

April 16, 2020

Sent Via Email

Contingency Planning Task Force – Updated 05.21.2020

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Dear Colleagues,

To protect the safety of students and the community during COVID-19 pandemic, the University quickly and decisively moved all Spring 2020 instruction to a remote delivery model. The University has also limited its Summer 2020 course offerings to an on-line format. While it is too early to know the pandemic's course, the full human costs, and the economic implications of the virus, the University must begin to plan how it will handle instruction in Fall 2020.

To inform the decision about Fall 2020 instruction, I am asking this task force to identify the benefits, drawbacks, and notable consequences of different instructional models. The University

must understand the implications of each model to determine the option that is most appropriate to achieving our goal of protecting the safety of our students and our community while maintaining the educational mission of the University, given what we will know about the pandemic and its consequences in the next few weeks.

I ask you to identify different models for instructional delivery in Fall 2020. One of these options would be a return to a “normal” residential-centric form of education with students living in the community and taking courses on campus. At the other end of the spectrum, the University could continue remote instruction for the entire Fall 2020 semester. I am asking you to identify additional possibilities, which may include partially re-opening residential instruction, sequencing students on campus, opening the campus to only certain types of students, limiting class sizes, and so on. You should identify the benefits, drawbacks, and consequences of each of them.

As you do so, please take into consideration the following questions:

- a. How do we ensure that all our students are able to access our educational offerings, paying particular attention to the needs of underrepresented and disadvantaged students?
- b. We have an incoming freshman class who have never been on campus. If we do not have normal in-residence instruction, how do we build a sense of connection and community with these students?
- c. It is possible that some students who have chosen to attend the Illinois will have to defer enrollment, either due to immigration restrictions or economic hardship. What activities can we provide to these students that will allow them to engage with the University during this time?
- d. Different cohorts of students may have different needs. How can we engage our different instructional modalities to meet their concerns and needs?
- e. What are the implications of these models for graduate and professional students?
- f. Are there particular longer-term consequences of a model that would make it more or less attractive?

Let me underscore that I am not asking you to rank the models or choose among them. Instead, your report will inform the decision that will be made, given the information that we will have in the future.

As you might imagine, we want to make a decision about Fall 2020 as soon as is prudent. Therefore, I request your report by Monday, May 11.

Thank you for your commitment to the University of Illinois, especially at this uncertain period of our University's history.

Sincerely,



Andreas C. Cangellaris
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost
M.E. Van Valkenburg Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering