

May 6, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

The work of the Sewanee Fall Operational Group (Sewanee FOG) is underway. Working teams have been meeting regularly and developing operating plans based on four opening scenarios for the upcoming fall semester. As mentioned last week in reference to Gov. Lee's guidance for Tennessee residents to return to work ([the Tennessee Pledge](#)), our Environmental Health and Safety FOG is working on a roadmap for transitioning from remote work back to on-campus operations. They are using recommendations from the CDC, OSHA, and other employment and safety organizations. While we do not have a target date yet, the planning currently underway will help ensure a safe and intentional process when the time comes. We will continue to monitor COVID-19 cases in Tennessee and our surrounding counties and make any necessary adjustments to this policy going forward. At this point, we ask that employees maintain their current status until further notice.

You will begin to see some students on campus starting today. Students and families are returning to Sewanee to retrieve their belongings. The process is being carefully regulated and scheduled through the Student Life Office, and is coordinated according to the current travel restrictions in specific states. The first students to move out will be those who live in Tennessee. We have limited the number of students who can move out of any particular residence hall to 10 per day. They can be on campus from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and are not allowed to stay overnight in their rooms. With about 850 students who need to retrieve their belongings, and given that some states are anticipated to have travel restrictions in place for another six weeks, this process is scheduled to last through the end of June. In order to protect our community, all individuals involved with move-outs are required to practice social distancing and wear face coverings and gloves.

Our dashboard indicators remain strong. Admission of new students, in both the College and the School of Theology, is a particular standout. As of May 6, the College has received 525 deposits, which is 77 students ahead of last year. The School of Theology has had to cap new student enrollment for the fall at 32. For the first time in recent memory, the School has a waitlist of interested students. Room draw for students in the College was held last week, and the numbers are on track: 1,176 students have rooms on campus or permission to live off campus. We'll continue to track other dashboard numbers and carefully manage the enrollment process for deposited undergraduates as the summer progresses.

From My Perspective

This is a difficult time. Some days are better than others. We are worried about family and friends, both near and far away. Please be sure that you are taking care of yourselves. I am grateful for everything that every one of you is doing to support the University's mission to educate our students and to ensure the safety of our community. I also worry about potential mental health effects of our stress and anxiety over COVID-19. If you are struggling, the

following resources may be helpful. May is National Mental Health month according to [Mental Health America](#). A few tips for managing the extra stress can be found in this [infographic](#). There is additional information available at our Human Resources [COVID-19 resources page](#). Take time to relax and rest, to do something you love. Exercise and eat well. Avoid excessive time on social media, watching the news, or other activities that make you feel that you are not doing enough. It is especially hard because there may not be much that many of us can do, except to take good care of ourselves. Doing so supports our front-line health care workers by flattening the curve so they are not overwhelmed. Take heart that you *are* doing something. Taking care of yourself, mentally and physically, is always important, but it is extra important right now.

Sincerely,

Nancy Berner

Provost