

Nov. 24, 2020

Good afternoon,

The fall 2020 semester was indeed a challenge, yet there are accomplishments about which to be proud — progress made toward a degree, learning new ways of teaching and doing business, and learning that we are all capable of more than we might have thought. As for me, I am pleased that we were able to provide in-person experiences to so many students — an effort the entire Bobcat community should be proud of. I am also truly thankful to all of you who worked so hard to focus on your academic studies as well as the health and safety of our campus to help all of us make it through a semester unlike any we've seen before.

And speaking of accomplishments, I want to congratulate Keenan Scott II, a 2009 FSU graduate, and the announcement last week that his play, "Thoughts of a Colored Man," will open on Broadway in its upcoming season! Keenan wrote the play while he was a student in the FSU Department of Theatre and Dance, and it had its initial performances here. This marks Scott's Broadway debut. [Read more here.](#) And he has been giving back to his alma mater by [working with our students this fall through a New Works Incubator project.](#)

I'm also thankful for the generosity of the Bobcat family toward "Operation Feast Mode" run by our Office of Civic Engagement. The response to our annual request to help families with Thanksgiving meals was truly wonderful. We collected 88 baskets and gift cards from student organizations, FSU departments and individuals, which included 2,493 pounds of food and \$2,270 in gift cards. Thank you for helping those in need during these difficult times.

Just a few quick notes to wrap up the fall semester:

- **Spring Start Date:** We are slated to start our spring 2021 semester on Monday, Jan. 25. While our plan for now is a blended-format semester as in the fall, the status of the pandemic may force changes. We will provide an update about the spring semester by Friday, Jan. 8, 2021.
- **Online Status:** If you want a completely online semester for spring 2021, ALL of your classes must be listed as ONLINE in PAWS. Blended (in-person/online) classes DO NOT COUNT as online. Undergraduate students might consider supplementing their FSU online courses with online offerings from the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) through the University System of Maryland's Inter-institutional enrollment program. Details about inter-institutional enrollment are available [here](#), and UMGC's spring 2021 course offerings are available [here](#). Additional information is available through the Registrar's Office at reginfo@frostburg.edu.
- **COVID-19 Testing:** For those of you remaining in the area over the winter break, the state and county health departments are providing free COVID-19 testing three days per week at the [Allegany County Fairgrounds](#). Hours are Mondays from 2-7 p.m. and on Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. No appointment, insurance card or doctor's order is needed.

- **Student Survey:** Please fill out the survey sent out to your FSU email address concerning the fall semester. It is important to send specific feedback about issues, concerns or solutions. I will be reviewing the results in December.
- **Everyone Survey:** Please fill out the Campus Climate Survey from the University Council for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The deadline is **Friday, Dec. 11**. The results from this anonymous, 15-minute survey will allow UCDEI to highlight areas for improvement while also furthering our mission to create a unifying campus environment. You can access it at [this link](#).
- **Virtual Coffees:** We plan to have virtual coffees with the president again this spring and will kick them off in mid-January. Starting last summer, we held more than 20 [virtual events](#) in which students and employees have shared nearly 1,000 queries or comments. Watch your official FSU email for an invite in January.
- **Agreement with AFSCME:** I am pleased that we have reached an agreement with our AFSCME Local 239 on salary actions that allow us to rescind the layoff notices that we sent last month. Those employees have been notified by email and will receive mailed letters soon. AFSCME-represented employees will receive more information from HR.

Finally, I offer my congratulations to our December 2020 graduates! Everything about your last semester at FSU has been different, even the fact that you have finished before Thanksgiving. Yet your achievement is one you can be proud of, and we are happy to welcome you to the family of Frostburg State University alumni. We will look for you at our [virtual commencement celebration](#), with a social media “Grad Week” leading up to our on-demand recognition on Dec. 11. And whenever we are able to gather in person, I will be proud to celebrate your accomplishment then, too.

I wish all of you a restful and safe winter break. We’ll see some of you in December and many of you in 2021.

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