

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

615 City Park Avenue

New Orleans, LA 70119

PHONE: (504) 762-3000 FAX: (504) 361-6697

www.dcc.edu

April 30, 2020

Dear faculty and staff,

I hope this message finds you, your family, and loved ones safe. We are nearing the end of the Spring 2020 semester, which will have a place in history. On Monday, April 27, 2020 Governor John Bel Edwards extended the stay at home order until May 15 to continue flattening the curve and slowing the spread of COVID-19. As a result of the Governor's Executive Order, we are preparing for our return, which will take place in a strategic, multi-phased approach. Our plan is based on CDC guidelines relating to face coverings, daily temperature and wellness checks, social distancing, and sanitizing of buildings. Additionally, we will follow the Governor's return to work guidelines once they are available. I want you to know that we are preparing, and your safety as well as that of our students is a top priority.

I can share with you that currently we are in Phase 1 (Preparation and Planning) of our plan. In this phase, we are training housekeeping staff on safety and proper cleaning and disinfecting protocols, and we are developing cleaning and disinfecting logs and inventorying supplies. On Monday, we will move to Phase 2 (Cleaning and Disinfecting of all College Locations) and this phase lasts approximately two weeks. Phase 3 of the plan, which is currently being developed and we can implement when the stay at home order is lifted, will involve a structured return with mandatory safety protocols. Within the next two weeks, your supervisor will discuss your work plan and work with you on a return to work strategy. Also, when it is complete, the College's Return to Work Plan will be posted on our Delgado Cares webpage.

Summer classes for the most part are all alternative delivery. However, there are some face-to-face courses scheduled for late summer. We will have to ensure social distancing, and we must be prepared to flip to remote instruction if the need arises. I have asked Interim Vice Chancellor Gaspard to prepare a plan for Fall Semester in case COVID-19 extends into the fall. There is still so much that is unknown, so we must have a strategy.

I am extremely proud of the work of faculty and staff. In this crisis, you have done and continue to do extraordinary work. I am extremely proud of faculty and the academic and technical divisions who flipped to alternative delivery without missing a step. You have been there for our students in ways that are unimaginable--I know because I have spoken to a number of them and they have told me. I am extremely proud of Human Resources, who have remained connected assisting employees; Office of Information Technology, who have kept our IT systems functioning and free of security breaches; Campus Police, who have continued to patrol and secure the facilities; housekeeping staff, who will return next week to begin the cleaning and disinfecting phase in preparation for our return; Public

Relations, who have ensured that Delgado has maintained a presence in the media and that our story is told and at the forefront; Business and Administrative Affairs who has not missed a beat in ensuring we continue important operations of the college; Student Affairs, who were the first in Louisiana to go virtual with online tours and provided virtual access and support to our students. I am extremely proud of our students. They persevered and stayed the course to continue their academic journey. I am immensely proud of the work that we have done to get us to this point. However, over the coming weeks the college will need all of you more than ever, as we plan for the future with so much that is still unknown.

Faculty, please encourage students to enroll in summer classes. I know they are dealing with life circumstances and trying to complete what is currently in front of them. Now is not the time for them to stop. Now is the time for them to continue their academic journey. Faculty, students listen to you, and this was demonstrated when I made the call to action to you in the fall for the spring semester to encourage students enrolled in your classes to enroll. Summer enrollment today is 3,049 and this day last summer it was 3,136. As you can see, we are slightly lower but I am very optimistic.

Also, you may receive questions from students related to Cares Act Funding. Guidelines from the Department of Education were released last week and the college is following those guidelines. A communication to students will be sent directly to them in the coming days. It is important to note that the college has received approval, but we have not received the funds. As you can certainly understand, there are many elements to this. The college must compile the list of students who are eligible based on the federal guidelines, and once that list is compiled specific processing guidelines must be developed (fund codes, detail codes, processes for bypassing a student's current balance). Once all of this is done, the processes must be tested. All LCTCS colleges are moving together on this. The reason I am sharing is because there is a lot of back-end work that must be done, and if students should ask you questions, you can respond.

What we are experiencing is unprecedented, and it is probably the most difficult situation that our community, our state, and our nation will ever have to face. I recall during my first convocation as chancellor: I mentioned Hurricane Katrina and the college's resilience in the aftermath. COVID-19 is not Hurricane Katrina, but what I do know is that our strength is overcoming challenges--that is what we do. I do not doubt that we will rebound from this stronger and more innovative. This crisis has shattered what we know as normal, but it will not shatter our ability to persevere, and our resilience. Please stay safe, and I am looking forward to the day of bustling campuses and sites filled with faculty, staff, and students. I appreciate you and what you have done for this college and our students more than you will ever know.

Sincerely,

Larissa Littleton-Steib, Ph.D.
Chancellor