



March 20, 2020

Dear Golden Lion Family,

As you are aware, we are facing a pandemic as a result of the spread of Covid-19. As we monitor reports at the local, state, and national level, we continue to remain in close contact with state government and University of Arkansas System leaders. While we have not had any positive cases of Covid-19 on the UAPB campus, there is a growing number of cases in the state and nationally.

In the current environment, the health and safety of the students, faculty and staff remain paramount. To that end, we have taken several important steps that are consistent with the social distancing requests of government leaders and health officials:

#### **Classes Online for Remainder of Spring 2020**

First, we have moved all classes online for the duration of the Spring 2020 semester. Our goal is to allow all of our students to complete their courses for the semester, make progress on completing their degree plans, and remain on track for graduation. For details on the extension of online classes, please read the Memorandum on Online/Distance Delivery of Classes from Dr. Robert Carr, Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

#### **All Residence Halls to Close; Move Out Scheduled**

Second, we are ending student residential life and allowing students to return and collect their personal belongings by appointment from March 23 through April 3. We will package and store any personal items that cannot be collected by April 3. For details on move-out plans, please read the Memorandum on UAPB Residence Hall Procedures for Covid-19 from Elbert Bennett, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

#### **Spring 2020 Commencement Postponed**

Third, the UA System Board of Trustees voted to cancel or postpone all commencement exercises through June 1, 2020. We are making plans for all graduating seniors to receive degrees. Diplomas will be mailed out after the degree certification process end of the semester. Additional information will be forthcoming on plans for graduates to participate in a ceremony later in the year.

#### **Athletic, Co-Curricular, and Extracurricular Events and Activities Affected**

Fourth, all athletic, co-curricular, and extracurricular events and activities have been postponed, cancelled, or moved online. The NCAA and SWAC suspended all spring sports. Student-Athletes should contact their coaches regarding summer and fall activities. All other university-sponsored events have been cancelled, postponed, or moved online. Please watch the website for updates.

#### **University Operations Shifts to Online**

**Fifth, UAPB is not closing.** We are shifting university operations and activities – other than essential operations – to online or other remote means to the maximum extent possible. That means many of our



offices will not be physically accessible, but we will endeavor to remain connected with each other and with the public by telephone, online and through social media.

Employees will receive their work assignment from their Vice-Chancellor. Some on-campus employees will be retained on-site, including some employees in senior-level administration, public safety, facilities maintenance, and other workers that will need to be present from time to time. In these units and everywhere, we must adhere to social distancing and other preventive measures at all times. Our university staff will continue to work tirelessly to keep surfaces clean and disinfected.

Only the Vice Chancellor of Research and/or an academic dean may authorize the continuation of essential research if the principles of social distancing are strictly adhered to (in cases where research may involve more than one individual). For questions or additional information, please contact Dr. Mansour Mortazavi, Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation, and Economic Development.

**Effective March 23, 2020, many of our employees will begin working remotely or from-home unless directed otherwise by their supervisor until further notice.**

Employees are designated – by supervisors – into the following three categories:

- ❖ **Working remotely/work-from-home:** The vast majority of university employees are directed to conduct work from home or other remote means off campus unless otherwise directed by their supervisor.
  - Remote work assignments during this declared emergency situation may include regular job duties, online training, alternative duty assignments or similar arrangements. Further, if potentially beneficial, alternate schedules or flexible hours should be considered.
  - Employees working from home may only use equipment necessary for this purpose and that has been specifically approved by supervisors.
- ❖ **On-Site Mandatory:** A limited number of employees who are considered on-site mandatory employees will be asked to work on campus in either a full-time or part-time capacity in order to continue essential services including IT operation, public safety, facilities maintenance, care of animals, etc.
  - These are employees whose presence on-site is necessary to carrying out authorized University operations.
- ❖ **Available:** A limited number of employees who are unable to work remotely and do not have job responsibilities pertaining to essential operations (on-site mandatory roles) will be classified as “available,” which means they will be “on call” to assist as needed.
  - Supervisors must consult with and obtain approval by Human Resources prior to designating employees in this category.
  - The University plans to continue paying federally funded work-study students for the hours they are scheduled to work for the remainder of the semester.
  - The University has determined that employees classified as “available” can receive up to 30 calendar days with pay. Thereafter, “available” employees would need to use accrued leave time.



Please consult with your supervisor if you have any questions, concerns or would just like to confirm your designation and immediate next steps.

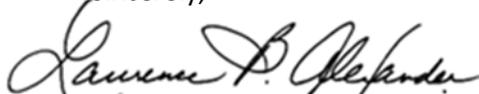
We believe these steps will help reduce the spread of the virus while continuing to serve the educational needs of our students. While we will continue to keep you updated across a range of platforms, I want to remind you that the best source for the latest news and information is our Coronavirus Update site.

This is a global crisis, and UAPB is not the only institution that must work through these issues. Colleges and universities across the nation have had to shift gears on a moment's notice. While these decisions are not easy for any of us, we want you to know that UAPB cares about its students, faculty and staff and holds your well-being as a top priority.

We will continue to monitor this situation, and we promise to continue to communicate with the UAPB community. Please stay safe. We can get through this challenging period together.

Students, have a safe enjoyable Spring Break!

Sincerely,

  
Laurence Alexander, J.D. Ph. D.