

Date: August 16, 2020

From: Chuck Taber, Provost and Executive Vice President

To: University Leadership, Faculty, and Staff

RE: Fall 2020 Preparation Updates

Dear Colleagues,

The start of the Fall 2020 semester is here! I want to thank everyone who joined our Town Hall meeting this past week. With 3000 participants, I am sure it was our largest Town Hall ever and we appreciate the questions, comments, and suggestions to help us all be ready to welcome students to the new academic year. I am writing now to share some recent updates to support your preparation for this semester, which we know will be like no other.

1. **COVID-19 website updates.** The COVID-19 website and K-State Today continue to be the best overall source for the most up-to-date information regarding the Fall 2020 preparation and planning. New [guidance and FAQs for university events](#) was added this past week. This guidance covers planned events on campus, indoors and outdoors, such as conferences and seminars, student organization events, staff and faculty events, public lectures, cultural and performing arts events and others. The [Isolation and Quarantine guidance](#) has also been adjusted to include the recent updates on travel-related quarantine from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). In addition to specific guidance regarding US states, or international or cruise travel, individuals who have attended or traveled to mass gathering events (out-of-state) of 500 people or greater on or after August 11 are required to self-quarantine for 14 days. A message has been sent to students reminding them of the KDHE mandate and sharing the updated list of high risk travel areas. This list is dynamic and updated every two weeks based on current conditions.

You can read the K-State Today summary of last week's articles related to COVID-19 [here](#).

2. **From the Provost's Desk archive.** Earlier this week, I sent a [message](#) to you with information related to some of your most recent frequently asked questions related to preparing for classes. I hope you have a chance to review it. Periodically I have been sending messages that augment information that may appear in K-State Today or are targeted specifically to academic faculty and staff. The COVID-19-related messages I have been sending out since March through the university listserv (and which have also been shared by Faculty Senate Presidents Tanya González and Mindy Markham) are available in the [From the Provost's Desk archive](#).
3. **Notification if a student is positive for COVID-19.** A recurring question we hear from faculty is how will they know if a student in their class tested positive for COVID-19. When students

are diagnosed with COVID-19, the Office of Student Life (OSL) will send official communication to their instructors regarding their absence. If a faculty member or GTA is made aware by a student of a positive test, please refer them to OSL if the student has not already reported it. OSL will also inform instructors of students who will quarantine as a result of being a close contact with a known COVID-19 exposure case. You can find additional information on the [COVID-19 Related Absences website](#). K-State Polytechnic and K-State Olathe also have a student life point of contact who will inform instructors of students who test COVID-19 positive.

4. **Classes and close contacts.** Another common question is whether a class must quarantine as close contacts if a student tests positive for COVID-19. If face masks are worn and everyone maintains 6 feet physical distance, students and faculty are not considered close contacts and would not need to quarantine.

5. **New Student Convocation.** Just a reminder that the virtual [2020 New Student Convocation](#) is at 5:30 pm today. I hope you can join us to help welcome our new students.

Please continue to share these messages across your units. Everyone has worked incredibly hard over the summer to bring us to the start of the new academic year this week. Thank you for all your efforts, commitment, patience, innovation, and resilience.

Stay safe and be well.

Chuck

--

Charles Taber
Provost and Executive Vice President
Professor of Political Science
Kansas State University