

ON BEHALF OF DEAN LAURIE BADZEK~



Deans Student Update Sunday, March 15, 2020

Dear Students,

Welcome back from an anything but normal spring break. These are unprecedented times, but this is a challenge we can meet. As members of a College of Nursing, we understand better than most how infection control can help to flatten the curve of the impact of the COVID-19 virus. We also understand that we are at the beginning but these next steps we take may be the most important for the health of our University, state, nation, and world.

This communication is intended to get everyone on the same page, while none of us know exactly what will occur in upcoming weeks, we are continuing to work well together. In some ways because much of nursing has been online, remote, zoomed, and flexible for years, we were truly more ready than others.

Over the last week we have accomplished many things together. We have cancelled or put on hold all Nursing related events, professional travel, international travel and study abroad, and personal travel for some. We have worked with our faculty, advisors, and all of you to transition face to face classroom teaching to remote synchronous learning, putting our students' experiences at the forefront while still supporting them with effective faculty communication and advising. We have moved most of our business operations to remote work from home while working to assure continuity. We are beginning to make research shifts and transitions beginning with those that impact students first. We have requested that all faculty and students learn, teach, research, and work remotely from home if possible.

We are....in this together.

What you need to know about information:

1. Our College Administrative Team (Dean, Associate Deans for UG, Grad, Research and our Assistants Dean for Outreach and Nursing Programs at Commonwealth Campuses along with our Finance Director, Director of Technical Operations and HR Strategic Partner, and Marketing Director) have been coordinating operations and sharing information during the break. We will continue to meet weekly or more often if needed.
2. I will provide you with updates at the beginning of each week. If the situation changes more rapidly you will also receive additional updates. Most important information will be coming to you from your program Associate Deans, Program Directors, Faculty, and Advisors. That information will more specifically address your concerns related to teaching, learning, and clinical courses.

What you need to know about our direction:

1. All learning for didactic courses is to be remote for a minimum of the next three weeks. Remote learning for courses will be synchronous and where possible will be taped. The courses must be synchronous for reasons that follow. The reason for synchronous is threefold—1. There is a financial aid component that impacts over 14,000 students if the courses are not synchronous; 2. We will conflict with one another if we change times; and finally, 3. We are hoping our remote learning systems will function well if we remain spread out across time. We recognize that some students may have difficulty with course times for a variety of reason and students should email faculty if they cannot participate in synchronous learning.
2. Our clinical courses for UG students across all our locations have been paused for one week and will be moved to remote learning using unfolding case studies and other learning methods that do not require face to face learning. At this time, we are allowing Senior students in their capstone courses with facility, preceptor and faculty approval to continue capstone experiences, but students should not be assigned to any patients with or suspected of having the COVID-19 virus. Many of you had continued in place over the spring break. We know many cannot continue because you are no longer near your assigned facility and preceptor or your facility is not allowing you to continue. We will work to plan how we will meet requirements efficiently and effectively over the next few weeks. Your clinical faculty will work with you on these issues. This is an evolving situation.
3. Clinical courses for NP and DNP students are also continuing. We are addressing individual issues with students as they occur. The expectation that those students complete the required clinical hours is still in place. This is an evolving situation.
4. Everyone is being encouraged to use zoom audio and go slowly with video as we roll this out especially in larger groups.
5. At this time We Are....Ready for remote teaching and learning tomorrow! I am so proud of you—College of Nursing students, faculty, and staff who will make this happen.

Other key information:

1. internet scammers are about. Beware of phishing scams. Generally, these messages are not things I or your faculty would ask you to respond to individually. If it seems odd, it probably is phishing.
2. The Penn State College of Nursing will be open although most of our services will be operating remotely such as advising and other student services. Faculty are also being encouraged to work remotely when they are able.
3. If you have technical issues you will have support. For most of you this is nothing new. You have received information about this previously.
4. Remember to focus on health and wellness. My friend and Dean at Ohio State, Bern Melnyk shared these resources to keep us going. Feel free to share. <https://wellness.osu.edu/chief-wellness-officer/covid-19-resources>
5. Continue to follow the University updates and check your email regularly for messages.

6. Many other facets of what we are facing are being effectively handled but it will require patience when we encounter problems. If you have a major concern start with the course faculty or advising or let the appropriate associate dean or me know and we will work to help you.

You are an amazing group. We are....Penn State Nursing and We will...do this together.

Be well,
Dean Laurie

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