A message from the office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

April/May 2020

Message from Chancellor Brown

Update on Commencement and Summer Classes

Dear Western Carolina University Community:

The past couple of weeks have seen the impact of COVID-19 expand across the state of North Carolina, continuing to disrupt the normal operations of the 2020 spring semester at Western Carolina University. Recent predictions from public health officials indicate that the peak of the virus's...
spread across our state may not arrive until late April or early May. In light of that new information and given Governor Roy Cooper’s statewide “stay home, stay safe” order, which remains in effect at least until April 30, university leadership has agreed that we cannot yet set a date for the rescheduling of commencement exercises originally set for May 8 and 9.

To students and their families, we want you to know that we are absolutely committed to hosting in-person commencement ceremonies so that we can celebrate this important milestone together. We fully understand that you are anxious to know when we will hold these on-campus events, but the fluid nature of this global health crisis means that we simply are not in a position to make a decision today with any degree of certainty. Indeed, it may be a number of weeks before we can definitely set a new date. We are looking at possible dates in early August or mid-December, depending upon the success of efforts to slow exposure to and transmission of the coronavirus disease. We will set a firm date for the rescheduled spring commencement ceremonies in the weeks ahead and will do so in consultation with public health officials, the University of North Carolina System, and state leaders.

In addition, all instruction during the summer months at WCU will be offered online, with no face-to-face courses. Students who are wondering about the status of summer internships, cooperative education assignments, and similar experiential learning activities should consult with their specific program directors for guidance, as there is no “one-size-fits-all” answer.

I once again thank you for cooperation, your patience, and your understanding. I continue to be amazed at the resilience of our Catamount community in coming together by remaining apart in these extremely trying times. And for those of you on track to graduate at the end of this semester, I am looking forward to the time when this pandemic has passed and I can acknowledge you as you walk across that stage at commencement.

Be safe and be well,

Kelli R. Brown
Chancellor
S/U Grading Policy for Spring 2020

The Faculty Senate has passed a resolution expanding the S/U grading policy for Spring 2020. This change gives most students the option to request Satisfactory (S) / Unsatisfactory (U) grades to replace standard letter grades for any or all of their Spring 2020 courses at the completion of the semester. Instruction for all courses will continue and faculty will provide letter grades as usual at the end of the semester. Students who wish to accept their letter grade for a course will still have that option. The S/U accommodation will award a grade of “S” for any letter grade from A to C, and a grade of “U” for a letter grade from C- to F.

Faculty will assign final grades in MyWCU as usual and as planned at the beginning of the semester. Courses that were to receive letter grades will receive letter grades, and courses that were to be assessed as S/U will be assessed as S/U, etc. Students will have the option to petition the Registrar to shift any or all of their courses to S/U grading by completing the S/U Grade Change Form, found on the Registrar’s webpage on April 30, 2020. The form will be available and accepted through June 30, 2020. A grade of S/U will not be factored into students’ GPA; however, the courses will count towards earned semester hours.

Undergraduate professional programs and graduate programs may not be able to provide this accommodation due to accreditation and licensure requirements.

Please note:

- Students may withdraw from Spring 2020 courses through April 30, 2020—and thereafter if necessary due to extenuating circumstances. For this term only, withdrawals will not impact completion percentages or student withdrawal limits. Students should contact Financial Aid at Finaid@wcu.edu or 828.227.7290 to discuss the potential impact that withdrawing has on their financial aid.
- ALL student transcripts, regardless of S/U grading elections, will include a note regarding the extraordinary circumstances of this time period.
- Deadlines for the completion of any Fall 2019 Incompletes (“I”) will be extended to December 14,
2020.
- Given this grading change, Chancellor's List and Dean's List designations will not be observed for the Spring 2020 semester.

Make sure your student has updated their emergency contact information - Log in to myWCU.wcu.edu - Click on Personal Services - Update Emergency Contact

Campus Recreation Goes Virtual

Students can beat the quarantine blues by staying active!

Campus Recreation and Wellness have created several programs for students to participate in whether they're at home or in their own yard.

Virtual programs, challenges, & services

Helpful Links During Online Learning
This is a stressful time for your student and transitioning to online classes can be difficult. Here are some resources your student may find useful.

**Managing Coronavirus Anxiety**

**Center for Career & Prof. Development Virtual Drop-ins**

**Math Tutoring Center (MTC)**

*Online MTC Tutoring*

*Online Brainfuse Tutoring*

**Self-Help tools from CAPS**

**Working and living Remotely - Information Technology**

**Writing & Learning Commons (WaLC)**

*Online Tutoring*

Submit your papers to tutors

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**Bookstore and Book Rental Returns**

The Bookstore is temporarily closed to the public for all in-person merchandise sales. At this time, we are fulfilling online orders, which will include free shipping. Please note that online orders, voicemails, or email responses may experience delays as operations change over the coming weeks.
Book Rental textbooks should be turned in during student’s official move-out from Residential Living (currently scheduled prior to May 8, 2020). Residential Living will release specific move-out dates at a later time. If your student does not live on campus, their textbooks should be returned to the Bookstore by May 31, 2020.

These details and dates may change, we appreciate your patience and we will do our best to meet your needs as WCU’s Bookstore.

Housing and Dining Refunds

WCU Family members, please be aware of the communication below sent to our students earlier this week. Additional information will be coming next week. We will also be sharing information about retrieving belongings from the residence halls and checking out. Thank you for your patience.

To Western Carolina University students:

We understand that many of you have questions regarding refunds for payments for on-campus housing and dining services that you are unable to access because of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. We now are beginning to receive guidelines from the University of North Carolina System on how to deal with the very complicated issues surrounding partial refunds for your housing and dining payments.

We are glad that we will be able to issue refunds to you. That said, the devil will be in the details. We anticipate that it will take us a few weeks to figure out the logistics because there is not a "one-size-fits-all" solution. Different students have different meal plans, and different residence halls have different room rates. Some students have received exemptions and have
been allowed to remain in on-campus housing, with fewer dining options.

We will figure this out, but it will require a bit more time for us to get it right. Also, please keep in mind that the amount of your refund may depend upon any outstanding balances in your accounts. We will provide additional details regarding refunds and related matters in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, we want you to know that we appreciate your patience and your understanding as we navigate these unprecedented times. Thank you for helping Western Carolina University do its collective part to slow the spread of the coronavirus. We wish you success in your continuing academic pursuits and good health for you and your loved ones.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sam Miller, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Mr. Mike Byers, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance
Mail/Packages

Students will receive an e-mail notification, via their Catamount e-mail account, for any packages received at the Student Mail Center. To ensure that their mail/packages are forwarded they need to make sure their address is correct in MyWCU. Mail and packages from United States Postal Service (USPS) will be forwarded, but all other packages delivered through UPS, FedEx (Ground, Express) and DHL will be returned to the sender.

If your student has already moved out of their residence hall but has not returned their mailbox key, they can mail it to:

Student Mailroom Supervisor
Attn: James Thomas
245 Memorial Dr
Cullowhee, NC 28723

Make sure they include their 920#, full name, and mailbox number. Please contact the mailroom at 828-227-3241 or via email at Resmailsup@wcu.edu for additional questions.
In order to minimize the risk of spreading a potentially infectious illness, all visits to Health or Counseling and Psychological Services will be by scheduled appointment only.

We are not able to accommodate walk-in appointments at this time.

Health Services
828.227.7640

Counseling and Psychological Services
828.227.7469

MANAGING STRESS & ANXIETY ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS

We encourage you to use the following 7 tips to manage stress or anxiety that can arise in the midst of uncertainty or fear about your or a loved one’s safety.

1. Acknowledge reactions. Allow yourself time to reflect on what you are feeling and how you may be reacting to any fears and uncertainties of the future.

2. Maintain your day-to-day normal activities and social outlets. Resist withdrawing and isolating yourself from the support and caring that others can provide.

3. Seek accurate information from “The Center for Disease Control & Prevention” and limit exposure to social media and news reports that provide no new information.

4. Pay attention to positive news instead of only focusing on negative and fear-producing reports.

5. Follow the protection and prevention tips given by medical professionals given by national medical authorities and your own medical doctor.

6. Practice calming rituals: Stay grounded in the present moment, which can help you maintain an internal sense of stability and balance when outside events feel threatening.

7. Seek supports & use campus resources. Reach out to friends and family and learn about campus resources available. If you or someone you know has high distress that does not seem to be lessening, talk about it with others or come to the counseling center. Your campus community is here to help!
STOP
THE SPREAD OF GERMS.

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19

Western Carolina University
Important Dates

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<th>Last day of classes</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 2 - 8</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
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Volunteer/Service Opportunities

Student Activities Calendar

Campus Rec & Wellness

Division of Student Affairs
Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, NC 28723

You are receiving this email because you are a member of the extended Western Carolina University community.