



Office of the Chancellor

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Philip L. Dubois
Chancellor

Statement from Chancellor Dubois

March 18, 2020

Dear Niner Nation,

I can say without question this has been among the most challenging weeks in my career in higher education. It has been confusing and stressful, and at times, I felt like I had whiplash from how quickly information was changing. I imagine you felt the same way.

I am not sure it can be overstated how unprecedented this situation is. This is truly a global crisis, and officials are adapting to changing information on a daily, and sometimes hourly, basis. Life as many of us know it has stopped: We aren't together in offices or classrooms, our social outings have been canceled, religious services have been suspended, and even going out to dinner with friends in North Carolina is no longer possible.

COVID-19 is serious, and for some, it is life and death. And we need your help. As we watch television stories about individuals continuing to congregate in large groups, we can only be alarmed. Their behavior is putting many others at risk, including members of their own families. There is a general lesson: It is not about one of us. It is about all of us.

Individuals with compromised immune systems or other underlying health conditions and those over 60 years old may not be able to fight this illness the way others can. I know we all have someone we care about who may be at risk.

That is why we must do our part to help "flatten the curve" of infection to buy our medical professionals more time to treat those who are sick and eventually find a reliable vaccine or treatment against this virus.

I have said many times that we value the health and well-being of our students, employees, and our extended Niner family above anything else. We must all put those words into action.

Social distancing is the chance we have to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. That is why we have moved our classes to remote delivery or online, why we are requiring all students who can to leave our residence halls and return home, and why our employees are now almost entirely teleworking.

I want you to know I recognize the challenges and inconveniences all of this brings. I feel quite confident saying most of us have never experienced something like this before.

I am asking you to help in lessening the spread of this disease. The sooner we get it under control, the sooner life can begin to return to normal.

Abide by social distancing protocols. Medical officials now understand that people, especially those under 20, may be able to carry the virus without showing symptoms but can still transmit it to others. Please heed the warnings about group sizes. Do not gather in groups of 10 or more. Avoid unnecessary contact with others, staying six feet away from people if at all possible. Sanitize high-contact surfaces in your home, like your phone and laptop. And though you have likely tired of hearing it by now, wash your hands as often as possible.

The next few weeks are not going to be easy. We must anticipate that more restrictive terms may be imposed by governmental authorities and/or the UNC System Office with respect to the conduct of our daily activities and movement around the community. There will be learning curves and growing pains, and I ask for your patience as we work through them together.

Please continue to monitor the [Emergency Management website](#) and your email for the latest information.

Sincerely,



Philip L. Dubois
Chancellor

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