

COVID-19 Update: 03-17-2020

Dear Stone Academy Community,

Good afternoon, I hope this communication finds you safe and healthy in all respects. I want to start by thanking you for all of your questions, insights, and patience. I continue to be impressed by the way in which we have all been able to rise to the occasion.

Today I am writing you to address the question of clinical experiences as well as to provide you with updates on institutional developments.

The most prominent question that we have received is regarding clinical rotations as it relates to both faculty and students. This week there is a meeting scheduled with the Connecticut Department of Public Health's Board of Examiners for Nursing to determine the next steps for clinical experiences in every one of the state's nursing programs. In advance of this meeting our Nursing Administrator, Terry Kinsley, has been working to develop contingency plans based on possible outcomes. This should mean that we would be able to provide guidance to all students and faculty before the end of the day on Friday. Please hold tight with any questions surrounding this, as we will make sure to disseminate information as soon as it becomes available.

Theory Coursework

Between yesterday and today our faculty and academic managers have undergone training on the Blackboard learning management platform and it still appears that we are on target to begin resuming courses on Thursday, March 19, 2020. By tomorrow most students should receive an email introducing them to Blackboard, which will allow them to access the online training to prepare them to start their courses.

We expect that the first few days will take the greatest adjustment and are prepared to provide extensive support for students and faculty alike.

Student Advisors

Effective Wednesday, March 18, 2020, students will be assigned a student advisor. This person is a member of our programmatic staff that will introduce themselves to you via email or a phone call tomorrow. Going forward, and until classes resume on-ground, this person will serve as your direct connection to the school and will work to support you in your academic progress. Faculty will be provided with a list of the Student Advisors and the students they are working with.

Staff on Campus

Beginning tomorrow, Wednesday, March 18, 2020, we will begin having staff work remotely. This implementation is being managed by each person's direct manager, so please don't hesitate to reach out to them with any questions. While the campuses will continue to have certain staff on-site, the reduction in this population is another effort to reduce face-to-face contact on campus to protect the health and safety of everyone.

Visitors on Campus

As communicated in yesterday's message, starting tomorrow we will no longer be allowing prospective students on campus. Admissions representatives will remain on campus for the next couple days as their workflow continues to be digitized, but the reduction of overall staff will serve to make the campus measurably safer.

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Vendors, students, faculty, or staff that are working remotely are asked to call ahead before coming on campus.

We have had a challenging few days in which our world has changed and I'm sure that it will take time for each of us to accept the new "normal" in our lives. I encourage you to be patient and kind to others as everyone has to deal with this in their own way.

I look forward to the time when I can see everyone back on campus, until then, stay safe and know that you are all in my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Bierbaum
President