

Aug. 12, 2020

Good afternoon,

As the first of our residence hall students begin moving in today, we are looking toward a very different semester. When COVID first hit the state last spring, we had little time to react or plan for what was to come. Now we return to our beautiful campus that is transformed in many ways.

You will see Informational signs, directional arrows and floor stickers to help with distancing, capacity limits posted on doors, reduced density and everyone (and I mean everyone) wearing masks to protect themselves and others.

Classes will look different, as our faculty have put a great deal of effort into transforming their courses in innovative ways, all designed to significantly reduce in-person time while maintaining the quality educational experience. Activities will be different, too. We won't have in-person Homecoming or Late@Lane, but plenty of creative and safe events are still being planned. For example, check out the drive-in movie this Saturday night in the Performing Arts parking lot.

We are committed to following state health and safety guidelines, and if these change in the coming weeks, our operations will adapt as well. We are also committed to our mission of providing our students with a high-quality education.

Here are some other things to keep in mind as we approach the beginning of classes:

On-campus testing: Please review the email sent yesterday from Dr. Jeff Graham regarding the on-campus testing occurring through Sunday. He explains how to proceed, who needs to be tested, how the test is administered, among other details. Remember to bring your ID and be prepared with your [daily online check-in](#) badge. Testing ends at 4 p.m. each day. Additional testing information can be found at [this link](#).

Contact tracing: In the case of a positive COVID test result, contact tracing is extremely important in helping any community minimize the spread of the virus. The Maryland Health Department website at [this link](#) has good information on how that happens. Here are some key details:

- Answer and/or return any calls from "MD COVID." If you do not have caller ID on your phone, look for the phone number (240) 466-4488.
- The name of the infected patient will not be revealed. Contact tracers take extreme measures to protect privacy.
- You may be asked about your health, symptoms and anyone you might have been in close contact with. If you've had a COVID test, they may ask for the date and name of your insurance company.

- You will be asked to verify your date of birth, address, and any other phone numbers you may have. You will NOT be asked for passwords, your social security number, money, photos or financial information.

Social compact: If you have not already, everyone is expected to review and acknowledge the [Social Compact](#). These are the actions that will guide us through this crisis as a community. Please read it at [this link](#). I want to focus this week on two elements:

- **Adhere to social distancing capacity guidelines for facilities, events, and gatherings.** This includes not planning events that will draw large crowds (a message sent Aug. 6 from Dean of Students Crowe defined “large” as 20 or more, although if state guidelines change, ours will, too). And your smaller events should still require mask usage and distancing.
- **Limit travel for essential purposes and avoid crowded transmission hotspots or super-spreader events.** There have been plenty of news reports about “super-spreader” events from all types of social gatherings, everything from birthday parties, house parties, family reunions, dances, choir rehearsals and more. Be wise and choose to pass on these for now.

CARES Act funds for fall semester: Currently, CARES Act money is available only in the amount of \$375 to go towards housing costs for the fall semester. (See [last week’s message](#) for instructions to apply.) If there are additional funds available after these awards are made, students will be notified as to what other COVID-related expenses they can apply for.

This semester will be far from business as usual. I urge everyone in our community to have patience and be kind to one another and support one another as Bobcats. Be sure to stay up to date on the latest information at www.frostburg.edu/fall2020.

Be well and stay safe,

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