

COVID-19 Update: 03-19-2020

Good evening Stone Academy Community,

Today will be a relatively brief update, as I know many of you are on information overload at this point. First I will outline the procedure for rolling out courses next week and then I will provide additional insight into the state of clinical courses.

#### Theory Coursework

Today we successfully tested the Blackboard platform and I can now say confidently that faculty will receive their login information and begin to go live tomorrow with students following on Monday, March 23, 2020.

Courses will begin to go live throughout the week, so please don't be alarmed if every course is not active on Monday. The reason for the gradual roll out is to ensure that our Student Advisors have the time to answer faculty and student questions and respond to any issues that may arise.

Students will be able to utilize their cell phones, tablets, or laptops to access their courses with a basic Internet connection. We have updated the information on Stone.edu/COVID-19 with more Internet connectivity options and encourage students to reach out to their Campus Director if they do not have adequate technology.

#### Clinical Coursework

On Wednesday, March 18, 2020 the Connecticut Department of Public Health's Board of Examiners for Nursing met but failed to provide the State's practical nursing programs with any guidance or flexibility surrounding clinical experiences. We were prepared for this possibility and have set in motion a plan that will begin to address clinical courses for both students and faculty.

Tomorrow our Clinical Supervisors will reach out to the clinical faculty to provide updates on our course of action for next week. Likewise, our Student Advisors will begin contacting students individually as well. Our procedure for rolling out clinical experiences will start by addressing students that are nearing the end of their program and work its way to those in their first semester. We anticipate that first and second semester students may not be addressed until as early as Monday, March 30, 2020.

#### Staff on Campus

Effective Friday, March 20, 2020 the admissions and financial aid departments will work remotely. Our Campus Directors and other select administrators will remain on campus to provide support to students, faculty, and staff for the foreseeable future.

I will leave you with one personal note tonight. Each evening that I have written to you has been after the most precious hour of my day, play time with my 8-month old daughter. For that hour there is no coronavirus, no recession, no disruption in the world, just toys and laughs and joy.

I hope that each of you has found that hour in your own day to shed the weight of the world around you and enjoy your own moment of solace.

Continue to be healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Bierbaum  
President