

From: LCOM Office of the Dean <COMOfficeOfTheDean@med.uvm.edu>
Sent: Friday, May 15, 2020 4:33 PM
Subject: Message from Dean Rick Page to the Larner Community

Dear Larner Community,

Spring is arriving on schedule in Burlington, even while our rites of spring here have been modified this year:

Honors Night was replaced this year with our [Honors Celebration](#), featuring 25 awards presented to graduating students and 10 awards chosen by the students for faculty, staff and departments. Check out the video presentation recorded for each award.

Commencement 2020 will be held on time, with livestream beginning at 2:45 pm on Sunday, May 17, featuring our students being hooded individually at home with loved ones. Although this is not the ceremony any of us anticipated four months ago, this will be the most inclusive such event ever held by our College, and should be a great celebration for the wonderful medical class of 2020. Please join us for the [livestream](#) of the event, featuring our commencement speaker, Dr. Joia Mukherjee, President Suresh Garimella and special guests yet to be revealed.

The **graduating graduate students** are participating in the activities coordinated for all UVM undergraduate and graduate students, and are being recognized on a special [website](#) that will go live on May 17 and plans for further celebration are still underway.

I appreciate UVM Vice President for Operations and Public Safety Gary Derr and Senior Associate Deans Christa Zehle, Gordon Jensen and Claude Deschamps for joining us at two sessions this week to discuss plans for the campus and College. We had a combined total of over 300 faculty and staff members join us.

Through the UVM Strong working group, plans are underway to allow for students to return to campus, including our medical and graduate students. We anticipate a phased reintroduction of medical students, in collaboration with our clinical partners and UVM:

- Phase I senior medical students/Advanced Integration clinical activities (June 1, 2020)
- Phase II clerkship students' clinical activities (July 13, 2020)
- Phase III return of non-clinical students to campus (August 10, 2020)

At the UVM Medical Center and Health Network, a milestone was achieved in the return of elective surgical cases being performed this week. Outpatient volume in the Network is back to 63% of pre-pandemic level and, remarkably, over half of those clinical interactions are being achieved using telemedicine. Although I miss seeing my own patients in person, I am now recognizing how telemedicine will continue to play a role in my practice, and in most clinical practice, even after this pandemic is over.

We have initiated plans for our cautious phased reopening of LCOM laboratories as detailed below. Please note that the requested laboratory reopening safety plans are due May 18, 2020.

- Starting May 18, 2020 - Only approved essential research faculty, staff, and graduate and postdoctoral trainees, as well as physicians with offices in MEDPLEX and medical education essential personnel.
- Starting June 1, 2020 - Additional nonessential research personnel including faculty, staff and medical student, graduate and postdoctoral research trainees.
- Starting June 15, 2020 - Consideration of other nonessential personnel including administrative staff and additional student researchers.

In keeping with our efforts to maintain communication with the entire Larner community in these rapidly-changing times, next week we will hold a combined faculty meeting and Town Hall for all faculty, staff and students at 1 p.m. on Friday, May 22. I have asked Brian Cote, Senior Associate Dean for Finance and Administration, to discuss some of the financial challenges we face. We will also review changes to the Bylaws of the College, and the newest draft of our Strategic Plan, in addition to our providing updates and opportunity to ask questions. Remote participation information will be forthcoming. Please plan to join us.

Even as we face this unprecedented health and financial crisis, I remain astounded by the commitment, creativity and commitment I see every day in our students, faculty and staff. The challenges are very real and painful at times, and none of us can predict the future, even as we try to reclaim our previous activities. No matter what happens next, our greatest assets are our people and the professionalism we manifest. Please look out for each other and find ways to preserve the essence of why we are part of an organization dedicated to patient care, education and research in medicine and biomedical science.

Stay well,

Rick

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