Good evening.

It has been an extraordinary day. There are certainly more extraordinary days ahead, and while the circumstances are not what any of us would hope for, I’m both grateful for and immensely confident in this community’s ability to rally on behalf of our students and each other.

This morning, in lieu of First Wednesday, I conducted a livestream video briefing. The briefing was intended as an opportunity for me to share our plans for continued operations and course instruction, but it was also important to share the principles that will guide our decision making and approach to working with students and each other during this time.

The health and safety of the College community are our primary concerns. If we err when making decisions, it will be on the side of caution.

We are determined to display the greatest possible compassion and flexibility during this challenging time. That applies to both student and employee circumstances. We will not penalize people for circumstances beyond their control.

We are committed to transparent, timely, and accurate communication. There is, and will continue to be, much to figure out. But we’ll do our absolute best to keep you and our students informed.

That last point means that you can expect emails from a number of people. While the “from” in most cases will be Marketing and Communications, the authors will be Drs. Butler, Simons, Babb, and VicePresident Hatcher. Please keep your eyes on your inbox.

The web resource for coronavirus impact is accessible from the College’s homepage and now includes a list of frequently asked questions that we will regularly add to and refine to reflect the latest information. There are FAQs for both students and employees. The site will always reflect the latest information about broad developments, both at the College and State levels. Some of the latest developments as of tonight include:

- All classes (including in-person, blended, and online) are canceled from March 16-20. This will give faculty and Academic Affairs leadership time to move instruction to alternate delivery methods. Classes will resume in alternate forms on March 23.

- Events at the College scheduled for this weekend are canceled and others are under review.

- College leadership is hard at work identifying needs and resources to facilitate telecommuting for employees and to maximize broadband internet access for both students and employees.
As you may be aware, today Governor DeWine announced a fourth case of Coronavirus in Ohio (Stark County). More cases are expected, as are further guidelines and directives intended to keep Ohioans safe. As the circumstances continue to evolve, our approach as a community will do the same. Thank you for your continued patience and your commitment to our students and to each other.

Dave

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