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## OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR



April 17, 2020

Dear Washington University Faculty and Staff:

The events of the past month have been transformative for all of us at Washington University, in the St. Louis region, and across the country. We are in a time of great uncertainty, and while there are likely some tough days ahead, it is reassuring to know that whatever may come, we will face it together, as a community. In the interest of transparency and keeping you informed, I am writing today with a series of important updates, with additional information to follow soon.

### **Financial Implications**

There is no question that this crisis is taking an extraordinary financial toll on the university. We are losing many millions of dollars in revenue and our costs continue to mount. We won't know for some time exactly the extent of the damage, but already, we know it will be significant.

As one step toward ensuring sound stewardship of our financial resources, leadership from each school and each central fiscal unit are quickly working to re-submit budgets for the 2020-21 fiscal year that were submitted earlier this spring. We have begun work on Federal Emergency Management Agency cost recovery and are also looking at how the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act might be leveraged as a means of seeking more direct economic assistance.

On March 30, I [announced a hiring freeze](#) as a reasonable and proactive step to protect our financial security. I anticipate that we also will need to make adjustments to staffing and salaries, and I expect to be able to share more information with you about that very soon. These are incredibly difficult decisions, and I understand that there will be a lot of anxiety among our employees, particularly until we are able to share details of what this will

mean. I promise we will communicate as soon as we can, and with as much transparency as possible.

### **Suspension of Summer Programming**

As we [shared with our students this week](#), we have made the difficult decision to suspend all in-person summer programming until at least August 1, and to significantly scale back summer study abroad and international academic experiences. These changes are significant, but allow us to continue to prioritize the health and safety of the community and focus on preparation for our return to more normalized operations in the fall.

### **Alternate Operations/Lifting of Stay at Home Orders**

I have tasked the Danforth Core Team and the Medical Campus Core Team with assessing the conditions that will allow us to start bringing employees back to our campuses, after the Stay at Home orders in our region are lifted. We do not know yet exactly when this will happen – the [St. Louis City](#) and [St. Louis County](#) orders have been extended indefinitely and will likely be revisited in early May – but when it does, we want to be ready. As much as we all are eager to start making this transition, we will make these decisions thoughtfully and carefully, and with the health and safety of our community as our top priority. Our current alternate operations protocols will remain in place until all state, county and city orders are lifted. Once the orders are lifted, continuation of operations will be made in close coordination with our Division of Infectious Diseases, and other guidance from the CDC and our local health department.

### **Laboratory Research and Graduate Students**

With the goal of phasing back in laboratory-based research once the Stay at Home orders are lifted, I have tasked Jennifer Lodge, Vice Chancellor for Research, with leading a working group for the university to develop policies and practices for a safe and strategic return to this mission-critical work. This will include an orderly reopening of labs and resumption of graduate student research once the orders are lifted. Research is core to our mission, and I am optimistic we will have begun the phasing, including graduate research, back to robust research operations prior to August 1.

### **Fall Contingency Planning Committee**

I have appointed a Fall Contingency Planning Committee (FCPC), which comprises key leaders from the seven schools and administrative units. This team will be focused on guiding higher level, longer-term decisions on matters such as academic calendars, curriculum, residential life, and

resource management. The FCPC is beginning its work next week, and we will share updates about the fall semester as soon as possible. The first order of business for the FCPC will be the identification of a “go/no-go” date by which we will determine whether in-class teaching will resume at the end of August or a later date. We will communicate that date to the community as soon as we have it.

I urge you to continue to carefully monitor our [COVID-19 website](#), including the [FAQs](#), which are regularly updated. I know that we are all receiving an unprecedented amount of email in our new virtual world, but please be diligent in reading messages from leadership and your colleagues so we can continue to stay connected during this time.

There are still many unknowns, and I wish we had answers to all of the questions that I know many of you are asking. I’m grateful to all of you for your resilience and resolve as we work through the challenging process of determining where we can and should go from here. While there is much we do not know, there is one thing I can say with absolute certainty, and that is that we will make the best decisions possible, based on the information that’s available to us and the [values we have established to guide our thinking](#). We’re going to have to make some hard choices and make sacrifices. But we will do so knowing it is what is absolutely necessary to ensure the university’s long-term ability to fulfill its mission in support of education, research and patient care.

We will share additional information as soon as possible. Thank you once again for your continued service and support.

Sincerely,

Andrew D. Martin  
Chancellor

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CHANCELLOR

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