

Subject: Pivot to Fall message from Provost Boehm

Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 at 7:30:46 AM Eastern Daylight Time

From: UofL Update,Service Account

To: UofL Update,Service Account

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff:

The Pivot to Fall Coordinating Committee, Safe Return to Work Committee, and Academic Scenario Planning Committee are pleased to provide a link to the [“final” report](#) detailing many of our plans for welcoming our students, faculty and staff back for fall.

Three weeks ago, I sent the first public draft of the report and invited comment through a web form and through participation in a public forum. I visited several faculty groups to listen and take back comments to the committees. Importantly, we listened to students, both those on the committee and those represented by the 450 pages of qualitative comments (24,511 individual comments) from spring semester on the transition to remote teaching and learning. We also reviewed the results of the SGA “Pivoting to Fall” Student Survey, which had a 29.4% response rate. The committees listened, rethought some of the issues, weighed competing interests, compromised where they could, and stood firm where they felt it advisable.

Here are examples of issues that received many comments and were reviewed carefully:

1. Instead of “requiring” flu shots, we are “highly recommending” them.
2. Synchronous online instruction (designated as remote) is now a possibility, but the committee, as a result of student input, is asking faculty to record and post those synchronous sessions for students who have scheduling or internet issues that prevent them from logging on at particular times.
3. Much discussion centered on whether to cancel fall break. Students argued strongly for the need for a mental health break and an opportunity for them to catch up on their work, and our custodial staff needs the long weekend to do a necessary mid-semester deep cleaning and disinfecting of classrooms and other public spaces. SGA, Student Affairs and the Provost have agreed to provide free student well-being and healthy campus events to encourage students to remain on campus those two days.

The committees made other changes to the plan as well, and we hope that the new draft will show that we listened to your comments and tried to balance many competing points of view. We know that no plan will satisfy everyone.

The Pivot to Fall remains a work in progress. We will continue to respond to the guidance of our public health officials and the governor of Kentucky, the latest science and research into COVID-19, advice from our colleagues at other universities and colleges, and input from our employees and students over the next two months.

We are guided in our planning by our mission as a university and by the need to balance four different and sometimes competing goals: enabling our students—and particularly those most impacted by the economic, social and health disparities spotlighted by COVID-19 and the protests against racism and racial injustice in Louisville, including on our own campus, and across the nation -- to make academic

progress through engaged learning and meaningful, safe interactions with faculty, staff and other students; keeping all our faculty, staff and students healthy and safe; ensuring that our researchers and scholars and the students who learn from them can continue their important and innovative work; and mitigating the adverse economic impact of COVID-19 on our university, our employees, our students and their families, the city, the region and the state.

If you have questions the report does not answer, please reach out to me or any member of the various committees.

Best, Beth

Beth A. Boehm, PhD
University Provost