Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

On the eve of our 100% mobilization for remote learning, I want to congratulate everyone for reaching this milestone! It is amazing that you have been able to convert our face-to-face world into an electronic learning community. I am so proud of your achievements and so grateful for all the work that went into this remarkable transformation.

I hope this will be a good experience for everyone, even though it was not what anyone planned for when the semester began. If you have trouble accessing your classes, please reach out to the IT help line at 617.287.5220. We want to be sure you are supported as you complete the semester.

The faculty have been amazing. For many, online education is very familiar. But for just as many, this is a first-time experience under duress. Everyone is in your debt for adapting your teaching so quickly. Staff members by the dozens have stepped up to help in every way since we began this involuntary odyssey. From manning the help lines over the weekends, to assisting students who had to move out of the residence halls in a hurry, to securing our buildings, they have handled all of the burdens required to get us to this Monday morning with grace.

Over the weekend, Vice Chancellor for Advancement Adam Wise launched an effort to raise funds to buy Chromebooks for students who need computers. As I write, on Sunday evening, we are close to achieving the goal of providing 200 machines for students in need, thanks to the generosity of friends of UMass Boston – in only four days! That speaks volumes about the community that is UMass Boston.

This pandemic has challenged us in all directions. Figuring out how we are going to care for family members, our jobs, our neighbors, and the education that we are all dedicated to has been no small achievement and there are miles to go before we sleep. It is hard to stave off anxiety as the toll of the coronavirus mounts. May you and your loved ones be well.

Thank you again for all that you are doing for UMass Boston and for the communities around us. And good luck on our collective electronic voyage!

Best wishes,

Interim Chancellor
Katherine Newman