

University President's Report

Board of Regents – June 22, 2020



President's Report

June 22, 2020 University President's Report

- / Equity and Inclusion Initiatives
- / Continued COVID-19 Planning & Response



- The President's Report this morning will address two main topics. First, it will provide the Board information on new, continuing and emerging initiatives related to fostering and promoting equity and inclusion at Southeast.
- Second, information will be provided regarding Southeast ongoing efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Equity & Inclusion Initiatives

Scholarship for Advocacy, Equity and Justice

The renewable scholarship will be awarded to an incoming student (freshman or transfer student) enrolled full-time at Southeast. The recipient will need to demonstrate academic achievement with a minimum 2.75 cumulative high school or transfer grade point average, and a letter of recommendation will be required. Priority will be given to students who are underrepresented in the Southeast student population or who have overcome obstacles such as socioeconomic or other disadvantages or are first generation in their family to attend college.



- Recent events in our nation, have caused us and others to pause and contemplate the value and meaning we place on social justice and equity.
- In response to a challenge from Dr. Scott Hagen, President of North Central University in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in early June, a George Floyd Memorial Scholarship was established with private funds at Southeast.
- Acting on pleas for societal reform, and after much thought and discussion on our campus and with members of the broader Southeast community, effective immediately, the scholarship will now be named the Scholarship for Advocacy, Equity and Justice.
- Developments that have occurred both prior to and since Mr. Floyd's death prompted us to broaden the award to recognize

those Southeast students who actively practice fairness and show commitment to promote advocacy, equity and justice for all.

- This Scholarship for Advocacy, Equity, and Justice will be awarded beginning this fall with the objective of providing institutional recognition to a Southeast student who values and promotes peaceful advocacy and inclusion.

Equity & Inclusion Initiatives

***The Equity and Inclusion Committee** will provide leadership to support the following initiatives during the 2020-2021 academic year:*

- / Develop and implement a multi-year training program for University leaders
- / Strengthen mentoring programs
- / Establish workshops dedicated to diversity and cultural inclusion
- / Enhance engagement with community partners



- As an institution, we recognize that establishing a scholarship alone is not enough.
- We know that there is still critical work to do to address systemic issues and disparities in access and opportunity in our communities.
- As we prepare for the coming academic year, I have asked Ms. Sonia Rucker, Assistant to the President for Equity and Diversity, to provide leadership on a number of initiatives.
- Those initiatives include, among others:
 - Developing and implementing a multi-year training program for University Leaders at every level;
 - Strengthening our student mentoring program;
 - Establishing a series of workshops dedicated to diversity and cultural inclusion; and

- Enhancing engagement with community partners
- In addition, I have asked Ms. Rucker and the University's Equity and Inclusion Committee to facilitate opportunities, and coordinate efforts, for Southeast's administrative units and academic colleges to continue conversations, and initiate new ones if necessary, that identify specific actions and reaffirm the University's commitment to being an increasingly diverse and inclusive community.
- We know that we must lead by example; and we remain committed to providing a learning environment that promotes inclusion, equity, civility, and a better way forward for both students and employees.

COVID Planning & Response

Continued COVID-19 Planning & Response

- / Return from Telework
- / Summer Classes and Events
- / Fall 2020



- I will now transition to describe our COVID-19 planning and response actions.
- As you may recall, my May Board Report focused on the impacts realized and the actions taken as a result of COVID-19 at Southeast.
- This report will provide a brief update on some of the University's work since the May 15th Board meeting, providing comments and updates addressing the following:
 - The University's return from telework
 - Summer classes and events
 - Fall 2020 planning
- This report will not go into detail on the financial impact COVID-19 has had and continues to have on our budget. Rather, Ms. Kathy Mangels, Vice President of Finance and

Administration, and I will offer some comments on financial impacts later in the meeting when we discuss in more detail the FY21 budget proposal and review the FY20 budget to actual report.

COVID Planning & Response

Emergency Operations Center

Incident Commander
(University President)

Emergency Response Team

Campus
Guidelines

Campus
Signage

Classroom
Safety

Events &
Mass
Gatherings

Communications

Residence
Hall
Safety



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- As I mentioned in May, the Emergency Response Team (ERT), which operates under the umbrella of the University's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), continues to meet, evaluate, and develop the University's plans for responding to COVID-19.
- The Emergency Response Team consists of nearly 25 individuals from across the university. More specifically, it includes all members of Executive Staff, the University's Emergency Manager, the Director of Public Safety, The Director of Residence Life, the Director of Facilities Management, the Director of University Marketing, the Director of Human Resources, and others. It also includes representatives from Academic Affairs. As indicated above, the ERT has been meeting periodically since March to address

matters related to COVID-19. I have participated in most of the EOC meetings.

- As part of these meetings, we share industry best practices, analyze actions taken by other institutions of higher education in Missouri and throughout the country, gather feedback from various University constituencies, and review data and guidance from local, state and federal authorities to inform our work. In addition, since February University representatives have been participating in frequent calls and meetings that include City officials, representatives from the Cape Girardeau County Public Health Center, leaders from both local hospitals, state emergency management officials, regional public information officers and others, wherein they discuss data, trends, projections and actions being taken by various agencies and organizations through southeast Missouri.
- The ERT has organized its work around the following six (6) Subcommittees:
 - Campus Guidelines for Return from Telework (Chair: Beth Glaus, Director of Department of Public Safety)
 - Campus Signage (Chair: Tonya Wells, Director of University Marketing)
 - Classroom Safety Procedures (Chair: Doug Koch, Vice Provost)
 - Communications (Chair: Ann Hayes, Director of University Communications)
 - Events and Mass Gatherings Safety Procedures (Chair: Brady Barke, Director of Athletics)
 - Residence Hall Safety Procedures (Chair: Bruce Skinner, Associate Vice President of Student Life)
- Each of these subcommittees meets on a regular basis and makes presentations to the larger group for consideration and

decision on final recommendations and plans.

- Once decisions are made and the information communicated to internal stakeholders, updates are posted to the University's COVID-19 informational webpage, and we share them with the BOR, legislators, the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, and others.

COVID Planning & Response

Return from Telework

May 18, 2020

Action	Status
Develop and approve individualized office plans for returning from telework	91 plans submitted – 84 approved – 7 pending review
Employee Safety Guidelines	Released May 29, 2020



- I will now address specifically the three areas that this report focuses on.
- The University began its transition to telework on March 24.
- The initial period for telework was to be March 24 through April 19; however, public health guidance and orders at the local, state and national level resulted in the telework period being extended through May 18.
- The week of May 11 the University community was advised that we would initiate a phased return from telework beginning May 18 through June 30.
- To facilitate a safe and orderly return, each office was asked to develop and submit to the Emergency Response Team an individualized plan to return from telework. The plan required every office or unit to provide information assessing

considerations for public access, changes to operations and/or services, timelines for employee return including considerations for student employees, and concerns or requests related to physical workspaces within their area.

- As of Friday, June 19, 91 Return from Telework Plans have been submitted, with 84 approved and 7 pending review by the Emergency Response Team or waiting for final review by Facilities Management and the University Emergency Manager.
- Currently, ALL student service departments have some staff on-site and can respond to phone and other inquiries consistent with regular operations; and by June 29, most service departments will re-open for face-to-face service to the public.
- To assist employees in their return to campus, Employee Safety Guidelines were distributed on May 29, 2020.

COVID Planning & Response

Summer Classes and Events

Summer Courses Beginning Prior to June 29

- / Online or Remote Delivery

Summer Courses Beginning June 30 to August 7

- / In-Person and Online Delivery

Events and Camps

- / Activities cancelled through June 30
- / Activities set to resume July 1



- Next, I will focus on Summer Classes and Events.
- As the University continues to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision was made April 9th that all summer courses beginning prior to June 29 would be delivered online or remotely.
- Summer courses beginning June 30 through August 7 will be taught both in-person and online, with appropriate precautions, as they were originally scheduled.
- Currently, summer FTE enrollment is 2437, which compares to an FTE enrollment of 2662 at this date last year. This represents a decline of 225 FTE or 8.5%. While recognizing that FTE enrollment has declined, it may be important to understand some of the context behind this – for example, all but 10 of our sections of courses this summer are being

offered online. The possibility exists that some students may have some online/remote learning fatigue/burnout from the spring semester which may have contributed to less students enrolling this summer. Additionally, stricter enrollment minimums for undergraduate and graduate courses (12 and 8, respectively) were established this summer in order to increase the efficiency and financial sustainability of our offerings.

- All University events on and off campus, including the use of University facilities by external individuals and groups, are cancelled; and the event cancellation continues through June 30.
- Beginning July 1, the University will resume hosting events and camps – some of which will be in-person and some will continue in a virtual format. For example, the University is working with a number of external groups and organizations to welcome them to campus over the next couple of weeks for their camps and summer programming and we will be having the Redhawks Kids Camp in person; however, our Horizons Youth Enrichment Camps will be held online.
- Conversations are on-going with the Department of Athletics and others to determine what considerations are needed for larger events and mass gatherings, and large-facility use as we approach the fall.

COVID Planning & Response

Fall 2020 plan is to resume Face-to-Face Classes on campus



- Allow me not to transition to our Fall 2020 plan.
- As communicated to students and the University community on May 27, our current plan is to hold face-to-face classes in the fall.
- There is a possibility that some face-to-face classes may be held online or in other alternative modes of delivery.
- We have communicated to students that they can expect to see more space in between them and others in face-to-face classes.
- We have also advised students that some sections may be relocated to large, non-academic spaces on campus; and we are working to add or upgrade technology in many academic spaces to support virtual meetings, as needed.
- To facilitate a safe return to both face-to-face classes and

- overall operations, the University has acquired, and continues to acquire, face masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectant spray and sneeze guards for use by our faculty, staff and students.
- Additionally, the University's Facilities Management staff continues their regular cleaning schedule, and staff are retrofitting spaces across campus to prepare for a safe return.
 - Beginning today and continuing throughout the year, new signage is being placed throughout the university to guide and remind everyone about social distancing and other safe practices.
 - As of today, our plan is to begin the semester on Monday, Aug. 24, as originally scheduled. However, we have made some adjustments to the semester calendar to limit potential exposure to the corona virus during various breaks and holiday-related travel and to minimize the potential for transmission thereafter. To that end, the plan calls for classes to be held on Labor Day, Monday, September 7. Under the plan, Fall break (October 8-9) will be eliminated, and classes will be held; and the last day of fall 2020 on-campus face-to-face classes will be Tuesday, November 24, just prior to the Thanksgiving break. Following the Thanksgiving Break, Fall 2020 classes will continue from November 30 to December 4 via remote/online instruction, with online final exams being conducted December 7-11. This means that the Fall 2020 semester will end Friday, December 11, one week earlier than scheduled.
 - According to the plan, the Labor Day holiday will be a class day, but will remain a holiday for University staff. University offices will remain closed on Monday, September 7, as scheduled, except for some essential services that will be in operation such as Counseling & Disability Services whose staff will be available by phone for emergencies or crisis-related issues; the

University Center will be open for dining services during its normal schedule; Information Technology (IT) computer labs and the IT Help Desk will remain open; the Shuttle service will remain in operation; and the Student Recreation Center will open from 5:30 a.m.-11 p.m.

- To support our health and safety priorities, we anticipate that this revised schedule may necessitate a change in date for our Fall 2020 Commencement. Those conversations are continuing and no decision has yet been made.
- The University's goal during these unprecedented times has been, and will remain, to keep faculty, staff, and students safe, and to contribute to minimize the potential for the spread of the virus in our community. The main elements of the plan described here have been shared with the director of the CG Public Health Center, Jane Wernsman, and Dr. John Russell. Their reaction has been one of support and appreciation towards the university.



- All of the information related to our COVID-19 response remains online at our COVID informational page and we will continue to keep the Board of Regents and the entire community updated on this, and the many other important initiatives we will be addressing during the coming academic year.
- As this report demonstrates, Southeast continues to operate effectively in these very challenging times.
- I would like to end by expressing my personal appreciation to every member of the faculty and staff of Southeast Missouri State University. I also want to express my appreciation to the students and parents of current and incoming students for their feedback and understanding as we navigate this unpredictable environment.

- Southeast has faced its share of challenges in the past, and has emerged a vibrant and stronger institution. And, while we do not expect that the current challenges will go away quickly, we believe that we will be successful dealing with them, and emerge a more flexible and adaptable institution.
- Thank you.