

March 16, 2020

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff:

Recent weeks have brought unconventional and unprecedented challenges to higher education. We could not have imagined when this semester began how our lives would be affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Since I last communicated with you, much has changed globally, locally, and on our campus. As you've heard me say many times these past few weeks, our highest priority is to protect the health and well-being of the entire Concordia University Chicago community.

To that end, today the University administration has determined that the best course of action moving forward is to transition to an e-learning environment for all students through the remainder of all spring terms. As you can imagine, this was not an easy decision. But clearly, with the state of Illinois and our own Village of River Forest declaring a state of emergency, it is in the best interests of the Concordia-Chicago community and society at large that we exercise utmost caution.

In addition, circumstances require that we postpone our spring commencement ceremony. This postponement will not affect anyone's graduation from Concordia-Chicago, as all students who are eligible to graduate in May will do so. While we deeply regret having to postpone this momentous event, the circumstances are extraordinary, and we must do our part to preserve public health. We are discussing options to support the participation of affected students in a future ceremony.

We understand that these decisions have far-reaching effects on the entire institution, set into motion significant changes in every facet of our operations, and raise many questions. I assure you that we are working diligently toward plans that will help answer them all. This morning, I asked colleagues across all areas of our administration to begin immediate work to coordinate procedures, schedules, and other necessary adjustments to support our new way forward.

No later than Wednesday, March 18, we plan to release detailed guidance regarding how these moves will affect students, faculty, staff, and all other members of our University community. This will include additional details on the following:

- Financial adjustments to student accounts
- Financial aid implications
- Completion of coursework
- Check-out/move-out procedures and dates for residential students
- Housing and food service (for residential students approved to remain on campus)
- Postponement and/or cancellation of events
- Commencement postponement logistics
- Further considerations and direction for faculty and staff

On behalf of the entire administration, I want to express my immense gratitude to all members of our faculty and staff who have continued to move forward with flexibility, teamwork, and strength. Likewise,

I commend our students for their unity and resilience as we continue to amend our plans to best serve them. Charting these waters brings uncertainty and discomfort, but with God's grace we can weather this storm together.

I encourage all of us to do our part to stay informed, remain flexible, and be willing to adjust as needed. As you await our additional communications this week, please continue to email your concerns and questions to the appropriate offices:

Faculty and Staff

Office of Human Resources

hr@CUChicago.edu

Current Undergraduate Students and Parents

Dean of Students

dos@CUChicago.edu

Current Graduate Students

grad.admission@CUChicago.edu

Current ADP Students

ADPAdvising@CUChicago.edu

Early Childhood Education Center Families

crfecec@CUChicago.edu

In challenging times like these, as in all situations, God invites us into the fullness of His mercy. At the foot of the cross of Christ we find peace, strength, and the perfect love that drives out all fear. And refreshed by that love, we can serve one another in love.

Grace to you,

Dr Dawn

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