

Sunday, March 15, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

You all just received a special K-State Today announcement about [Limited Operations Status](#) from President Myers with important information for employees, including the news that all employees, student workers included, will continue to get paid during this emergency period. I found the note a useful and encouraging assurance that K-State cares.

More evidence that K-State cares has come from you. You have provided me important feedback that is now being used to update FAQs. Thank you. You have quickly gotten to work to prepare courses, advising, and other student services. I thought a timely summary of these clarifications and additional resources could help you.

**TIMELINE FOR THE REST OF THE SEMESTER:** Since there is no official word about when face-to-face instruction will resume, I have been encouraging everyone to plan on remote teaching for the rest of the semester. As of today, we are not moving the dates for the final examination week or the end of the semester. That means we have all lost a week of instruction and should adjust our syllabi accordingly. I know this is not good, but we are definitely in emergency mode now.

**BOOKS & OTHER COURSE MATERIALS:** In efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19 by mitigating crowds, the University has decided that only students who have medicines and / or computers in their dorm rooms will be allowed into residence halls to collect them. These students will also be allowed to collect their books and other course materials. Students must call **785-532-6453** in advance to make these arrangements.

Of course, many students took their medicines and technology with them as they departed for the break, which means that not everyone will have access to their course materials. Again, this was a necessary step to mitigate the kinds of crowds we see on “move-in” day, which would defeat the purpose of the measure we are taking to limit the spread of this virus. So we still have an access issue.

**PROVIDING ACCESS:** I know it is stressful to teach and learn without the assurance that our students have the exact course materials we assigned at the beginning of the semester. And I’m sure our student life and housing and dining colleagues are working very hard in extremely difficult circumstances, including a barrage of communications from distressed students and parents.

As it turns out, faculty are also at the front lines of mitigating student and family stress and anxiety about the rest of the semester. Luckily, each of our students has 4-6 resourceful faculty members and at least one advisor who can reduce student stress by 1) communicating calmly and being flexible about when and how our students can complete assignments, and 2) assuring our students that we will make assignments accessible by whatever means necessary.

Copyright librarians from across the country came together to create a [Fair Use Guide](#) that acknowledges and supports our ability to provide our course materials on Canvas. We also have open educational resources beyond Google if needed. The [Merlot](#) collection, [Open Textbook](#)

[Library](#) and [OpenStax College](#) are just some helpful sites for those of us looking for materials to replace chapters in textbooks, texts in the humanities, and face-to-face lab instruction.

I know this is difficult. But if I know anything about my K-State colleagues, it is that we are going to be awesome at this because we care.

If you have additional questions, comments, or concerns that have not been addressed by the [COVID-19](#) site and our [FAQs](#), please reach out to me at [tgonzale@ksu.edu](mailto:tgonzale@ksu.edu). I will do my best to communicate with you as soon as possible.

In solidarity,

Tanya