

**Subject:** Campus Community Update for Jan. 22

**Date:** Friday, January 22, 2021 at 5:57:24 PM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** Office of the President

**To:** SRU Stakeholder

Jan. 22, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

I hope that you had a first good week of classes.

I'm going to spend this week's update addressing some questions that emerged from last week's update.

First, some questions emerged based on the following sentence: "I do, however, encourage faculty to consider reducing out-of-class assignments during the week of March 8 (when spring break would have occurred) to allow students to catch up if they find themselves lagging behind." Let me be clear. This is not a mandate. Nor is it a suggestion that faculty should cancel classes. There is no subtext that is meant to be implied. The week of March 8 would have been spring break. Student Affairs staff is planning on emphasizing self-care in its messaging and activities that week. If your course allows for it, I am asking you to consider a lighter workload for students that week. That's all I was suggesting.

Second, people are wondering if there are more details as to what the fall semester will look like. In short, those plans are still evolving. Last Friday, I joined the weekly meeting between the provost and department chairs. I was impressed with the work being done there and the expressed commitment to be as face-to-face as possible in the fall. When the schedules are completed in February, we should have a sense of our best-case scenario, where the best case is defined as being as in-person as possible. We will vary from that schedule based on evolving conditions. If, for example, our testing capability proves more limited than anticipated, or vaccinations are less widespread than expected, then we might have to scale back our plans. I promise to communicate any changes in as clear and timely a fashion as possible.

As always, thank you all for everything that you do for our students and our community.

Best,

Bill