

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

When the history books on the COVID-19 are written, there will be a long list of heroes. Many of them will come from the health care professions including physicians, pharmacists, nurses, lab technicians, dentists and veterinarians, to list a few. However, there will be many others who have made our daily living possible during these difficult times; they are the custodians, maintenance personnel, delivery drivers, police and firefighters. I see so many individuals willing to work in grocery stores and carry-out restaurants in order to help keep essential service available to all of us. These are truly heroes.

Here at Midwestern University we have many heroes too. They are the faculty and staff that developed course work to keep our students progressing in their degree programs. I am so grateful for the endless hours our Human Resources Department, Information Technology Department, Security, and Facilities Operations are dedicating to keep our faculty, staff and students productive while our facilities are sanitized and keeping us secure.

The COVID-19 Response Team held our daily briefing earlier today, Monday, March 23, 2020. Once again we discussed a number of important issues.

State of Arizona Executive Order 2020-19

- The Governor of Arizona issued the State of Arizona Executive Order 2020-12 at 3:00 P.M. this afternoon. The order **does not** include a provision of "Shelter in Place" at this time, but does highlight institutions that are considered essential services that must be maintained during this health care crisis, and asks people to keep observing social distancing.
- Essential functions include all health care and public health operations including hospitals, clinics, dental offices, pharmacies, veterinary clinics, mental health, optometry clinics, and all medical laboratories.
- Educational institutions are listed as essential to facilitate distance learning, performing critical research and other essential functions.

Faculty and Staff Dress Code

- Business Casual attire is being temporarily relaxed during this time for any member of the academic campuses with the exception of security personnel that need to be easily recognized.
- In the Midwestern University Clinics, anyone in patient care areas must continue to wear appropriate attire. Those working in non-patient areas are allowed to wear relaxed business attire as long as it is appropriate.
- The University Dress Code is relaxed on a temporary basis while we do not have visitors and many students on campus. Please know that dress jeans are approved; however, flip-flops, jean shorts, T-Shirts or pajamas are not appropriate. Remember this is still a professional work environment.

Essential Travel Letters

- Human Resources is in the process of gathering all the names of faculty and staff that will receive a letter for “Essential Travel” under the State of Illinois Executive Order. These will be sent by the Human Resources Department to eligible colleagues by March 25, 2020.
- Students requiring “Essential Travel” to and from the Midwestern University campuses will obtain these letters from their Academic Deans.
- Students remaining on clinical rotations in the State of Illinois should receive a similar letter from their clinical sites.

Midwestern University Non-Discrimination Policy

- Midwestern University has always been a diverse community that welcomes everyone.
- I find it unfortunate that there have been reports from around the world that individuals are encountering discrimination and a stigma in their communities.
- We must take steps to counter and stop stigma in our communities as health care professionals. Remember we are committed to protecting and maintaining an individual’s privacy. We need to speak out against negative behaviors, including negative statements about groups of people. As a health care University, we have the responsibility to help counter stigma during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Campus Cleaning and Sanitization Procedures

- All campus facilities are cleaned and sanitized daily and all buildings are using 100% outside airflow to maintain a healthy environment.
- The computer labs are being cleaned three times a day as they are only open from 7:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. The early closing allows for overnight sanitization.
- Please remember to thank our hard-working cleaning crews every chance you have. They are entering offices to clean keyboards, phones and door knobs. They are trying not to move things around, but please remember they are working to keep you healthy.

2020 Spring Graduation Ceremonies

- Midwestern University is so proud of our graduation celebrations. They are special events for faculty, staff, families and our students.
- We are looking at all factors regarding graduations this coming spring. While a decision has not yet been finalized, we are considering all options.
- We will notify all students by Friday, March 27, 2020 of any modification to commencement 2020 plans.

I am very impressed and thankful to our faculty, staff and students for your feedback. You have contributed greatly to our plans with your questions, notes and comments.

Personally I have felt supported and inspired by your notes of encouragement and appreciation for my Daily Evening Updates. As time goes by they will become briefer and have less details as we learn to navigate through these uncharted waters.

In the meantime, know that I believe all of you are heroes.

Dr. G.