



“Our Finest Hour” April 16, 2020

Good Thursday morning to all,

The COE Leadership Council is meeting today at 9:00 AM. We will review a number of items discussed by the Administrative Council, Core Executive Team, and Academic Leadership Team, the latter two having met on Monday and again yesterday afternoon. We are still concentrating on building a robust summer session that is 100 percent online and making course delivery and contingency plans for the fall 2020 semester. In addition, as we are now all aware, the CARES Act does not provide funding to IHEs to help pay off revenue shortfalls, so recruitment is always a top priority.

The University is surveying students to gather information on the conversion to online instructional formats. Preliminary data were shared with deans late yesterday afternoon. Some students have requested they be contacted to discuss their experience. During LC this morning, I am asking that our office of Accreditation, Assessment, and Data Management review these data and send me a report by the end of this week so we can share findings in next week's Post.

Also during LC this morning, I will ask department heads to contact each faculty member to collect information pertaining to each fall course in terms of format of delivery. The University has developed a form to be completed for each class that will assist with scheduling options that will comply with federal, state, and local guidelines for "social distancing." The prevailing thought is that Southwest Missouri's approach has been successful thus far, so we may see gradual trends toward less stringent guidelines over the coming months. Personally, I have become VERY optimistic of late.

I rehearsed potential reopening of campus scenarios in Monday's communique. Suffice it here to say, all levels at the University are working around the clock to ensure we have a plan that will work for absolutely any scenario. Key to this will be a contingency that is smooth, seamless, effective, and of the highest quality. To accomplish this, I have asked each department head to reach out to any and all faculty who might need assistance with online instructional modalities.

"Rosy-fingered dawn" has given way to a bright sun emerging over Fellows Lake. Looks like a beautiful morning is approaching. Get outside today and enjoy the spring colors. Remember how much you are appreciated, how valuable your work is, how important our students are, and how promising the future is and will continue to be.

Keep calm and spring on,

David