



Letter from President Deborah J. Curtis June 1, 2020

Dear Campus Community,

The reaction to the killing of George Floyd has shaken our society and shown that much work is left to be done to live up to our nation's ideals. Indiana State University joins those opposed to oppression and supports peaceful protest. ISU's Core Values state that we **take action to honor diversity**. Therefore, we are engaging academic deans and others to work with faculty to develop an academic opportunity for our students. They will study the root causes of these societal failures and develop strategies to confront them. More than a one-time event, this would be a sustained effort to teach and promote change. We will share more details in the coming weeks.

We have also been planning for the Fall semester amid the myriad challenges associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic. We made clear our priorities: doing our very best to help protect the health and safety of our students and employees while fulfilling our educational mission. I am so grateful for all of us working together.

A few weeks ago, we announced our summer phase-in planning, which aligns with the State of Indiana's "Back on Track" plan. Today, we want to update the campus and the community with some key next steps as we continue our Sycamores Back on Track Phase-In Plan.

Fall Semester

The University will resume on-campus teaching and learning this fall. Provost Mike Licari has been working closely with academic leaders and in consultation with the Faculty Senate on instructional modifications for the fall. ISU will not alter the fall academic calendar approved by the University's Board of Trustees. As is typical, most classes will be offered face-to-face with some courses being online. Academic leaders and the faculty are working to make adjustments in order to promote social distancing in instructional settings. This includes finding ways to reduce the number of students in classrooms and moving some classes to larger spaces on campus. The end of the fall semester will be modified with Study Week and Finals Week

(following Thanksgiving) to be completed online. This revised schedule will allow students to complete the semester without returning to campus following the Thanksgiving Break.

Face Coverings

The University will provide two face coverings to each student, faculty, and staff member this fall. Until further notice, face coverings for students and faculty will be required in instructional spaces including classrooms, laboratories, and studios. The University is expecting use of face coverings in indoor public areas where social distancing is difficult.

Fall Event Planning

In alignment with the Governor's reopening steps, some events and gatherings can resume after July 4. The University will follow careful mitigation activities for events throughout the fall semester, including limiting attendance at campus events to 25% of venue capacity and capping attendance at 250 at any indoor event other than those at the Hulman Center. Face coverings will be required at most University events. See [here](#) for specifics.

Homecoming 2020

Modifications to the 2020 Homecoming will be forthcoming this summer and will be based on recommendations from the Homecoming Committee made after consulting with campus governance groups and community stakeholders including the City of Terre Haute and local business owners. The University's decisions on Homecoming activities will be informed by the CDC, State Department of Health, and the Missouri Valley Football Conference.

The decisions leading to a return to campus have not been easy. This information is subject to change as more guidance becomes available from public health and government officials. What will not change is our commitment to safety and our core educational mission. We cannot stress enough the importance of continuing the four key and common sense practices to minimize risk of infection:

- Cover your face
- Don't touch your face
- Wash your hands frequently
- Maintain social distancing

I cannot thank you enough for your commitment to Indiana State University. I remind myself each day that ISU has weathered challenging times in the past — wars, economic depression, a 1918 pandemic, and demographic changes impacting enrollments, to name a few. From each challenge, we grow stronger. While these unexpected events associated with COVID-19 are

causing hardships and serious health issues, they are also inspiring all of us to be even more innovative in how we work. Our university is strong, and it will continue to be a very special place to learn and work. Together, we will overcome this challenge and move forward with the strength and resilience that defines the Sycamore.

Sincerely,
Deborah J. Curtis, Ph.D.
President