



“Our Finest Hour” August 13th, 2020

Good Thursday Morning to All,

Am adapting to changing conditions. This morning a mix of daylight and haze greeted the critters and bugs in my garden. Dragged out the water hose and resuscitated the squash, okra, and cucumbers. Will give the tomatoes a drink later, I suppose. No glorious sunrise today, just a dimmer switch on low beginning to the day. Can no longer take out aggression on weeds circa 5 o'clock, either – it is now closer to 6:00 AM before enough light allows me to distinguish lamb's quarter from sweet potato vines. Life on the farm is pretty much on “dog days” hold right now.

Normally, at this time of year we're ready to leave the poison ivy and red wasps and join colleagues for a day of good food, good company, and riveting information at the Sportsman's Lodge. Until just a few weeks ago, we were still trying to figure out how and where to put us all together in a semi-normal fashion. Erred on the side of caution, however, and opted for a virtual meeting.

Tomorrow during our town hall-style College Meeting, I am going to focus on “Adapting to Our Environment” rather than delivering a traditional State of the College Address. I think the slide we'll be using early on reads: “The Year Thus Far: Past, Present, and Future.”

As classes begin this fall, we will continuously monitor conditions on campus, in our academic buildings, and in our classrooms. That all starts, as you are very well aware, first thing Monday morning. Much discussion took place on Monday last, and then again yesterday, that focused on supporting faculty to continue developing, redeveloping, and enhancing virtual teaching and learning modalities, including blended class experiences. I have asked our COE department heads to encourage and support this important aspect of our work with an “all hands on deck” approach, so we can get back to other important activities as soon as possible. Right now, that appears to be sometime after the spring 2021 semester. Translation: Let's all focus on our classes as a priority right now and continue to do so throughout the entire 2020 – 2021 academic year.

The following link to the University's FAQs is helpful. I trust you have reviewed it, as well as other matters on the COVID web pages.

<https://www.missouristate.edu/Coronavirus/faqs-for-faculty-and-staff.htm#faculty-faqs>

Please know how much I appreciate you and the enormous amount of time many have been spending preparing for fall 2020 classes. See you tomorrow,

David