

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

The ability of a group of people to do remarkable things hinges on how well those individuals can successfully work together as a team. Over the past eight weeks, the 37 members of the COVID-19 Response Team have met daily to discuss how Midwestern University can effectively plan and address the impact of the coronavirus on our campus community. Since the month of March and through the first few weeks of April, all of our efforts have been spent on reacting to the public health crisis. We enabled faculty and staff to work at home, ensured our students could continue their education through online courses, identified essential members of the community who remained on campus, and adjusted our benefit plans and paid time off policies to continue to provide faculty and staff with job security.

Later in April and now in the month of May, we are embarking on a recovery strategy centered on how we gradually bring more faculty and staff back to campus and welcome patients into our clinics. By June, we hope to gradually resume regular operations with new procedures in place to provide assurance that you will feel safe returning to campus and knowing your colleagues will be adhering to new safety and health protocols. While the new State of Illinois Executive Order, published on May 5, 2020, continues to restrict gatherings of more than 10 individuals, we are moving ahead with small steps to prepare for greater relaxation of the order. We are closely monitoring how members of our community will be impacted in the month of June, knowing that restrictions will still be in place.

Today May 6, 2020, the dedicated COVID-19 Response Team began discussing what steps will be instituted prior to having all our faculty, staff and students safely return to campus.

Announcements

- Midwestern University is working on a plan to reassure our faculty, staff and students that they are returning to a safe environment. Many organizations and health care providers have implemented a brief daily health questionnaire along with having every individual's temperature checked prior to entering their facilities. Midwestern University will be following the same protocols. We are addressing the logistics of this implementation and will start sharing actual plans as we get closer to returning to campus.
- Midwestern University is developing protocols to protect your physical, mental and emotional well-being once we implement a gradual return to campus. These steps will include limiting the number of individuals using an elevator at one time, new traffic flows to enter and exit our academic buildings, adjusting work spaces, limiting the number of individuals using break rooms, and restricting the number of individuals using a conference room.
- In order to maintain proper distancing between patients in our clinics, signage will be placed on the existing furniture to limit the number of available seats. Patient scheduling will be adjusted to assure we do not have large gatherings arriving at our clinics at one time.
- Social distancing is very important. Midwestern University is carefully monitoring our facilities to limit gatherings and encourages everyone to keep six feet between yourself and others. It is up to each individual to do your part by wearing a face mask and maintaining six feet separation when other people are nearby. We can all do our part as our campuses and communities begin to reopen.

I view all of us as one team. We are united by our mission, vision and service to our community. I really believe a team is not just a group of people who work together, but rather a team is a group of individuals who trust and look out for one another. It is truly my honor to be part of the Midwestern University team.

Be well.

Dr. G.