Important news about Fall 2020 from President McConnell

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on behalf of
President Joyce McConnell <presofc@colostate.edu>
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To: All Students, Faculty, Staff and Associates <csu-community@lists.colostate.edu>

Happy Friday, everyone!

My Thursday message is arriving in your inboxes on Friday this week because we have some important news to share about our Fall 2020 semester, and that means that my message to all of you is also going out publicly to external audiences.

Let’s start with what I hope all of you already know: We will provide face-to-face instruction on campus this fall, beginning as scheduled on August 24. Some classes will be online-only, and we are working to facilitate remote learning for those who will need that mode due to health and other concerns. We will also reduce density in our classrooms and ask faculty to create hybrid classes as needed to incorporate online learning.

Faculty members, we are asking a lot of you on behalf of our students and our whole community. Thank you in advance for the work I know you will put into your syllabi and course materials to make them exciting and engaging across various modalities.

And to all of you: I affirm that at every step of our planning, we remain committed to addressing the needs of any student, faculty, or staff member who is vulnerable in the COVID-19 crisis or who cares for another who is vulnerable.

So what’s new?

Well, first off, pending approval from the Board of Governors, I intend to freeze tuition for 2020-2021 at the 2019-2020 rates. As I know all of you will agree, this is the right thing to do for our students at all levels and in all disciplines. The financial impacts of the COVID-19 crisis have been profound for individuals and families around the world. I believe that at this critical moment, rising tuition costs present a real barrier to many of our new and returning students. That goes against our 150-year-old access mission; freezing tuition helps us uphold that mission.

Second, we will move to remote, online classes following Fall Break. This means that the last two weeks of classes (November 30-December 11) and finals week (December 14-18) will be delivered virtually.

We’ve made this decision because the health of our community is our top priority. The public health experts on our own team and across the country are united in urging people to limit travel to contain
the spread of COVID-19. In light of this guidance, it would be irresponsible to ask our community members to return to campus after traveling for Fall Break.

Please know, however, that this doesn't mean campus will be closed for faculty, staff, or students. Residence Halls will remain open during and after Fall Break for students who need to remain or return, while other campus facilities will adjust operations as appropriate per public health guidance in place at the time.

This new, important information will be announced in SOURCE shortly and shared publicly; I wanted all of you to have it directly from me first.

There is a great deal more to share with you all about our rapidly developing public health precautions for the fall, but it is honestly too much for this format. I hope that when you have time, many of you will read the forthcoming SOURCE story, and also check out the latest on our plans from the Pandemic Preparedness Team here.

Of course, we will also continue to respond to public health guidance to address the pandemic. And I will communicate plans with all of you throughout the next few months. For the most up-to-date information about what CSU is doing currently and in terms of future preparations in response to COVID-19, I encourage you to check the current COVID-19 safety site. Also keep an eye out for two new sites coming online in early June, one focused broadly on CSU’s COVID-19 recovery and the other specifically on Fall 2020.

During this continually uncertain and challenging time, I know how important transparency and concrete information is to your peace of mind. Please know that providing those things is one of my top priorities, now and going forward.

Warmly,

Joyce