



Dear Campus Community,

As each day brings new information, closures, directives and guidance, we have all learned that we must remain flexible with our plans. Our leadership team begins each discussion by seeking God's blessing for wisdom in these difficult times.

Since my communication to you last Friday, there have been many changes impacting the College's approach to the current crisis. K-12 school closures will impact many of our employees. Directives on crowd size and events have created significant practical challenges for our on-campus community. And staffing will become an increasing issue as concern for personal safety increases. These are a few of the evolving factors we must address.

Therefore, it will be necessary for us to adjust our plans for campus life going forward. A large percentage of students have already decided to return home, and, with classes cancelled tomorrow through Friday, that number will grow. We understand that some students will need to stay on campus because traveling home is not possible or for other highly unusual circumstances. However, apart from this limited number of situations, it will be necessary for all students to depart campus as soon as arrangements can be made. Mr. Hardesty in Student Life and Learning will be sending further guidance today. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

I know that many students and their families have concluded that the College is safe place to live during this national emergency. And it's certainly true that we continue to be greatly blessed with no confirmed COVID-19 cases here in Mercer County. However, the College must comply with all relevant requirements and recommendations by managing our affairs appropriately. For example, the CDC's recommendation to limit in-person events to no more than 50 persons presents a severe practical challenge for student dining and campus life. Clearly, our government leaders want families to stay home for the next couple of weeks. Also, we cannot in good conscience continue with our plans if we are not confident that our staffing levels are sufficient.

Please note that there will be no on-campus student employment after Friday, March 20 and until April 13. In certain instances, supervisors may reach out to student employees regarding opportunities to continue employment if the work is deemed to be critical to the operations of the College.

Let us hope and pray that this crisis subsides in time for us to regather on campus this academic year and enjoy life together in our special learning community. If we should be so blessed, we will undoubtedly cherish this experience more than ever.

Again, thank you for your understanding and support.

In His peace,
Paul McNulty
President