



Statement to the St. Louis College of Pharmacy Community

DATE: Friday, July 31, 2020
TO: All Students, All Faculty, All Staff
FROM: John A. Pieper, Pharm.D., FCCP, FAPhA, President of the College
RE: Updates and Reminders for the Fall Semester

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff:

The beginning of the fall semester is just around the corner, and we are eager to welcome you back to campus. To the new students joining our community this fall, welcome to the St. Louis College of Pharmacy family!

Please review the updates and announcements below for important information about the fall semester.

Student Declarations for Virtual Lecture Attendance

Last week I shared information with you about an option to attend lectures virtually. Deans Gleason and Kilgore have shared with me that many of you have submitted your intentions for the fall. We hope this virtual lecture option provides flexibility for you as we navigate the fall semester.

If you have not yet indicated your plans, please do so by Sunday, Aug. 2. This information is needed by our faculty as they plan for your fall courses.

As we make our final preparations for fall, please know that we are closely monitoring the situation in St. Louis and the surrounding areas. We receive new information every day, and we continue to update our plans to align with the most current information and recommendations.

Earlier this week, Dr. Heather French, vice president for student affairs, hosted a virtual Student Forum on Return to Campus Guidelines. If you were not able to attend, I encourage you to [watch the recording that is available online via Microsoft Stream](#).

De-Densifying Our Campus

We will continue to prioritize on-campus course delivery and engagement, and we are confident students and faculty can safely return to the classroom at this time. To review and enhance our plans to protect students, faculty and staff, we are working with a board-certified infectious diseases physician and a professional infection control expert.

In addition to the health and safety measures we have implemented, we will focus on de-densifying our campus to further protect our community. In the coming week, we will update our return-to-work policies for employees to continue remote work for some staff who do not need to be on campus to perform their job functions. Creating the safest educational environment is our highest priority, and de-densifying campus will create an additional layer of protection for on-campus instruction, learning and living.

These arrangements will be based on the job functions of each employee and will likely differ across our institution. Some staff may remain in an entirely remote work arrangement. Other staff may transition to a hybrid arrangement of on-campus and remote work. Staff providing support services for students may transition to mostly on-campus work.

These complex decisions will take place at the unit/office level, and the Office of Human Resources will provide more detailed information for faculty and staff next week.

As we navigate these decisions, I ask that you extend us patience and flexibility, and I thank you for your ongoing commitment to providing every possible protection for our students and community.

White Coat Ceremony and Commencement

Last week, I shared updates with our P1 class and the graduating class of 2020 regarding our upcoming White Coat Ceremony and Commencement. Due to ongoing restrictions on events and gatherings within St. Louis city and county, and in alignment with our “no guests” policy on campus, we have made changes to these events.

Based on a poll of student preferences, the format for these events will be as follows:

- At this time, our White Coat Ceremony will be held on campus on Friday, Sept. 4, at 6:30 p.m. with only the participating students and designated faculty and administrators in attendance. This will allow us to follow physical distancing recommendations from the CDC, St. Louis city and St. Louis county. The ceremony will be streamed live online beginning at 6:30 p.m. CST on Friday, Sept. 4, at stlcop.edu/live. More information is available at stlcop.edu/whitecoat.
- Based on the preferences of the graduating class, we have decided to hold our postponed Commencement for spring 2020 graduates virtually. The live, virtual ceremony will be streamed at stlcop.edu/live on Saturday, Sept. 5, at 11 a.m. More information is available at stlcop.edu/commencement.

These events are important milestones, and sharing in these moments is something we all look forward to each year. This is not the update we hoped to share, but even though these events will look different this year, we are grateful that we can still come together to celebrate.

Again, I thank each of you for your patience, flexibility and commitment to the College. Our return to campus will be a complex process, but we are working hard to take every precaution. As our environment changes, we will respond. The College’s leadership team is closely monitoring updates, and I will share more information with you as it becomes available.