



## “Our Finest Hour” March 23, 2020

Good Monday morning to all,

Today, I focus on two things: Thing One is safety. Thing Two is academics.

Thing One. I expect in a day or two or three we will receive a “Stay in Place” order from local, state, or national authorities. If this happens, know I will continue working 24/7 for as long as it takes to help our faculty, students, and staff. Please keep in mind that the novel coronavirus pandemic, while very serious, will not last indefinitely. The immediate goal is to keep you safe. The mid-term goal is to reduce significantly the incidence of infection, and the long-term goal is to resume our lives post-COVID-19 in a manner consistent with pre-COVID-19. Projections vary; however, the scientific community is recommending a 30-day “stay in place” policy to save lives and get us back on track within a few months. These thoughts are my own, but I am moving COE forward now with the expectation that no one will be in Hill Hall or the PCOB after Wednesday of this week, preferably as soon as tomorrow morning. Students are not to be on campus for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester. They will complete course work online.

Thing Two. “Our finest hour” shall be validated when we emerge as the model for academic success in the face of global crisis. Students will complete course work, program requirements, and graduate on time—many with honors. They will pass licensure examinations at high rates. They will enter careers better prepared than they could have possibly otherwise imagined. Our composure and professional demeanor during these times will distinguish the MSU COE as a “go-to” College of Character. And we will work in common accord, ultimately expanding our mission of “Creating a Legacy of Learning” throughout the State and beyond.

To achieve this a number of measures will be put into place immediately. First, I have empowered department heads to assist faculty and students by redeploying graduate assistants to areas of greatest need in terms of assisting faculty and students with virtual instruction. Second, I have reached out to area partner agencies whom I suspect will be ordered to stay at home in the very near future. We are in the process of discussing needs, opportunities, and staffing. Third, I am temporarily suspending all searches, including staff, faculty, and administrators. (Note: The Executive Budget Committee will meet on Wednesday, so our representative will hear first-hand why I must do this.) Fourth, the COE Leadership Council will hold a meeting on Thursday of this week to discuss ways to move forward with recruitment, retention, and marketing that will be vital to our future success. Last, I am putting my own retirement plans on hold indefinitely until we emerge victorious. What more incentive could you have. 😊

Keep calm and stay home,

David