



*One University. A World of Experiences.*

To: Bobcat Student Community  
From: Dr. Artie Lee Travis, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Date: Thursday April 28, 2022  
Re: Message to Bobcat Nation!!!

Dear Bobcat Nation:

On Tuesday, April 26, 2022, I left campus hoping that I had done the best I could to accomplish two things simultaneously:

- Support of the students on campus
- Support the Student Affairs team and other administrators directly involved in protecting the Constitutional rights of both the external organization and our students

As Tuesday unfolded, we knew that the external organization would participate in what we hoped would be a civil demonstration. While we realized there would be anger, grief and pain for some of our students, we hoped that it would be manageable. In many cases, grief and pain manifested into anger directed at demonstrators and administrators for what students perceived as not being cared about. As always, the mental health and well-being of our students remain our priority and cannot be underemphasized. I believe our students know they are not alone and will never be alone.

I do want you to know that from the time the demonstration was set up until the writing of this correspondence, Student Affairs team members have been supporting and providing outreach to the student community - be that Brady Health, CAPS, Residential Life, Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, the Lane Center or Student Engagement. Not because it's our job, but because it's our passion. We had professional mental health members on standby in case any student needed support throughout the day and after.

While it was clear that there would be an undeniable intersection of conflicting views on abortion rights, I could have done a better job at informing the entire campus population in advance of the exact date and time of the planned demonstration. SGA leadership was advised well in advance that the event was going to happen, but I DID NOT advise them of the date and time. I apologize to each of you for that. I also will redouble my efforts to not overlook easy solutions to potential problems. The President has tasked me with making sure proper notice is given when we have possible controversial issues arriving on our doorsteps in the future. My team is pretty well versed in the five steps we use to manage controversial situations:

- Prevention and Mitigation
- Planning
- Response
- Recovery
- Learning

Appropriate notification will be a priority moving forward.

As a member of this community, we all know about the First Amendment and freedom of expression. We saw that in action on Tuesday. As we prepare to leave for the Summer, I suspect this Fall will bring more activities regarding free speech. We will better prepare the campus community by providing information to inform and advise the campus in advance.

Frostburg State University is a place where vigorous discussion should be occurring. Our campus is a place where you should be able to stand for what you believe in... and stand for what you say in the public arena. We are a university; we are a living laboratory where we are held to a different and higher standard.

I do want to thank not only the Student Affairs team, but also the members of the faculty and staff that were on site and supported our students, members of the SGA Executive board present to assist in maintaining support for the students gathered, and for all those present that participated in a civil manner.

While many stood up, all were heard, don't sit down, but be civil in your actions... debate is healthy and will provide various opinions for all of us to learn.

Peace be with each of you!