

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

IMPORTANT UPDATE DECEMBER 11, 2020 – PLEASE READ THOROUGHLY!

GRADUATION

Due to the exponential increase in new cases, hospitalizations, and deaths from COVID-19, I had to cancel the December virtual graduation. It was also canceled because a significant number of students who did not want a virtual graduation.

I believe that we have been doing everything possible to make sure that the graduates have a ceremony. We are the only ones who can provide that ceremony and so I take that responsibility very seriously and will go to any length required to have a ceremony as long as we can protect everyone's health and safety.

I met with your class leadership (for 2.5 hours) last week, I have conducted two different surveys of your graduating class and held a virtual town hall where all students were invited to contribute input regarding graduation preference. The class was almost evenly divided between having a graduation ceremony in person (23 students) or holding one virtually (20 students). We appreciate those who took the time to attend. Again, since only CCMS can provide that ceremony I rescheduled the in person ceremony for April 17th at 1:00PM at the Summit Hotel in Cincinnati.

I schedule the ceremony for April because I wanted to give the graduating class a date that they could count on rather than just postponing the graduation to a date to be determined in the future.

Right now, COVID-19 infections are spreading at an exponential rate. January and February are expected to be the worst months yet. Therefore, I didn't want to schedule in January or February. In March the college will undergo a regional accreditation visit. This accreditation adds a tremendous amount of value to your diplomas. Regional accreditation means your earned credits and transcripts are accepted anywhere in the United States and beyond.

Also, the vaccinations are beginning now. By April the vaccinations should be beginning to have a positive impact on society. Even though total herd immunity is not expected to be achieved until late summer - early fall, I feel confident in setting an April graduation date.

Your graduation will take place at 1:00 PM. There will be another graduation that same day for the current S3 class in the morning. I wanted to make sure that each class had their own ceremony and that two classes were not combined.

You will receive everything you are entitled to diplomas, sashes, cords, binder, transcripts etc. later this month. Some of the cords are on backorder but everything else is progressing on track.

We have extended an opportunity for students who want to repeat any class taken via distance learning during the past year to attend that class again in person next semester. Some students have accepted and will be taking gross anatomy again next semester.

The COVID-19 Pandemic had been hard on everyone; students, faculty, staff, and supporters all had to work hard to achieve our two priorities. Our two priorities during this pandemic: 1) keep everyone safe as possible from COVID-19 and 2) keep classes going so students would earn their degrees on time so they could start their careers without inordinate delay. I believe that we did all we could to keep everyone safe while continuing to provide quality instruction via distance learning. Evidence of that point can be seen in how extremely well your class did on the NBE. In fact, you've had the best first-time pass rates for a class in recent history.

I ask for your indulgence a little longer. As we get closer to your new graduation date we will begin to gather info on who will attend and amount of guests. If necessary, we may have to have a hybrid graduation where some of those who cannot attend in person are given the opportunity to attend via zoom.

Because the date is several months from now, I recommend asking your new employers for that date off as early as possible. If you plan now, you will have better success at getting the time off from your apprenticeships to graduate. If anyone needs help speaking to their employer, I am more than glad to try and assist.

FINAL THOUGHTS

- ✓ Make the right choices over the holidays! The data proves that young adults hold the key to containing COVID-19. You can reduce the risk of COVID-19 for EVERYONE by making the choice to keep out of crowds and crowded spaces.
- ✓ Continue to practice social distancing, avoid public spaces as much as possible and interactions with the public to the best of your ability.
- ✓ Younger people are at significantly higher risk to contract and spread the disease due to the desire to go out into public spaces and socialize with friends. I know it is difficult, but you need to resist parties and crowded indoor spaces.
- ✓ Wash your hands regularly, keep your hands away from your face, and continue to wear a mask when in public spaces. Your mature choices go a long way towards ending this pandemic.

This pandemic is not over – but you must do your individual part to help everyone remain healthy until a COVID-19 vaccine is produced, distributed, and we have achieved overwhelming herd immunity. Students, faculty, and staff did not want or create this worldwide pandemic. Everyone is suffering through this pandemic; we are all stressed but need to continue to support each other so we can get through this together. Decide to make a difference for good and govern yourself accordingly! We can get through this together.

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President & CEO