To: UB Faculty, Staff and Students

From: A. Scott Weber
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date: March 11, 2020

Re: UB Transitioning to Distance Learning March 23

I am writing as a follow up to President Tripathi’s earlier communication regarding UB’s plans to maximize distance learning and reduce in person instruction, effective March 23 through the end of the Spring 2020 semester.

Distance Learning at UB – Spring 2020

During this period of remote learning, the university has defined “maximize distance learning” to mean that all courses, where possible and regardless of size, should be offered in distance learning format. We recognize that some formats (e.g., labs, studio, field based programs, etc.) may not be amenable to a distance learning format in the short term. Accordingly, unit leadership has the authority to grant exceptions in some circumstances with the guiding principle to minimize density in the teaching environment. In addition:

- Classroom instruction should be delivered remotely with the specific modality determined by individual faculty members and instructors in consultation with their department chair or dean.
- Online training and other resources for remote instruction, testing and evaluation are available at https://www.buffalo.edu/ubcei/teachingbeyond.html.
- Per New York State Education Department guidelines, instructors have the ability to alter assignments in their syllabi as long as stated learning outcomes continue to be met.
- All course instructors, including faculty, staff, and TA’s, should review their syllabi and determine if changes to course requirements are necessary.
- Revised syllabi must be provided to the class with clear instructions for class expectations.
- Instructors should notify their students by March 19 regarding how to access course content.
• As appropriate, deans will share additional guidance regarding specific degree requirements and how their programs will adjust.
• Faculty and instructors should direct questions and concerns to their department chair or dean.

Student Life

• Students may elect to complete their semester from home if their courses do not require on campus activities.
• Campus housing and dining will be open for students who remain on campus.
• Students leaving campus for spring recess should take with them any items necessary to continue their education remotely such as laptops, textbooks, notebooks, essential papers, art materials, musical instruments, etc.
• Students will receive further communication from the Office of Student Life regarding evolving student-centric issues.

Campus Operations

• Campus operations will continue without interruption including research, scholarship, student academic support, health services, university libraries, transportation, campus safety and all other university services.
• All professional obligations of faculty and staff remain unaffected, including those related to research, scholarship and service.
• Students on TA/GA/RA appointments and post-doctoral scholars are expected to carry out their employment obligations and should consult their supervisors for guidance regarding any modifications to regular duties.
• Student employees, including work-study students, should consult their supervisors for guidance regarding any modifications to regular duties.
• Vice Presidents, Deans and Vice Provosts should rely on guidance from the Erie County Department of Health in evaluating whether or not to hold campus events involving more than 50 participants.

Please continue to visit https://www.buffalo.edu/coronavirus for updates and important information related to this evolving situation. Recognizing that these are extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances, I am confident that together we can overcome the challenges presented to us and continue to provide our students with a high quality academic experience.