Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

Greetings from Centre!

With our first-year, incoming students set to arrive tomorrow, followed by returning students over the following three days, I know we are all eager to begin classes on Wednesday, August 26. I offer heartfelt thanks once again to our faculty and staff who have devoted countless, untold hours as we prepare to make the fall term successful, in spite of the challenges thrown at us by the pandemic.

I challenge all of us to honor this hard work and make sure it is not in vain. It will only take the carelessness of a few in our Centre community to undue the hard work of the many.

After all, the rest of the world is curious how we will handle this and is already asking about our preparations. If you did not happen to catch them, here are interviews I did this past week with TV stations in both Lexington and Louisville about our work to prepare for the fall semester:

- “Centre College president talks about start of fall semester,” WKYT
- “President Milton Moreland on WAVE Country with Dawne Gee,” WAVE-3

Our efforts thus far are proving hopeful. Pre-test reporting from students indicated a positive case rate of 0.54 percent, slightly lower than the 0.72 positivity rate among faculty and staff who tested on campus as part of our return-to-work effort. Of the students who arrived earlier this week, and those who were with us this summer and have now moved to their new rooms, we saw an early move-in test positive rate of 0.57 percent. Let’s be diligent to keep these percentages low.

I will not be reporting these figures regularly in my updates, since we are developing another COVID-19 dashboard to share the surveillance testing, our isolation and quarantine status, and additional testing done for those who are symptomatic and need additional testing because of contact tracing.

After all our careful planning and implementation, testing is essential to complement our strict policies to wear masks, social distance, and track symptoms through the Daily COVID Pass.
Identifying positive cases as soon as possible is a key way for us to limit the spread of the virus, which is now our number one goal.

Let me note in closing that this is the penultimate COVID-specific update. Beginning Thursday, September 3, we will transition to broader campus-wide weekly updates.

I end with additional thanks to those staff and faculty involved in the move-in process over the next several days. Thank you!

To the students who are returning to Centre this week, I send my very best of wishes for safe travels.

Sincerely,
Milton