

June 22, 2020

Dear UA System students, faculty and staff:

The Board of Trustees met again on June 17 to continue monitoring the University of Arkansas System response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to address issues related to the reopening of campuses, divisions and units in the coming months. The Board considered resolutions on fall class scheduling and the use of cloth face coverings, and heard reports from four campus chancellors on their preparations for reopening for the fall semester, among other agenda items. Specifically:

- The Board passed a resolution directing the chancellors and chief executive officers of system institutions to work with appropriate campus constituencies to consider modifications and contingencies to the traditional academic calendar for the fall semester. Potential modifications include extending class periods and instructional days, eliminating traditional fall breaks, and planning for the potential of shifting to remote instruction after Thanksgiving in order to maximize instruction time while limiting the need for students, faculty and staff to travel and increase the risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- The Board discussed and delayed consideration of a resolution to require the use of cloth face coverings in institutional facilities when physical distancing is not possible, in accordance with public health guidance. Board members requested that the resolution be modified to specify stipulations regarding campus guests and to address participation in extracurricular activities such as athletics. A revised resolution will be considered at the next Board meeting in July.
- The Board heard fall semester campus reopening updates from University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Chancellor Dr. Joe Steinmetz, University of Arkansas-Pulaski Technical College Chancellor Dr. Margaret Ellibee, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Chancellor Dr. Laurence Alexander, and Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas Chancellor Dr. Steve Cole.

The Board was impressed with the range, level and depth of the planning described by the chancellors, which included efforts to promote social distancing on campus through modified classroom layouts and scheduling, changes to food service protocols, and reductions to residence hall capacities, among other measures. Also discussed were the procurement of personal protective supplies for students, faculty and staff and the plans for handling potential cases of COVID-19 on campuses.

We appreciate the continued patience and support of all UA System campus constituencies during these unique times. The Board will meet again on July 15 to continue oversight of the system response to the pandemic. Additional chancellors will report at the meeting and the Board will consider further actions to provide necessary support to students, faculty and staff across the system.

Sincerely,



Donald R. Bobbitt, President
University of Arkansas System



John Goodson, Chair
Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas