

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

Many of you have already returned to campus, and others are beginning classes in person or online next week. It is officially the start of our Fall 2020 quarter; and it seems very different from previous years. We have faced a portion of our spring and all of our summer quarter dealing with the pandemic and the most recent social and racial injustices. Over these months I have been reminded many times of the importance of listening and learning, and looking inward as we as an academic community stand together for what is good and right. I also know the importance of a team committed to working together each day to prepare our facilities and classes for this Fall quarter.

As a campus community, we are taking extreme measures to mitigate the risk of transmitting COVID-19 to each other by completing our daily health check, frequently sanitizing our facilities, and following safety protocols. Yet, after months of planning and selfless dedication by faculty and staff, we have heard that a few students felt they could ignore the public health standards and gather off campus with other students without wearing face masks and adhering to social distancing practices. I have also been notified that some students have gathered outside classrooms and labs with no regard to social distancing. What is key to a successful fall quarter is close adherence to the protocols put in place to protect everyone's health and well-being. Wearing a face mask, and remaining socially distant from faculty, classmates and co-workers is required of everyone on campus. I am expecting our students to act as a health care professionals and respect the commitment made by your faculty to advance your education. Please take our protocols seriously and respect the measures we have taken to protect everyone.

This past week we have had no positive COVID-19 cases among our faculty and staff. The Downers Grove campus had four positive student cases, the Glendale campus had two positive cases; and fortunately, none of the students who reported positive test results have been on our campuses.

#### Temporary Student Activities Protocols

To further ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for all members of our campus community, we will be observing the following temporary measures related to student activities to prevent, reduce and combat the spread of COVID-19.

- Student events, including student government meetings, organizational clubs, educational and social event will be held virtually.
- In-person club and organizations social events are suspended, whether on or off campus.
- Any in-person non-social educational event, or practice lab must be approved by the academic dean and the faculty advisor, who needs to be present. All attendees must wear a mask and remain a minimum of six feet from other participants.
- Communal food service during an event cannot be approved. This includes BBQs, ice cream socials, pot lucks, snacks and lunches; however, a pre-packaged boxed lunch to be eaten on one's own after the event is allowed.

## Update on the Diversity and Inclusion Five Point Plan

- The Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine has completed their Diversity Initiatives. Five task forces have begun their work: Admissions, Curriculum Review, Outreach (to undergraduate programs and high school students), Research Grants, and the final group will focus on Training and Development. The Training and Development group will focus their efforts on communicating action plans that will impact the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine students, such as curriculum changes, outreach opportunities and participation in research grants. This task force will also work toward the inclusion of other colleges at Midwestern University to share their new educational opportunities with everyone.
- Midwestern University has appointed Diversity Support Coordinators on both the Glendale and Downers Grove campuses. Reporting to Dr. Ross Kosinski, Dean of Students, and Dr. Pamela Jurgens-Toepke, Associate Dean of Students on the Downers Grove, these coordinators will focus their efforts on outreach to student groups, coordinating activities between colleges and programs, and offering support for students seeking diversity and inclusion assistance.
- Please join me in congratulating and thanking Ms. Catherine Rent, Downers Grove campus, and Ms. Julie High Horse, Glendale campus for accepting this additional responsibility as Diversity Support Coordinators. Both Ms. Rent and Ms. High Horse have been with Midwestern University for many years, and have been working with our students, faculty and staff in many capacities. After an orientation to this additional role, I believe they will be of great service to our campus communities and all of our diversity and inclusion efforts.

The Fall always represents changing of the seasons. Beyond cooler weather and falling leaves, we face new challenges as we adjust to the changing time. It is my hope that we can continue facing all new circumstances and changing conditions together and hold fast to our commitment of caring for all members of our community.

Be well.

Dr. G.