Dear SEU Community:

We have recently received updated guidance from the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education and I am sharing with you what we know about fully reopening at this point in time.

New Jersey Governor Murphy continues to hold state reopening plans at Stage 2. While Stage 3 would allow us to return to full face-to-face operations and instruction, in Stage 2, we are moving forward with a staggered return for students with specific curricular requirements.

We will be reopening the residence halls, using social distancing practices that include the use of face coverings/masks, based on the following criteria. Beginning August 16, we will only be welcoming students back to the residence halls students who have hands-on class requirements, such as labs (science and health science) or technical requirements (art) which cannot be carried out remotely/online and students for whom on-campus housing is necessary to support equitable education.

Student Life is working with resident students on a one-to-one basis. As previously announced, we will be offering residence hall drop-off, by appointment only, starting today. Those appointments will allow the student and two accompanying adults one hour to drop off personal items.

Fall 2020 Class Schedule

- Orientation for new students will take place during the week of August 16 in a remote/online format involving both pre-recorded sessions and live Zoom workshops. A schedule of welcome week events and activities for all students (new and returning) will be made available shortly.
- All classes (undergraduate, Continuing Studies and graduate) will begin on Monday, August 24 on a remote/online basis through Friday, September 5 with the exception of students whose courses have lab (science and health science) and technical (art) components. This includes resident students. Laboratory and technical instruction will begin on Monday, August 24.
- On August 17, based on the Governor’s orders, we will make the next announcement regarding the format of instruction to be in place on Monday, September 7. Should the Governor move the state to Stage 3, in-person classes will be delivered using a blended approach based on SEU’s existing ED CHOICE model. Most importantly, students who wish to remain remote/online can do so for the semester.

Those who wish to attend in-person classes will be provided with a hybrid schedule to reduce classroom occupancies. Additional information will be provided regarding the specifics of how this will be implemented once we have more information about resuming in-class instruction.

- To reduce the possibility of contagion, there will be no breaks in the fall schedule. Classes will be held on Monday, September 7 (Labor Day) and Monday, October 12 (Columbus Day). The University will officially close for the semester on Wednesday, November 25.
- The fall 2020 semester will officially conclude on Wednesday, November 25, and students will depart for winter break. Exams will be held during regular class time leading up to the end of the semester. Spring on-campus instruction will begin on January 19.

This schedule is intended to reduce the risks associated with the virus and fall season affecting the community during the colder months. It also avoids the possibility of students, faculty and staff traveling for fall break and Thanksgiving, contracting the virus and returning to campus with an active infection. Information will be provided to faculty and staff at a later time regarding operations leading up to the Christmas break.

Delivery of Instruction

Beginning Monday, August 24, all classes (undergraduate, Continuing Studies and graduate), with the exception of hands-on classes, will be delivered remotely/online only. This structure is being utilized to comply with the current Executive Order by Governor Murphy which remains in place.

Should New Jersey move to Stage 3 and the Executive Order is lifted, beginning on September 7, the University will move to a hybrid model. In the hybrid format, instruction will be in-person, in reduced-density classrooms requiring the wearing of face coverings/masks. Students who wish to remain remote will continue their studies entirely in a remote/online fashion.

Please continue to monitor emails regarding ongoing developments. If you have questions, students should contact Vice President of Student Affairs (StudentAffairs@steu.edu), faculty should contact Vice President of Academic Affairs (academicaffairs@steu.edu) and staff members should contact their respective vice president. Additionally, the plans for the staged reopening of campus can be found here: https://www.steu.edu/restartplan.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding as we continue to maneuver through this very different academic year opening. I know we will get through this most challenging time. I anxiously await welcoming all members of the SEU community back to campus. In the meantime, I pray every day for the health and safety of you and your families.

Sincerely,

Helen J. Strockert
President