March 23, 2020

IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING COVID-19

A message from WSU Tech President, Dr. Sheree Utash

WSU Tech administration continues to closely monitor the spread of COVID-19 (also known as coronavirus disease 2019). The health and safety of our students, faculty and staff is our highest priority.

We have a strong team that is assessing conditions regionally and across the nation and is making recommendations guided by the following principles:

1. Keep WSU Tech open so it can provide services to the fullest extent possible given unprecedented circumstances.
2. Maintain continuity of operations that support the academic mission of the college.
3. Prevent the spread of the disease at WSU Tech and beyond.
4. Protect members of the WSU Tech community through self-quarantine and social distancing, especially the three groups at greatest risk:
   a. those who may have been exposed,
   b. those who have chronic health challenges,
   c. those who are currently sick.
5. Encourage all members of the WSU Tech community to be informed and practice healthy behaviors by following CDC recommendations.
6. Protect equity for our most vulnerable employees and students, as much as possible, as we respond to the situation.
7. Respond with agility to the fluid and changing nature of the situation.
8. Provide clear communications to all members of the WSU Tech community.
9. Provide exceptions for mission-critical activities on a case-by-case basis.

All WSU Tech Campuses Closed until May 4

Effective immediately, as a precautionary measure all WSU Tech campuses will close to all students, visitors and the public until May 4. Starting March 18, college employees will work remotely until May 4. Essential staff will continue to report to campus under the direction of their unit's Vice President or Executive Director while adhering to the social distancing guidelines as provided by the CDC (6 ft).

Face-to-Face Classes Will be Moved Online Until May 4

To help protect the health of all members of our community, including those who may be at higher risk of the effects of COVID-19, the resumption of face-to-face classes will be delayed until March 30. **Beginning Monday, March 30 and continuing until May 4**, **face-to-face classes will resume in an online format.**

Students: Face-to-Face Classes will be cancelled March 23 – 27. Beginning Monday, March 30 and continuing until May 4, face-to-face classes will be offered online rather than in classrooms. Instructors and the Student Services department will be communicating regularly with students regarding a time frame in which to make up labs, internships, clinicals and hands-on learning. Our team will reassess the need to continue remote-only instruction each week, starting March 30. Online courses will continue or begin as scheduled, with no interruption.

Online courses will continue or begin as scheduled, with no interruption.

High School Students: High school students attending classes at a WSU Tech campus will continue their courses online beginning March 30. High school students enrolled in dual credit courses at their high school, look to your high school instructor for guidance.

Students enrolled in face-to-face courses scheduled to start the week of March 23: These classes will begin on March 30 in an online format. Look for further communication and instructions from the student services department.

Students (affected laid off workers from Spirit AeroSystems and the Supply Chain) enrolled in the new up-skill, re-skill, face-to-face courses scheduled to start the week of March 23: A new start date is coming. Look for communication from your academic advisor.

This approach limits in-person exposure after spring break to align with the estimated COVID-19 incubation period and allows faculty members a modest amount of time to prepare and begin the transition to online instruction. It also keeps the college functioning and helps students continue toward their educational goals.

In the days ahead, look for a message from your instructor(s) and/or student services about what you might expect for your courses. If online learning is new to you, please visit https://bit.ly/39QJrPI for a basic guide and resources to get you started. You can also access these resources by logging on to your MYWSUTECH account, clicking on the "Student" tab and locating the links under "Log in to Online Learning" Instructors and advisors may also use tech tools, such as Skype or Zoom as an alternative for in-person meetings or office hours. Students with technology concerns please send an email to studenthelpdesk@wsutech.edu

Advising and Admissions Appointments

Students and Prospective Students: While the campuses are closed, we will still be conducting advising and admissions appointments. WSU Tech's student services department will be able to "meet" with individuals through phone calls or virtual meetings. Current students should continue to use the Navigate app to schedule appointments. New and Prospective students can schedule an appointment by selecting the appropriate advisor or admissions counselor at wsutech.edu/contact. If you have questions or issues scheduling an appointment email admissions@wsutech.edu.

Commencement / Graduation & Pinning Celebrations

It is with much regret that we announce that our Commencement Ceremony and Practical Nurse pinning ceremony are cancelled. It is of great importance to all of us at WSU Tech to celebrate our students' accomplishments and we are actively looking for other ways to accomplish this. This decision was not made lightly but given the current circumstances it was unavoidable. Please look for further communication on how we will celebrate our class of 2020 to come out in the upcoming weeks.

Inclusion and non-discrimination

As we respond to this situation, it is important to reaffirm our commitment to a safe, supportive and inclusive educational environment. Our diverse community is an essential part of WSU Tech, and we have a responsibility to ensure our college is free of discrimination and harassment. Relatedly, we should seek opportunities to offer care and support to those who have family and friends affected by COVID-19.

We will continue to monitor the situation and communicate regularly through email as updates and changes occur. COVID-19 is an evolving situation both in the U.S. and abroad. Make sure you are receiving information from a reliable source. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at cdc.gov and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) at kdheks.gov are the good resources for accurate and update information.

Dr. Sheree Utash, President, WSU Tech