

MEMO - March 9, 2020

To: CUC Faculty and Staff

**From: O. John Zillman, Sr. VP/Academics
Tom Hallett, COO and CFO**

**Subject: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Academic and Business Continuity Planning and
Contingency Testing of All-Electronic University Operation**

Colleagues,

As you know the University continues to plan and closely monitor information related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). As part of this planning effort, we are reviewing and identifying strategies that would allow for the academic and business operations to continue through potential quarantines or closures. This may also include moving to an entirely online learning environment for courses and possible remote work for employees.

While we certainly hope and pray that a long term suspension of face-to-face instructional and business operations does not materialize, it is best to be prepared and to work through any technical and/or communication issues in advance. We will be relying on all concerned to put into practice the well-laid operational/emergency systems already in place, to be flexible, creative, and audacious in preparation for an eventuality in which we may face a test of how well we take good care of each other while moving the educational enterprise forward.

In the interest of responsible preparedness, the University is planning a test run of the processes needed to continue courses in a fully online format should the need arise in the current situation or at some future time. In its meeting of this date, the President's Cabinet has determined that this will occur on Tuesday, March 24 through Wednesday, March 25, 2020.

Planning for the contingency test, above, will roll out in three phases:

Phase I - Faculty Preparation: All faculty – full time and adjunct – engaged in all class sections which would ordinarily meet in a face to face format on these dates will meet electronically by means of Blackboard Learn. This includes campus based classes as well as face to face graduate courses at cohort sites. Those faculty members affected by this change of teaching modality are advised to begin preparation promptly; those who have previously taught online courses should be prepared to assist colleagues who have not.

Support from IT and CougarNet already includes resources developed and available at the following link: [Academic Continuity Resources](#). All faculty, department chairs and program leaders are strongly

encouraged review these resources in preparation for online learning. This information will be updated as planning efforts continue across the University.

Phase II – Campus Staff Contingency Assignments: Campus staff members will receive additional information within the next few days. Due to the diverse functions of staff and there will need to be decisions on maintaining essential operations (much the same as a holiday break); who will be eligible to telecommute, etc. Work is proceeding on technologies to allow employees to work remotely from the campus, e.g., individuals with University laptops will be expected to use these devices utilizing the VPN network when necessary; those using University desktops will be provided with a means to connect to their computers remotely using a non-CUC computer.

Phase III – Information for Students at All Degree Levels: With the assistance of Student Life and Graduate Student Services staff, on-campus residential students, commuting undergraduate students, and graduate cohort students will receive communication on how their instructors will connect with them, whether their courses will “meet” online, at the regularly scheduled time or in an asynchronous manner. In some instances, instructors may have already set forth contingencies for continuing course in the event of a weather-related emergency and the like. We will assess the effectiveness of the approach and welcome “after action” follow-up suggestions, evidence of unintended consequences and “blind spots” similar to the “Polar Vortex” closures of a year ago.

Thank you in advance for your full cooperation in this important endeavor which has at its focus the well-being of all members of the CUC Community.

More to follow.