



Thursday, March 19, 2020

Dear Heidelberg Alumni and Friends,

On Monday afternoon, as I took a walk across campus, I was struck by the dramatic ways our lives are changing and the magnitude of our current experience with the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Knowing what we had to do to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of our entire University community, the Senior Leadership Team was about to make an unprecedented decision later that day to close the campus for the rest of the semester. With the strong support of the Board of Trustees officers, we made that call on Monday night.

This is new territory for all of us. We are in the midst of a once-in-a-lifetime convergence of a health crisis and accompanying financial uncertainty. I want to take a moment to share with you many of the key ways Heidelberg has responded with our priority to protect the health, safety, and well-being of everyone who works, studies, lives, and visits our campus, including our alumni and friends.

- All courses for the rest of the semester are being delivered online beginning on Monday, March 23. We are providing resources for faculty and students to ensure their success.
- As of now, the University remains open for business with staff reporting as usual. You can reach us as you always have.
- We are announcing a Temporary Telecommuting Policy for campus employees today.
- We have required students to move out of their campus housing by 5 p.m. Sunday, March 22.
- We have a plan in place to reimburse or credit residential students for room and board for the remainder of the Spring Semester.
- We have cancelled all campus events for the rest of the semester. This includes all April and May alumni events. *(Please note: As of now, Alumni Weekend 2020 on June 19-21, will take place. We will notify you of future event changes.)*

- Regrettably, we have decided to cancel our 2020 Commencement ceremony, scheduled for May 17. Discussions are already taking place about possible ways to award, recognize, and celebrate our seniors at a later date.
- Our Senior Leadership Team and the campus COVID-19 Planning and Response Team are meeting daily to assess our current situation and the best ways we can comply with our local health officials and state and federal government agencies.
- We continue to maintain a constant flow of information with our campus community as we implement strategies to continue our academic mission. You can read campus communications on our [website](#).

Our decision-making has been difficult. But we have proceeded with thoughtfulness, urgency, a strong sense of our priorities and the most current information and direction from Governor Mike DeWine, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Ohio Department of Health, and our local Seneca County Health District. We have asked a lot of our campus community. I am proud of my colleagues for stepping up to handle new and ever-changing responsibilities. Our shared focus is on the well-being of our students, faculty, staff and surrounding community. Their collaborative spirit and the many examples I have seen of their care for one another and for this institution is inspiring. We are all in this together, and we will get through it together.

During these challenging days, we are thinking of you, hoping and praying that you and your loved ones are healthy, safe, and have all of the provisions that you need. We will see each other again on this campus someday soon.

With appreciation and respect for Student Princes everywhere,

[Rob Huntington, Ed.D.](#)

President