

## Task Force Planning Update

### Key Updates:

- *The Academic Calendar has been amended to begin the fall term one week early and finish two weeks early*
- *New Student Move-In Day has been changed to August 13-14, with individual times assigned by Residence Life; Returning and Transfer Student Move-In Day changed to August 16-17, with individual times assigned by Residence Life*
- *The College will maintain use of the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) and Microsoft Teams collaboration platform for the 2020-21 Academic Year*
- *Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) will be provided for all students at the start of the academic year*
- *All (108) eligible students living on campus during the summer have been placed in campus jobs*

Dear Members of the Campus Community,

Just over a month ago, Presidents Brigham and Everett announced the creation of a series of Pandemic Planning Task Forces as part of a multi-tiered process for safeguarding the campus community and preparing for a return to in-person instruction in the fall. During the five weeks since that time, these Task Forces have worked at a rapid pace to address matters related to Academics, Athletics, Finances, Health and Safety, and Student Life. In addition to these group efforts, Task Force leaders have met weekly with the Presidents and faculty leadership to coordinate and report progress.

As these planning efforts have grown more distributed and complex, we recognize that communicating important developments to the campus community will grow more challenging. In response, we are writing to provide the first in a series of biweekly updates on this process, including key outcomes and current agenda items from across these groups.

### Academic Affairs:

- Classes for the fall 2020 term will begin on August 19<sup>th</sup>, a week earlier than originally scheduled, and the last day of final examinations will be November 24<sup>th</sup>, two weeks earlier than originally planned. The traditional week-long fall vacation has been replaced by a series of one-day, mini-breaks distributed over the course of the semester. Additional details and the full fall calendar can be found [here](#).
- Discussion is underway with regard to the academic calendar for the remainder of the year, with focus on the possibility of shifting the winter session to June. This discussion will be carried to the faculty via a proposal during the coming week.
- A faculty forum was convened last week to discuss online teaching, and a similar forum focused on lab and other activity-related courses will be held this coming Tuesday.
- A new communications plan for disseminating pandemic planning resources and updates to faculty will be announced in the coming week.

### Athletics:

- The Athletics Task Force has taken leadership on developing safety-related travel protocols for students, faculty, and staff. Specific considerations include PPEs, testing, and quarantines; travel options, including buses, cars, and airlines; room and board considerations while traveling; and Athletics travel roster reduction.

- Special attention is being lent to the creation of a social compact by which our campus culture understands, values, and complies with the actions necessary to keep our community safe. A communication plan is being designed, complete with core messages and a timeline, and the group will coordinate with the Office of Communications to enact it.
- Athletics is partnering with the Health and Wellness group in developing policy and protocols for testing for COVID-19 and establishing a protocol for actions to be taken in the event of positive results.
- Policy and protocol are being developed for co-curricular events and safety regulations, as well as external groups' use of campus event venues.

Health and Wellness/Facilities:

- A policy has been drafted for Health and Safety Guidelines on campus that lends attention to physical distancing, use of PPEs, handwashing, and disinfecting. Personal and community requirements are addressed, as well as recommendations for hand sanitizer and cleaning products. A FAQ of related information is also under development.
- The group's current agenda includes testing logistics related to student move-in dates and cleaning routines for classrooms and other facilities.
- Discussion of options for checking symptoms and establishing a protocol for tracing contact with infected individuals is actively underway.

Finance:

- Direct costs of the pandemic are presently estimated to be \$2.5m for the 2021 Fiscal Year.
- Efforts are well underway to address the budgetary shortfall, with meetings convened by this Task Force with the Presidents' cabinet, Trustee leadership, and faculty leadership.
- A joint meeting with the Presidents, the Executive Council, and the Faculty Budget and Benefits Committee will take place during the coming week to discuss options and strategies.

Student Life:

- The Student Life task force has established move-in dates and a move-in schedule that will allow for decreased density during the move-in process. We will be communicating specific move-in times to individual students in July.
- We are developing expectations for the campus living community, including a guest policy, guidelines for common spaces, laundry, and other venues that will guide how our students in residence can live, learn, and grow together while maintaining physical distancing where possible.
- The first two weeks of the term will likely be a more restrained than usual, as we thoughtfully settle into this new way of being together. As the semester continues and we gain confidence in the new protocols and community wellness, we will be able to relax some of these policies.
- We are exploring how our dining program can provide high-quality and varied options, while also adhering to physical distancing guidelines where possible.

As always, we welcome your feedback on any aspect of these activities, and look forward to your continued engagement with this planning process.

Sincerely,

Paul Bennion, VP Student Affairs

David Douglass, VP Academic Affairs