

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

August 10, 2020

Dear College of Arts & Letters Staff, Deans, Directors, and Chairs,

As we prepare for the semester and continue to respond to the ever-changing challenges of the novel coronavirus here at Michigan State University, I want to provide you with updates for fall 2020. The health and safety of our community has been and will remain our College's top priority. In our focused efforts for fall planning, a concern for the well-being of our students, staff, and faculty, guided by the [Culture of Care](#) we have created in the College, has shaped every decision we have made.

This fall will be different from any we have experienced. The pandemic presents personal and professional challenges we need to face together. Many of us are balancing the needs of family, childcare, online and home schooling, and/or elder care. Now more than ever, it is important to be patient with one another and to support each other as we navigate this difficult period. In this spirit, let me re-emphasize the expectations we have in the College and what has been discussed with our unit leaders.

Remote Working for Fall 2020

We have received many inquiries over the last few months about whether remote working will be an option for fall 2020. Given the spread of COVID-19 over the last several weeks and months, our remote working plans have not changed in the College. I continue to encourage all College staff to take every possible measure to work from home. Our Chairs, Directors, and Supervisors are aligned with this approach. We will be flexible and accommodating as we continue to adjust to working together remotely while still providing the best possible experience for students, staff, and faculty. If you have not done so already, please consult with your unit leader to determine how most effectively to balance safety and service in your area of responsibility.

Unit Service Level Expectations

In discussions with unit leaders, we know there are areas that will need in-person staffing on campus. In these unique circumstances, I have asked that the unit leader, the staff member, and our Chief or Staff (Ken Desloover) work together on contingency plans that will prioritize safety and maximize our capacity to establish responsive, human connections for students, staff, and faculty. I do want to emphasize that most of the services we provide can be done virtually. Even in virtual settings, however, we need to be able to respond in real-time to messages and inquiries. Establishing protocols that enable us to deepen our connections with one another as we support the success of everyone who encounters the College of Arts & Letters will require flexibility, creativity, and imagination. If you have questions about how best to engage and communicate with students, staff, and faculty, please contact your unit leader.



College of Arts & Letters

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'Together We Will' Website

I encourage you to visit and monitor updates from the University by visiting the [Together We Will](#) website where you will find the latest on planning and preparation for fall 2020. This website is being updated daily. There you will find more information about testing, fall classes, arriving/returning to campus, research and travel protocols, and more. In addition, please look for future communications from my office and our Associate Dean offices as the school year approaches and into the semester.

Lastly, I want to thank each of you for the conscientious leadership, compassion, and generosity you have shown over the last several months during these times of uncertainty and ambiguity. You have been an inspiration for our students and Spartan community, and for that I am grateful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris P. Long", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Long
Dean, College of Arts & Letters