

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

As I have reflected on our second week of whirlwind activity, I find myself in awe of our campus community. It was just two weeks ago when events began to unfold so rapidly that it was hard to keep up. Beyond our activity level, the past weeks have found many of us glued to the news and social media, trying to dissect all the information in real time, and what all of this means to each of us. These are indeed confusing and chaotic times and many of you, like me, are forging ahead on an unfamiliar path.

I have carefully listened to all of you, heard your concerns, your fears and yet witnessed your resolve to meet the challenges as one community. For me, it is times like these when I try to spend some time away from the noise and develop plans to continue to assure our students their education is ongoing, while also assuring our faculty and staff that they have the tools needed to connect with one another and our students.

During this time, I want all of you to know I am deeply committed to helping all our faculty and staff get through these tumultuous days. I understand that eventually more clarity and calm will come back to us, if we just give it enough time. Here is the good news; I am happy to report that over the past two weeks, a total of 130,289 payroll hours were paid, 82% of our faculty and staff were able to work their regular hours, 1% requested personal days, 3% used vacation time, and 15% used the flex-time benefits. This is excellent news. It says we are all actively engaged in working with each other on behalf of our students. I see this as an excellent outcome, thanks to all of you.

Today I am announcing two very important new programs effective Monday, April 6, 2020. In consultation with Human Resources, our Finance Team and key staff, I am implementing the Midwestern University COVID-19 Emergency Fund and the Midwestern University Public Emergency Salary Continuation Plan. These are both designed to provide those of you who cannot work on campus or at home, the ability to provide you with a paycheck. These programs are designed to provide our faculty and staff assurance that we care about your well-being.

These plans were shared with the COVID-19 Response Team earlier today, and I received their support for these new programs.

Midwestern University COVID-19 Emergency Fund:

- All faculty and staff are eligible for 120 additional hours of full wages to be utilized in accordance with the new policy that will be distributed in the near future.
- The Midwestern COVID-19 Emergency Fund will remain active and available for the next 12 months, if needed.
- All benefit plans remain active during these additional 120 hours from the Midwestern University COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund.
- The Human Resource Department will be issuing the details and policy surrounding this plan shortly. I am pleased to share that no member of our community is in need of this fund in the immediate future.

Midwestern University Public Health Emergency Salary Continuance Plan:

- This plan is designed to assist employees that are not eligible to work from home or can only work part-time from home. It can also be utilized for employees working on campus that are facing reduced hours due to limited operations.
- Employees will receive 75% of their regular rate of pay for each day of absence for a maximum of 12 weeks.
- Faculty and Staff that are receiving this Midwestern University Public Health Emergency Salary Continuance Plan will continue on our benefit plans, and will continue to accrue paid time off, receive retirement contributions based on their hours paid, and receive all other eligible benefits.
- Part-time employees who are not eligible for flextime, vacation time or personal days will be eligible for this fund.

While these two plans are being introduced today, the most important message I continue to send to all of you is we need you, our faculty and staff, to continue to work on behalf of our students. I want all of our faculty and staff to continue making a difference in the lives of our students and each other.

Please take the weekend to recharge. Find your resolve, focus on the good you can do in your own life and that of your families. Please stay positive and look forward to the future. We are creating a brighter tomorrow – together.

Be Well.  
Dr. G.