

Sunday, August 2, 2020 – Message from Provost Taber: Fall 2020 Preparation Updates and Student Communications

Dear Colleagues,

Please see below a letter from Provost Taber with updated guidance as well as information about communication with students.

Thanks,

Mindy

Mindy Stafford Markham, PhD, CFLE
Faculty Senate President
Associate Professor
Associate Department Head for Academic Affairs
Department of Applied Human Sciences
Kansas State University
316 Justin Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
mmarkham@ksu.edu

Dear Colleagues,

As we are getting ready to welcome our students back to campus in the next two weeks, I am writing to share updates on our plans and some additional information about student communications.

1. **COVID-19 website.** The [COVID-19 website](#) and K-State Today continue to be the best source for the most up-to-date information regarding the overall status of Fall 2020 preparation and planning. Every Friday, a summary of university updates and changes related to COVID-19 and the coming semester is included in K-State Today. Guidance and FAQ content that has been added recently includes [COVID-19 exposure protocols](#), [isolation and quarantine](#), [temperature checks](#), [testing](#), [contact tracing](#), [cleaning and disinfecting](#), [hand-washing](#), [meetings](#), [food service](#), [building access](#), and [options for high-risk employees who cannot work remotely](#). The [employee](#) and [supervisors](#) information has been updated as well to reflect some of the new/revised guidance.

2. **Employee Return to Campus Updates.** In a [letter today](#), Vice President Stephens and I shared some updates and resources specifically related to employees. We are committed to flexible approaches to working with all employees, recognizing the challenges being presented to all of us due to the changing circumstances and uncertainty caused by the pandemic. In addition to the guidance outlining options for high risk employees or those who are in households with members at high-risk for COVID-19 complications, we shared information about the new training, “Come Back ‘Cats-Reopening K-State”, that will be available on August 3.
3. **University Operations Preparations for Fall.** COO Cindy Bontrager’s [letter to campus](#) includes many details regarding university operations as we return for the semester. The letter covers a wealth of information regarding plans for custodial services, building and classroom infrastructure and systems, occupancy guidelines, Facilities storeroom and mail services, building access, environmental health and safety, and parking services.
4. **Faculty Communications with Students.** Several faculty members have asked for suggestions about what information should be communicated to students in advance of the start of classes. I have attached a template with suggestions for the types of information you might want to communicate. If you have any questions, please contact Brian Niehoff at niehoff@ksu.edu.
5. **Student Communications – Student Quarantine Emails.** As we near the beginning of the semester, a robust set of student communications will be sent from Student Life and our Enrollment Management units. A communication is being sent today to explain to students who may be arriving in Kansas from a COVID-19 high-risk area of the need to self-quarantine for 14-days. Students are being asked to contact the Office of Student Life (or student life contacts on the Polytechnic or Olathe campuses), who will then notify faculty of their situation. I have attached the travel quarantine email that is going to all students and ask that it be shared with all faculty as they may be contacted by Student Life or by students directly. Please be prepared to work with these students to accommodate their self-quarantine situation.

On Monday, students will receive additional communications about the final academic schedule, class teaching modalities, and the opportunities to adjust their schedules. We can expect advisors to be very busy next week.

Communications are particularly challenging in the midst of so much change and we hope this summary email is helpful in consolidating the recent developments. Your efforts in reinforcing these messages across your units is very helpful in providing our faculty, staff, and students information to help provide some stability amidst so much uncertainty. I appreciate all the work everyone is doing to prepare our university for the Fall semester.

Stay safe and be well.

Chuck

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Charles Taber

Provost and Executive Vice President

Faculty & GTAs

This template is to assist you in communicating with your students in preparation for the Fall 2020 semester:

General Welcome:

Dear Students,

Welcome back to K-State! The fall semester ahead is nothing like any we have experienced in the past. I am writing to both provide you with information that you will need, and to assure you that we remain committed to supporting you in your learning.

Specific points to include regarding the instructor's class:

- My class will be
 - Fully in-person
 - Blended (part in-person, part online)
 - Fully online
- (If in-person or blended) The in-person component of the class will operate as follows:
 - The full class will meet (how often, in person/online)
 - (If divided) The class will be divided into (x) groups with each group attending in person on different days (provide explanation)
 - For the first week of classes, our class will meet... (if meeting in person, describe who will be expected to attend the in-person component and where)
- For those students who do not attend in person, you may participate remotely by... (provide guidance on accessing recordings or other remote learning participation)
- In order to allow time for cleaning after class, we will be stopping class five minutes early each day we meet in person.

General points that could be included:

- The start date of the semester has been moved up one week and classes will begin on Aug. 17.
- Students who are unable to attend class due to the need to isolate or quarantine because of COVID-19 related symptoms, exposure, illness, or travel-related self-quarantine mandates (see <https://www.k-state.edu/covid-19/guidance/health/covid-19-exposure-protocol.html>) should contact the Office of Student Life, who will inform the student's instructors. Students may also be encouraged to contact the faculty member directly as well.

- Students on the Manhattan campus can either complete the form on the [Office of Student Life website](#) or contact them at 785-532-6432 or stulife@ksu.edu.
 - Students on the Polytechnic campus should contact Kyle Chamberlin at 785-826-2662 or kchamberlin5@k-state.edu.
 - Students on the Olathe campus should contact Kimberly Ramacciotti at 913-307-7313 or kramacciotti@k-state.edu
- Face masks covering mouths and noses are mandatory for all students, faculty, staff and visitors on K-State campuses in all hallways, public spaces, classrooms, common areas of campus buildings. Face coverings must also be worn in offices or other work spaces or outdoor settings when 6-foot social distancing cannot be maintained.
 - Students needing accommodations may contact the Student Access Center (accesscenter@k-state.edu).
 - Social distancing requirements on campus will require that classroom capacities will be limited. Students will likely have a mix of face-to-face and online components in most of their classes, with some being completely online.
 - For any in-person meetings in classrooms, faculty and students are asked to help with the cleaning of rooms at the end of class. The class leaving the room will be expected to spray workspaces that were used during the class. The class entering the room will be asked to wipe down the spaces that have been sprayed. For more information, see the guidance on cleaning (<https://www.k-state.edu/covid-19/guidance/health/cleaning-disinfecting.html>)
 - If students do not feel comfortable meeting in person, they may request that they can access the class through online means.
 - A full list of the changes and guidelines adopted by K-State due to COVID-19 may be found at <https://www.k-state.edu/covid-19/>.
 - There is a lot of information to process and it can be easy to feel overwhelmed. There are a number of resources and individuals who are ready to help you. Your [mental health and wellness](#) is important.
 - As you prepare to come to campus, we encourage you take the [Every Wildcat a Wellcat pledge](#) to stop the spread of COVID-19. This pledge is a way to show your commitment to taking small steps to protect yourself and the bigger K-State community and our host communities.

Student Quarantine email

Dear <student name>,

We look forward to welcoming you to campus very soon! We understand that you and your family may have many questions about the start to the school year and our preparations in response to COVID-19. We are working very hard to prepare our campuses for the return of students and to have health and wellness protocols in place.

You may be aware that the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) mandates a 14-day self-quarantine for anyone who has traveled to Kansas from a [high-risk area](#). Per the guidelines, self-quarantine should occur upon arrival in Kansas. The list of high-risk areas is dynamic based on current conditions, and does include international, specific states in the U.S. and cruise travel. The current high-risk states are Florida and Arizona between June 17 and July 27.

If you have recently traveled or traveled to a high-risk area (international, specified US state, or cruise travel), there are a few things that we want to share to create a seamless start to your fall semester.

1. Action needed: contact the university to confirm that you are traveling from a high-risk area.

Manhattan campus – Complete the form on the [Office of Student Life website](#) or contact them at 785-532-6432 or stulife@k-state.edu .

Polytechnic campus - Kyle Chamberlin at 785-826-2662 or kchamberlin5@ksu.edu

Olathe campus – Kimberly Ramacciotti at 913-307-7313 or kramacciotti@k-state.edu

2. Action needed: if you have a housing contract, please contact housing to discuss options.

Manhattan campus – 785-532-6453 or housing@k-state.edu

Polytechnic campus - Kyle Chamberlin at 785-826-2662 or kchamberlin5@ksu.edu

3. The university will inform your faculty of your situation. Your faculty are prepared to work with you, should your quarantine overlap with the start of in-person or hybrid/blended classes.
4. You must not attend in-person university programs or activities, including attending classes or - working until you have completed the quarantine period. You should follow the travel-related exposure [self-quarantine guidance](#) provided by KDHE.

We understand that you may have many questions and we encourage you to contact us to help connect you with information and resources.

We are very glad to have you at K-State and look forward to working with you!

Go Cats!

Karen Goos
Vice Provost for Enrollment Management