June 18, 2020

Greetings Virginia State University Family!

We hope this update finds you well and safe. As we look back over the past three months, we are grateful for what each of you has done to ensure that we could continue providing a quality and transformative educational experience for our students. COVID-19 presented a sudden and unexpected adjustment to our life. Thank you for stepping up to meet the challenge during this transition. Job well done.

We are now focusing on moving forward. The goal of Virginia State University is to provide transformative educational experiences for our students and to prepare them to change the world. While the COVID-19 pandemic may have sidetracked our normal operations, it did not alter our mission or our goals. We will continue providing our students with access to a high quality and affordable educational experience in the upcoming fall 2020 semester. We are here for our current students who are working toward their degree, and we are here to welcome our new Trojans, the class of 2024.

We realize that circumstances surrounding COVID-19 may necessitate an adjustment to our plan, and we are prepared to alter it as necessary. More information will be released to you within the next week via our VSU website. However, we want to share with you a few of the highlights of our Fall 2020 Reopening Plan.

**Health and Safety:**

The VSU Department of Student Health Services continues to prioritize the health and safety of the campus community. With the plans of reopening campus, all faculty, staff, students and administrators will be required to complete COVID-19 training prior to the start of the semester. In addition, preventive care and education programs will be conducted in the residence halls and throughout campus. All students will receive a welcome back kit that contains a cloth mask or gaiter, disposable masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, and a safe touch tool that allows students to open doors and push buttons without touching. All buildings will be de-densified to conform to social distancing protocols (usually 6 feet between people) with signage installed campus-wide to delineate safe distances.

**Instruction and Academics:**

Our plans remain flexible as we monitor any new COVID-19 mandates. We realize that circumstances surrounding COVID-19 may necessitate adjustments to our plan; and we are prepared to alter it as necessary.

We will begin fall 2020 face-to-face classes on Monday, August 17, 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 health and safety recommendations, we will limit the capacity of our on-
campus/residential community to freshmen (students with fewer than 30 credits), student leaders, student athletes and seniors (students with 90 credits or more). This population of students will have priority in enrolling in face-to-face courses. All other students will be commuting or online students. Commuting students will be provided an option of taking online, face-to-face or hybrid courses depending on class availability. Depending on requirements for their major, some students may choose a course load that is fully online/remote.

To afford students an opportunity to make a well informed decision prior to making travel arrangements or securing housing, a full schedule of all classes will be made available no later than July 1, 2020.

The Following adjustments have been made to the academic calendar:
   1) There will be no fall break.
   2) The last day for face-to-face classes will be **Tuesday, November 24.**
   3) Following Thanksgiving break, students will not return to campus. All remaining instruction and/or assessments will be conducted remotely until the last day of the fall semester, **December 11, 2020.**

**Campus Life:**
On-campus housing capacity will be reduced due to the conversion of some double rooms to single occupancy. This is to reduce on-campus population density and to support social distancing. **Preference for on-campus housing will be given to freshmen (students with fewer than 30 credit hours), student leaders, student athletes and graduating seniors (students with 90 credits or more).**

**Additional Housing Needs:** Additional on-campus housing may be made available for all other students based on maximum capacity. Students who do not secure on-campus housing may also be referred to the University Apartments at Ettrick. For more information, please Contact Resident Life at reslife@vsu.edu.

Again, this is a brief overview of our plan. We will provide more detailed information within the next week. We want every member of the VSU community to know that we remain fully committed to our mission and our goals. We are grateful to have each of you as a member of our Trojan Family. We miss you and we look forward to welcoming you back for the fall semester.

Hail State! Hail State! Hail, Hail, Hail!

Sincerely,

Makola M. Abdullah, Ph.D.
President