



Wednesday, April 15, 2020

Dear Heidelberg Faculty & Staff,

As you may have heard, the federal stimulus package known as the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) is allocating \$14 billion to colleges and universities across the country to provide direct emergency grants to students whose lives have been disrupted by the COVID-19 health crisis.

In announcing funding through the CARES Act, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos said, “What’s best for students is at the center of every decision we make. That’s why we prioritized getting funding out the door quickly to college students who need it most. We don’t want unmet financial needs due to the coronavirus to derail their learning.”

Last Thursday, we learned that Heidelberg University will receive approximately \$1.2 million in funding from the CARES Act. This is wonderfully welcome news! The only statutory requirement is that the funds be used to cover expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus, including eligible expenses under a student’s cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care.

We are awaiting guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education that will clarify our understanding about the rules and restrictions for uses of the funding. We do know that our students who are Pell Grant recipients are eligible for funding; other students may qualify as well. Our current interpretation is that we will not be permitted to utilize any of the funds to reimburse the University for the room and board refunds issued to students earlier this month.

Secretary DeVos indicated that this first round of funding is being prioritized to get money in the hands of students in need as quickly as possible. Colleges and universities have significant discretion about how to award the emergency assistance.

The Senior Leadership Team and key administrators are continuing our discussions about how to correctly implement CARES Act funds to eligible students, based on U.S. Department of Education guidelines that are still forthcoming. We will share additional information with the campus community, students and families as it becomes available.

I hope everyone has settled into the new routine of working and teaching from home, social distancing and taking care of yourself and each other.

Warm regards,

Rob Huntington
President