

Subject: Important message regarding continuation of spring semester
Date: Monday, March 16, 2020 at 12:33:01 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Office of the President
To: SRU Stakeholder

March 16, 2020

Dear Students:

To say the past week has been challenging for all of us is probably a huge understatement. When we announced last week that the University would extend spring break due to the COVID-19 outbreak, I held out some hope that we would be able to resume face-to-face instruction later this semester. I no longer believe that this is possible.

Shifting an entire curriculum to distance methods and maintaining business operations at a time when many University employees cannot come to work because of school closings and health concerns is a massive undertaking. Therefore, it is impossible to simultaneously plan for the repopulating of our campus in the midst of this work, especially at a time when epidemiological models suggest that social distancing will be necessary for many weeks to come. **Therefore, I am announcing that all face-to-face classes for the remainder of the spring semester will be delivered through distance education models beginning March 30.** All existing online courses will begin instruction today, March 16.

I know this is not what many of you had hoped for, nor is it what you had planned on when you came to SRU. But rest assured that your professors are diligently working to bring your content online before virtual classes resume March 30. In response to the numerous questions we've received about pro rata room and board fees, please know that University staff are working diligently on this front and that more information will be coming soon.

If you were a residential student this semester, staff from the Office of Residence Life will be in touch soon to schedule an orderly clean out of your personal belongings. We ask that you please do not show up to retrieve your belongings without an appointment as we are trying to avoid large groups coming together at one time. Showing up unscheduled and unannounced will undermine this effort. If you are one of the handful of students who must currently continue to reside on campus and have registered with the Office of Residence Life, you are welcome to continue to stay. Staff will be in touch with any logistical issues that may arise.

If you believe that you will have trouble accessing your distance coursework due to technological constraints, please email connectivity@sru.edu or contact the Help Desk at 724.738.4357. We are committed to doing all that we can to help you access your coursework.

Please note that all on-campus events, including athletic contests and individual school, college and group recognition ceremonies and other events are canceled for the remainder of the semester. Some groups are currently planning virtual event with details to come. Information regarding our spring commencement ceremonies will be also forthcoming, but probably not for a few weeks.

This is uncharted territory for everyone and I ask for your continued patience as we work through many issues. As with any complex shift, there are bound to be bumps in the road. Should you happen

upon one, please let us know, but please be understanding. Everyone is working incredibly hard to make things as efficient and seamless as possible.

As you go about your daily routine, please remember that above all, your health is your biggest priority right now. Take care of yourselves. Take care of your family and loved ones. Stay home, stay safe and stay healthy. Practice the habits of social distancing and hygiene shown to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

I recognize the difficulties this outbreak has created for everyone, but one of our University's key strengths is our sense of community, so it is important that we all support each other during these unusual times. When we look back on how we handled this crisis, we will be judged by our ability to come together to support each other, maintain our composure and to solve problems. I have full faith in our community's ability to step up to this challenge.

Together, we are Rock Nation and together we will remain solid.

Sincerely,

William J. Behre, Ph.D.
President