

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students:

As we are blessed to approach this new year, I remain committed to your health and safety as we prepare for another semester at our beloved Tennessee State University. I express my thanks to you for the manner in which you have supported the policies and strategies that were implemented for the welfare of our university family.

The University will open as planned on January 3, 2022 for staff and administrators. We had originally scheduled January 11, 2022 as the date for faculty to return to campus to begin the second semester for this academic year. However, the invasion of the omicron variant and its increasing difficulties, have caused us to delay the return of faculty by one week to January 18, 2022. Classes will start on Monday, January 24, 2022. Additionally, all campus assemblies and activities will be delayed by one week.

The Faculty Staff Institute will be held on January 18<sup>th</sup> and will be in a hybrid format. To ensure compliance with appropriate COVID-19 health and safety protocols, in-person attendance is optional, and not required. We are allowing up to 100 fully vaccinated persons to attend in person. These are in addition to the fully vaccinated Cabinet members, Deans, Faculty Senate Chair and the Staff Senate Chair who are asked to attend in person only if you feel comfortable coming to campus to attend this Institute. If you desire to attend in person, please register online at the following link ([Registration](#)). The University will reserve these seats for the first 100 faculty or staff members who register to attend the Institute. All seating will be appropriately spaced and all individuals must wear masks.

We had hoped that after almost two years in this pandemic, our nation would have returned to normal routines. But the COVID-19 virus along with the delta and omicron variants, have prevented us from assembling in person for our annual Spring 2022 Faculty Staff Institute. At this point, the University expects to maintain in-person classes and operations during this semester. However, we are prepared to adjust our course delivery model, including the implementation of hybrid, online, or remote academic models, if the evolving COVID-19 related health and safety concerns warrant such adjustments. We will again implement a two-week “Safer in Place” program during the first two weeks of the semester which will require that all courses, regardless of permanent course delivery method, will be offered online for this two-week period.

We will continue to monitor the Centers for Disease and Control (CDC), and will follow state and local guidance, regarding any developments pertaining to COVID-19 and related variants. Please be assured that federal, state and local health and safety guidance will continue to drive the University’s actions regarding course delivery and in-person operations affecting the TSU community. Moreover, we strongly stress that all employees and students be fully vaccinated, and that you also get the booster shot.

Thank you for your cooperation as we navigate through these unprecedented times. We encourage you to be safe, take precautions, get vaccinated and get the booster shot. I look forward to seeing you next month.

President Glenda Glover