

Date: February 24, 2021

From: Chuck Taber, Provost and Executive Vice President

RE: Preparing for Academic Instruction for Fall 2021

Dear Colleagues,

President Myers [announced](#) the plan to move to phaseout of the university's [reopening plan](#) beginning August 1. We have long awaited the time when conditions would allow for moving to fewer restrictions and a return to more in-person teaching, learning, advising, and research.

While it is impossible to predict the trajectory of COVID-19 over the next six months, we do have promising signs of lower rates of infection, a decrease in hospitalizations, and improving rates of vaccine dissemination. We have demonstrated that we can pivot quickly from in-person to a mix of in-person, remote and hybrid instruction. Of course, we will continue to closely monitor conditions and could make the decision to pivot back based on data. We will not abandon our commitment to the health and safety of our university community and our host communities.

To facilitate the shift from our current mix of modalities to a largely in-person semester, we will make adjustments to the course schedule over the next few weeks. I realize that these changes will require time and attention and will be a heavy lift for some of our units. I am grateful for the effort that will be invested.

We will pause the release of the course schedule until March 5. We are delaying to facilitate necessary course information and system changes, and to avoid having to change student schedules.

Faculty, departments and colleges are asked to re-engage in determining how they intend to offer the robust and engaging teaching and learning experiences we are known to offer. We will lift all COVID capacities on classrooms and other learning spaces. The Registrar's Office will lead a process by which they will help facilitate changes to the course schedule. **We need all course changes by March 12.**

Making course changes after enrollment begins will be allowed only in limited circumstances and will need to be approved by the Dean and me. Making such changes negatively impacts student enrollment.

We have designed an implementation schedule to allow faculty time to review their plans, communicate changes, and for system updates to reflect the appropriate modalities. Although students will have access to the course schedule on March 5, there will be adjustments through March 12. Advisors should communicate with students during advising appointments the need to

review course plans prior to enrollment. To accommodate these adjustments, **Enrollment will start on March 29, one week later than usual.**

The Office of the Registrar will be following up with the College/Academic Scheduling points of contact later today with additional information.

I remain cautiously optimistic that conditions will continue to improve. It does, however, remain prudent to expect that conditions may shift. There are still many unknowns about the new variants of the virus and vaccine distribution must continue to accelerate. I ask that all faculty and supervisors have a plan to move to hybrid status should conditions warrant. I also ask that our faculty and supervisors consider how to remain flexible and address concerns of our students and employees, especially those who may have documented medical concerns.

Understandably, we know that many of you have questions about what this news means for remote work status and you may have personal health concerns that impact your ability to return to campus. I urge you to remain patient while we continue to put plans into place for the full Reopening Phaseout plan.

Please contact Karen Goos at goos@ksu.edu and Kelley Brundage at kbrundage@ksu.edu for questions about course schedules. Other questions may be directed to Brian Niehoff at niehoff@ksu.edu.

Thank you.
Chuck

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