

May 1, 2020

As we write this, we hope all of you, whether current or prospective students, faculty, staff, alumni, or friends of The College of Idaho, are healthy and safe. While none of us can state with any certainty that we know exactly how COVID-19 will play out over the upcoming months, it is incumbent on us to plan for the future based on the best and most comprehensive information currently available.

When the pandemic spread to growing numbers in the United States in early March, we assessed the situation and prioritized the health and safety of our campus community. We feel strongly that the actions the College took to move online and send students home were the most responsible decisions at the time.

Since then, the landscape has evolved and the relative impact of COVID-19 on the Boise/Caldwell Valley has been far less than most areas of the country. In light of this change, the College again faces the need for timely and responsible decision-making, this time regarding how and when to re-start our College. The best information provided by our local healthcare community and their scenario-planning models shows that as long as people adhere to appropriate guidelines the systems can handle the cases we may experience here in southwest Idaho.

For the past several weeks, we have been meeting (virtually) with our senior leadership team, covering all areas of administrative and academic leadership, to determine the best approach to the fall semester. We identified key principles to guide our discussions, including the following:

- To protect the physical and mental well-being of our students, faculty, and staff
- To provide a transformative education for our students
- To sustain the positive culture of our close-knit community
- To maximize flexibility, timeliness, and evidence-based decision making

With these principles in mind, and with a careful eye to the evolving COVID-19 landscape, we wish to announce our intent ***to open The College of Idaho for in-person classes and on-campus living for the upcoming fall 2020 semester.***

We are appointing task forces that in the coming weeks will work directly on the changes required to be ready to open campus this fall. Each task force will keep our guiding principles in mind as they focus on the following areas: Student Life (housing, food service, student travel, etc.); Academics (class sizes, calendar, etc.); Athletics/Activities (events, social distancing, etc.) and Facilities (sanitation and hygiene). For each of these areas, we are developing contingency plans and timelines.

While we can make decisions for our Student Life and Academic programs, we cannot completely control what happens with fall athletics because we partner with the NAIA and our conference leadership in rendering decisions. However, at this point, we feel confident that fall sports will take place. There is substantial discussion about the schedule and manner (e.g., on-time, delayed start, reduced season, move to winter/spring, no fans, etc.), but we feel there will be sports this fall.

Our plan is to share more specific details with our extended Yote family by the end of May, but we feel it is critical that we communicate now our continuing commitment to in-person classes, on-campus living, and a timely start to the fall semester.

We want to thank everyone for all of your support over the past two months, with special appreciation for our students, faculty, and staff, who went from 129 years of in-person classrooms to online classes in the course of one week. And while we have no desire to stray from our core of in-person academic excellence, the fact that everyone committed to making the change is a testament to why we love The College of Idaho and why we are One C of I.

Sincerely,



Doug Brigham
Co-President, The College of Idaho



Jim Everett
Co-President, The College of Idaho