Aug. 21, 2020

Dear Campus Community,

I had the privilege today to host a non-traditional welcome back to campus via Zoom. It was a time to share my deep appreciation of you, reflect on where we have been over the spring and summer, recognize several award recipients and look ahead to the next semester and beyond.

If you missed the event, I encourage you to carve out a little time when you’re able to watch. You can view it here.

**Appreciation and Effort**

While I said it then, it is worth repeating here: I am genuinely inspired by and thankful for each of you. We could not be serving students safely without the nonstop effort that has taken place. We have now welcomed back our students.

I know many of you are anxious about the semester. I am anxious about the semester. But what I know, and what gives me confidence in the midst, is the dedication, spirit and attention to detail I see everyday. We have crafted a plan, folded in your ideas, and are following through. It encompasses health and safety, academic and instructional continuity, housing and community living, student support, equity and more.

**Alterations and Changes**

Rooms were evaluated this summer for density. Furniture was moved and adjusted. A Social Distancing and Face Covering policy, gathering and event restrictions were put into place. Screening, testing and tracing protocols have also been detailed, along with personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, and high-quality MERV-13 filters.

On campus and off, our students are being told quite clearly of the importance of masking and social distancing. This will be a priority all semester. We have advanced this with the Cardinal Pledge, which you see all across campus and in communications. Community standards will be enforced with the student conduct policy and its application off-campus. I appreciate the outreach work of University Police, others in Enrollment and Student Success.

**Dedication and Focus**

What we do is as important as ever. You can see that driving down Rugar Street. Or, like I have been doing, walking down Rugar Street, meeting our newest class of Cardinals and their families. Students are moving in about 300 per day over six days in two shifts, breaking up the traffic and lowering density.

While the semester is in a time like no other, so is our community, our state and our nation. It is a time of heightened activism by students and heightened expectations.

We will continue to build partnerships with students and foster institutional accountability through continued engagements in the form of community listening sessions. This will build on the Speak series from the spring. We are also advancing an All S.E.T campaign to achieve inclusive excellence. The
acronym S.E.T stands for student-centered, equity-minded, and trauma-informed. A comprehensive education campaign related to All S.E.T to educate administrators, faculty and staff has already begun.

**Leaning In and Serving**

As we lean into the semester, I want to remind you that daily health screenings, face coverings and social distancing -- for your safety, the benefit of others, and as an example to our students and wider community -- are part of the daily routine.

How we serve and educate our students begins with us. They are beginning and continuing their lives as Cardinals. It is a community we know well and one I have come to treasure. Thank-you again for all you do.

Dr. Alexander Enyedi

President