March 18, 2020

An important message from Dean Thompson:

Dear Graduate Students (Nursing, CNHS/UMass Boston),

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the UMass Boston Campus will be moving all in-person classes to online. In addition, and effective immediately, ALL graduate clinical experiences will be suspended effective Monday, March 23rd until further notice. We will continually monitor to determine when these activities can resume. Most importantly, you need to remain available on the days and times of your courses. This is essential as your online clinical and didactic learning can include both synchronous (all together virtually) and asynchronous (readings, PowerPoints, and assignments that you complete on your own by specified dates) learning. All faculty and staff will be working remotely.

The Nursing Department will be communicating and providing services via email, phone, or Zoom (video conferencing application) in order to reduce the density of people on campus and encourage social distancing. If there is anything you need from us, please know that we are still here for you and we are happy to assist you with academic matters. We want to assure you that we have and continue to work diligently in developing a plan for the continuity of learning that supports the successful completion of the Spring 2020 semester. You will be receiving more specific information from your course coordinators and clinical instructors. We ask for your patience and understanding as we move all classroom learning to online/virtual modalities.

The Graduate Program Track Coordinators will be in touch with students through the course or graduate nursing website announcement tool and on the discussion boards. These will be the primary means of communication. You may direct all other questions to:

1. Nursing Department Chair (Ann Gakumo): Ann.Gakumo@umb.edu
2. AGNP Track Coordinator (Jenny Hackel): Jennifer.Hackel@umb.edu
3. FNP Track Coordinator (Leah Gordon): Leah.Gordon@umb.edu
4. PMC Track Coordinator (Beth Rowlands): Beth.Rowlands@umb.edu
5. PMC Program Assistant (Liz Malone): Postmasternp@umb.edu
6. Masters Nursing Program Assistant (Carlos Salas): MastersNursing@umb.edu

Our leadership team is currently exploring alternative activities and/or reordering of their curriculum by prioritizing patient care, student safety, and education in these extraordinary times. Virtual assignments are currently being identified and organized for each clinical course to enable each student to meet the clinical objectives and move forward in the graduate curriculum and to successfully meet graduation requirements. Before this decision was made, schools and colleges of nursing were increasingly experiencing difficulties with placing and maintaining clinical activities due to increasing challenges in the health care system as a result of COVID-19. We will work closely with the relevant accrediting agencies to minimize impact on students’ academic progress.

We recognize that this directive will be inconvenient and challenging for faculty, staff, and students. Careful thought and consultation were involved in making this difficult decision. This decision was made to ensure the safety of our students and faculty and to promote a more consistent clinical educational platform for all of our students. The situation is changing daily and policies may need to be adjusted as we continually respond to emerging needs.
Here is the link for BlackBoard Learn Help for Students:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student

You should sign-up for a FREE Zoom account (You may be using Zoom for Clinical learning and conferences). Here is the link:

https://www.zoom.us/signup

The Zoom app is available for free on the App Store for iPhone and iPad, and the Google Play Store for Android.

Information Technology help: ITServiceDesk@umb.edu (617-287-5220)

Assistance with InPlace: inplacehelp@umb.edu

We acknowledge that this is a stressful time for all of us as we try to make the required accommodations both for school and our everyday lives. Please know that we will work with you to the best of our ability to move forward through a successful semester.

Like you, the faculty, staff and administration in the CNHS are closely monitoring guidelines from the CDC, WHO and other national and local health organizations. Please remain updated so that you protect your health and wellbeing and that of your family, friends, neighbors and community.

To get updated information about university policies about COVID-19 please click here: https://www.umb.edu/coronavirus/updates