April 7, 2020

Lone Star College Employees:

Thank you again for your resilience, patience and commitment over the past month. While the local and nationwide situation seems to be improving, we still have considerable work to be done. I can only imagine what it’s like balancing your life, finances, children and outside responsibilities during this period.

Early next week I’ll be sharing my thoughts on what to expect for 2020-2021 and beyond. You can expect a “new normal” for LSC that will include how we educate students and the impact on our work.

**Virus Update**

As of 12 pm today, we have ten students and two employees who have tested positive. The only good news about all this is that we’ve been out of the office since Spring Break with only a few exceptions. We do not want anyone except very essential personnel to access the facilities or grounds to minimize contact.

We do have a number of Police and Public Safety Officers who are quarantined because of their exposure during this period. As usual, our officers have stepped up when we needed them the most.

**Budgets**

We have been spending many hours reviewing this year’s budget and proposals for the 2020-21 fiscal year. At the moment we’re down about 40% in summer registrations but it’s still early. Fall registration begins on April 15 and that will be the real measure of where we are.

We are anticipating a total loss of revenue and expenses of $15-20 million for this year and next. But, as I have noted in previous notes, we were in excellent shape before the pandemic and between our budget management, actions we’ve taken, the anticipated stimulus funds and, if needed, our reserves, we are in good shape.

We are taking steps to address our finances immediately with a budget and hiring freeze, a budget sweep and cancellation of all travel, conferences and meetings. We are allowing for declines in summer and fall enrollments for budget purposes, but we’re adding online sections in the hope that enrollments increase.

We’ve prepared different scenarios for the 2020-21 budget that will vary due to enrollment uncertainty but still provide a high level of service.
Faculty-Full Time and Adjuncts
I cannot say enough positives about the response of ALL our faculty during this period. As of this morning, we have over 66,000 students taking online classes!!!

Full Time and Adjunct faculty have given students the opportunity to remain in class and provided hope for the future.

A quick overview of the work done is below:
- 1,624 sections of online courses grew to 6,825 in the online migration—an increase of 5,201 online course sections
- 5,682 sections of face to face courses shrunk to a 481 sections after online migration.
- 2,397 instructors (unduplicated) have transitioned from in F2F or hybrid to 100% online instruction
- 2,675 of 3,097 (87%) of SP 20 instructors are certified to teach online
- 481 sections that are in hybrid or F2F because of required clinicals or workforce skills labs
- **6,825 total sections are now online**

I am cognizant of the tremendous amount of work done to make this happen. As you know, we will remain largely online this summer except for critical workforce programs, and will be substantially online this fall. We are working on several different initiatives to assist faculty and student in their efforts. These include insuring all faculty and staff have the training, support and equipment they need; providing students with access to technology and training (we’re exploring options to provide entering students with computers); and working with faculty and staff on schedules that meet both your and our students’ needs.

A major issue for LSC is the access and equity challenge. We do not want leave anyone behind and we know that technology gaps exist in lower income areas. We can’t solve every problem in our various communities, but with the shift to more online classes we have the opportunity to make a huge difference in our communities.

For adjuncts, we are expanding online sections anticipating more students will enroll if the classes and technology are available. The campuses will have authority to offer as many classes as needed online and we will allow adjuncts to teach over the normal course loads with the appropriate benefits.

The Presidents and Vice Chancellors have provided names for a select group of faculty, staff and administrators to develop a future plan for online.

Chancellor Updates
My plans are to update you every other day unless something major is occurring. I am sensitive to the frequency but want you to stay informed!

Reminders
April 10                Spring Holiday. No work should be scheduled that day!!
April 13        Eight week classes start
               Resumption of classes paused previously

April 15        Fall Registration starts

Regards,

Steve Head
Chancellor