October 5, 2020

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students:

Thank you for your cooperation and hard work as we continue to manage the university operations during this COVID-19 pandemic.  I pray that you, your families and loved ones are safe and well. I am pleased to provide you with this campus update pertaining COVID procedures and effects during this first half of the semester. Operations are continuing as planned, and students for the most part are confirming with the rules.

**Academics**

Students have adjusted to the virtual environment and to the health and safety requirements. Faculty members are following the same guidelines, and are working diligently to ensure that our students have first class, high-quality instruction. Classes are offered in-person, online, and hybrid, with approximately 85% of the course delivery being online.  To assist students with the online classes, technology devices were provided to approximately 1,000 students, and also to faculty and staff as needed. Additionally, classrooms have been equipped with safety equipment and are regularly cleaned and sanitized. It is important to note that all classes were online for the first two weeks of the semester in response to a campus-wide 'safer-at-home' order.

**Testing and Tracing**

TSU is following the health guidelines from the Tennessee State Department of Health, the Center for Disease Control and other agencies regarding testing, contact tracing, face-coverings, social distancing, hygiene, facility cleaning, and other recommendations designed to slow the spread of COVID-19. Our plans are being executed well. Students are tested aggressively. We have self-testing kits available for students, faculty and staff, with pre-paid express shipping. And we have implemented rapid testing procedures that allow results in around 15 minutes.

Students and employees may be tested anytime as test kits are available at the Campus Health Center located on the third floor of the Floyd-Payne Campus Center.  Currently, we have had thirty-two (32) students who have tested positive, twelve (12) have recovered, and twenty (20) students are in quarantine or isolation. While we strive to have zero students with positive test results, the number of positive cases at TSU is significantly lower than the other universities in the Tennessee system. Students in quarantine or isolation are moved to a separate facility and are monitored regularly throughout the day.

Students who are experiencing coronavirus symptoms must contact the Campus Health Center at (615) 963-5291, emailStudenthealthservices@tnstate.edu or contact the TSU COVID-19 non-emergency phone line and email at (615) 963-6888 and  COVID-19@tnstate.edu. [View the TSU Testing Plan here](http://www.tnstate.edu/return/documents/TestingPlan_2020_0810.docx). Please make sure to visit our COVID-19 website regularly for the most up-to-date information and guidance at <http://www.tnstate.edu/return/>.

**Student Behavior**

Our students have modified their expectations as it pertains to student activities, and have adjusted to the virtual environment. Health and safety protocols remain in effect and TSU requires strict compliance. We have encountered a small population of students who we have discipline in accordance with our zero tolerance policy. Students not following the basic safety tenets as outlined by the University have faced student conduct action.

Early in the semester, the University enacted a curfew for students living on campus as a part of the Safer in Place policy.  In an effort to mitigate the concerns around the pandemic influence on the campus, students were required to be in their residence hall by 11:00 p.m. nightly. With over 1800 students living on campus, student well-being is our priority. The curfew was relaxed a few weeks into the semester, but the Office of Residence Life will continue to adjust and update our housing plans weekly as deemed necessary.

Lastly, I continue to stress the importance of students and employees following all public health guidelines. Our protocols are for the sole purpose of protecting the faculty, staff, and students from contracting COVID-19. We require everyone on campus to follow all health and safety guidelines including social distancing, face-coverings, temperature checks, hygiene, cleaning, avoiding large crowds and encouraging others to do the same. As the TSU Tiger Family, we are facing this challenge together and sharing in the responsibility of keeping ourselves and others healthy.

Thank you for your prayers and continued support.

President Glenda Glover