Dear Staff and Faculty Colleagues,

As I’m sure you know from watching the news, the COVID-19 situation is becoming progressively more serious and, accordingly, our preparations on campus and off are moving toward a “full time remote” mode. I am writing to you now to outline in greater detail what that means for us moving forward. It is important that everyone follow these instructions to maximize our ability to work remotely, maintaining the key functions of the university for the rest of the semester.

First and foremost, please remember that we are NOT CLOSING. We are working remotely and the success of our efforts will be assessed by many interested parties: students who have sacrificed to pay tuition, their parents who have done the same, legislators who care very deeply about the quality of the education we provide, competitors in the higher education marketplace, and members of the media who are always interested in our work. How we conduct ourselves and the quality of what we provide will make a lasting impression.

Second, our ability to remain in contact with one another is, almost unavoidably, going to be less robust than usual. That is why it is critical for everyone on the staff and all members of the faculty to pay attention to the protocols established by your managers/chairs/deans. I will be relying on their reports to summarize our progress in maintaining our academic and administrative work to the Office of the President.

For All Members of the Campus Community

1. Our ongoing efforts to reduce the number of employees on campus will be fully implemented by the close of business on Friday. Beginning at 5 p.m. on Friday, only staff who are needed to maintain the most critical of functions will be required to work on-site.
   - Managers will notify those who are required on-site in this unprecedented circumstance.
   - All others—including some who have been working on campus this week—are to remain at home.
   - Managers will continue to assign work from home where that is a possibility. Please consult the campus staff FAQ for additional information.

2. Starting at the close of business on Friday, buildings on campus will be accessible only to those employees designated "required onsite." Wherever possible utilities will be ramped down or shut off to conserve costs.

3. Anyone who needs to pick up items from campus should do so before the close of business on Friday. The bus service from the JFK stop is running on a very limited basis and most likely will stop altogether after Friday.
   - Effective at the close of business Friday, all parking lots and garages will be CLOSED.
   - We will end the shuttle at 6 p.m. on Friday.
c.) Parking for employees authorized to be on campus will be at the West Garage only. All other parking locations will be unavailable.
4. There will be no food service on campus except for box meals provided to the remaining residents in the residence halls.
5. University Health Services plans to be fully remote starting Friday afternoon. General medicine and counseling center services are available via telemedicine and can be accessed by calling UHS at 617.287.5660.
6. The Healey Library will close its doors, but the vast majority of its services will be available online.
7. As we move to the online model, faculty and staff requests for technology assistance should be referred to ITServiceDesk@umb.edu; please note that we will not be delivering assistance in the on-campus computer labs.
a.) Instructional needs will be prioritized in responding to requests. Upon contacting the service desk, a service ticket will be issued, and faculty and staff issues will be responded to on a priority basis just as quickly as available resources permit.
b.) We appreciate the patience of the entire community as we work to ensure a smooth transition to the remote instructional modality.
8. Computer labs on campus will be closed. We will make a concerted effort to accommodate any faculty member who does not have a home computer or laptop available to use remotely during this emergency. Faculty should be in touch with their deans in this regard.
a.) Once faculty instructional needs are accommodated, a limited number of loaner laptops may be available for staff working from home who do not have remote computer access. Additional information about this option will be forthcoming shortly.
b.) All other services that students and staff typically access on-campus should now be available on a remote basis. For students these include advising, Ross Center services, The One Stop, and many more.

For the Staff

1. Vice chancellors and deans will be collecting weekly progress reports from managers regarding the work that employees are performing from home. This information will be closely managed and shared with me on an ongoing basis to ensure that assignments are communicated to staff and completed in an orderly and clear fashion.
2. I will be providing a weekly summary to the system office so that an accurate portrait of our continued functioning – as an academic and administrative organization – is provided.
3. Managers should immediately report any challenges that arise regarding work from home to their dean or vice chancellor. Provost McDermott and I will be in touch with the VCs and deans frequently, but issues that demand immediate attention should be communicated right away.
4. Staff working from home, and those whose jobs do not permit work from home, should consult their managers and the staff FAQ for additional guidance.
5. To ensure the success of the remote work protocol we are implementing to address this unique circumstance, it is important that all staff continue to remain in close communication with their managers and be attentive to complying with managers’ directives to ensure the success of our transition to remote instruction and our emergency remote work model.
6. VC for Marketing and Engagement Megan Delage Sullivan and her staff will be working with managers to update websites with instructions specific to a “remote-only” environment. We want to be sure visitors to those pages will find the information they need.

For the Faculty
1. Provost McDermott has written to you already, and will continue to communicate with you, about the upcoming to shift to online as of Monday. Classes must be maintained as per usual so that students can count on moving toward their degrees and receiving appropriate academic credit for their work. **I cannot stress enough how important this is.** Often at great sacrifice, students have paid their tuition and must be able to count on receiving the instruction they were promised.

2. We have offered tutorial assistance through IT for faculty who are new to the online modality. Please use it whenever needed. In many departments, faculty with experience in online teaching are providing informal advice to their colleagues who may be new to it. We thank them for stepping up.

3. Many lab-based researchers will face constraints in accessing facilities necessary to their work. Fortunately, federal agencies are cooperating in relaxing the rules for grant effort reporting. I think you can reasonably expect no cost extensions. But everyone will be held responsible by those agencies for completing the work they have promised to do when life returns to normal, so obviously keeping it moving as best you can is important.

Students are receiving separate communications, but just so you know, a very large number of our students take online courses during the academic year and summer sessions and hence have experience with this modality. Those that don’t will be able to access help lines to support them.

We are mindful that some students rely on campus facilities to access the Internet. We have ordered as many loaner machines as we can locate, and students have been informed of their availability; Internet providers like Comcast are opening up free services to those in need. I am sure this will not be perfect either, but a lot of work is going into addressing the needs of our most vulnerable students.

PLEASE, PLEASE check the [university website](https://www.umb.edu) once a day, even if just briefly, for any updates. We will have to depend on the internet to stay in contact for the foreseeable future.

I close by thanking the many people who have gone well beyond the call of duty in preparing the university for this moment. Much of this work has involved adapting our emergency procedures to these unprecedented circumstances. The whole institution can be proud of its ability to respond.

Your patience for any shortcomings is much appreciated.

Interim Chancellor
Katherine Newman