

Sept. 1, 2021

Welcome back! I hope everyone is settling in for the fall semester. It's wonderful to see the campus full of students, faculty and staff. Glad to see the smiling eyes above masks!

A few updates:

Great News for FSU! The Washington Monthly came out with its college rankings this week and FSU has much to be proud of in this listing. Among U.S. master's level colleges and universities (600 universities that offer undergrad and master's degrees and a few doctoral degrees), we rank **FIRST** among public universities in Maryland, **NINTH** in the category of service and **44th** in the country overall! Read more at [this link](#). Look for this announcement on our home page soon.

Visits to Residence Halls. I'll be scheduling evening visits to each of the residence halls this fall. I didn't do the visits last year because of social distancing requirements. These visits will be advertised in advance and are open to any student who wants to stop by for an informal chat with me. I will be doing virtual coffee hours with staff and faculty and have offered to attend virtual coffee hours sponsored by SGA. Look for announcements on these over the upcoming weeks.

Strategic Planning Initiatives. We've set aside over a \$1 million to support our strategic plan. There is some overlap on initiatives but we are investing in *student retention/success* (through advising – hiring university advisors, and purchasing new software to make advising easier), *student recruitment* (developing and distributing more recruiting materials to high school sophomores and juniors and continued work with our marketing agency on refreshing our brand), *improved technology* (greater distribution of software to get us away from paper and software to make financial aid processing easier) and *DEI* (to support UCDEI initiatives).

Things to do over the next week. There are several events (mostly outdoors) planned for the next week.

- Today, Sept. 1 (until 2 p.m.) – Student Involvement (Organization) Fair (Lane Center)
- Thursday, Sept. 2 (5 – 10 p.m.) – Cruise-In (Main Street, Frostburg)
- Sunday, Sept. 5 (1 – 5 p.m.) – Western Maryland Craft Beverage Festival (Hoffman Park, Frostburg)
- Wednesday, Sept. 8 (6 – 10 p.m.) – Block Party (Main Street Frostburg).

Chartwells. As many know, there are many jobs going unfilled these days because of the pandemic. Chartwells is looking for students who want to work. If you are interested in earning some extra money, check out: dineoncampus.com/frostburg/job-opportunities. In the meantime, please be tolerant and understanding as Chartwells does its best to provide food service to our campus during these times. As an aside, you may see the Coke and vending machines being refilled. Our vendors have had a tough time getting supplies.

Mask Wearing. SGA leadership asked me about mask wearing for vaccinated individuals. We continue to follow CDC guidelines. Given that Allegany County and almost all of MD is classified as either “substantial or high” risk in terms of virus transmission, we are requiring everyone to wear a mask indoors when in the presence of others. Depending on CDC guidelines, when we return to either a

“moderate or low” risk level we may see a relaxing of the mask wearing rule for those who are vaccinated. Thank you for following the rules and keeping the campus community safe.

Best wishes as we complete the first week of class. Have an enjoyable and safe Labor Day weekend.

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