaningful lives of work and service.

C19 Crisis Management Task Force

Members of the Senior Staff

- John Roush, President of the College
- Andrea Abrams, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs & Diversity Initiatives and Special Assistant to the President
- Brian Cusato, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Special Assistant to the President for Institutional Research
- Kay Drake, Vice President for Human Resources and Administrative Services
- Ellen Goldey, Vice President for Academic Affairs & Dean of the College
- Brad Fields, Director of Athletics and Recreation
- Randy Hays, Vice President and Dean of Student Life
- Brian Hutzley, Vice President, CFO, and Treasurer
- Jamey Leahey, Vice President for Legal Affairs and Gift Planning
- Shawn Lyons, Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement
- Alex McAllister, Associate Dean of the College
- Yvonne York Morley, Executive Assistant to the President and Assistant Secretary of the Board of Trustees
- Bob Nesmith, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid
- Michael Strysick, Chief Communications Officer
- Richard Trollinger, Senior Philanthropy Advisor

Additional Key Personnel

- Gary Bugg, Director of Public Safety
- Robyn Cutright, Interim Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning
- Lori Hartmann, Interim Director of the Center for Global Citizenship
- Kathy Jones, Director of Student Health
- Wayne King, Director of Facilities Management
- Andy Ryan, CIO and Executive Director of Information Technology Services
- Julie Wheeler, Staff Congress President
- John Wilson, Faculty President