



June 11, 2020

To the students, parents, faculty, and staff of Wabash College,

Over the course of the last three months, Wabash has empowered several teams to simultaneously close out the school year and plan for the return of students, faculty, and staff for the start of the fall semester. The work of the COVID Response Team, Healthy Campus Task Force, and Academic Policy Committee – with guidance from our campus healthcare professionals and multiple public health agencies – has been critical to all that we have done.

Ours is a unique culture that places the highest value on the relationships our students form with their teachers and fellow students, and all of our plans reflect this important, high level of engagement and support. We know that this year will be very different for all of us, but by working together – and trusting one another – we are confident we can deliver an exceptional education for all of our students.

On the recommendation of our on-campus teams, as well as conversations with other colleges and universities, we have decided that Wabash will start the fall semester two weeks earlier than scheduled. While some additional adjustments could be made, we plan to implement the following schedule for the fall semester:

Aug. 7-8	New students move into living units (scheduled and staggered)
Aug. 9	Ring-in Ceremony for new students (live-streamed for family members)
Aug. 10-11	Remaining upperclassmen move into living units (scheduled and staggered)
Aug. 12	Classes begin
Nov. 17	Classes end
Nov. 18-24	Final exams

We will eliminate fall break so that final exams can take place before Thanksgiving break. This early start gives us our best opportunity to complete the fall semester in residence. We have mobilized across campus to meet the challenges that face us when we return to residential operations. We also know that experts agree that education is part of any mitigation strategy and no one educates young men more effectively than Wabash! Here is a summary of some of our planning efforts to date:

- The Student Health Center is putting in place protocols for symptom monitoring for all students, faculty, and staff; COVID testing for symptomatic students; isolation of those who are ill; and contact tracing utilizing campus personnel and local and state health department employees. It is imperative that all new students create a Magnus Health Account, and returning students must update their existing account. Students will receive an email with details from Nurse Amidon next week.



- As part of their commitment to the Gentleman’s Rule and a culture of personal responsibility, we will expect all students to meet specific expectations outlined in the Gentleman’s Compact to reduce the medical risks of returning to campus and, once on campus, reduce the spread of the virus.
- The campus will be educated on best practices for maintaining individual and community health. Everyone will be required to follow the guidance of our health experts on topics such as face coverings and masks, safe physical distancing from others, monitoring and prompt reporting of symptoms, COVID testing, and other effective disease mitigation strategies identified by public health agencies.
- We are finalizing plans for how classes will be conducted. Many classes will be taught in larger rooms to allow for physical distance between students and faculty. Other classes will be taught in spaces other than traditional classrooms. Some classes may institute a so-called “hyflex” approach: students will alternately attend class in person, while others participate virtually from their living units. This is also one example of ways that we will accommodate students who can’t attend in person because they are ill or are isolating themselves due to possible COVID exposure.
- We are grateful to have strong campus services partners whose organizations bring best-in-class expertise on managing facilities and dining. The Sodexo team is working diligently on maintenance and deep-cleaning all of our living units to prepare for the return of students. All rooms have been emptied and will be reconfigured according to guidance from health experts. We are also working with our food service providers, Bon Appetit and the fraternity cooks, to plan for the safe preparation and distribution of meals for all students.
- We are working with our North Coast Athletic Conference member schools, conference leadership, and the NCAA to determine the appropriate steps for resuming intercollegiate athletics. Under current guidance, fall sport participants would arrive on campus the same days as non-athletes. As these plans come together, we will communicate with student-athletes and their families.
- While Wabash has long been noted for its outstanding Visiting Artists Series, theatrical productions, concerts, large campus events, and cheering crowds at athletic competitions, we know that our ability to host these activities will be limited this year. We await additional guidance from the CDC, state government, and county health department, but it is obvious that some events will be canceled or held virtually, and others may be limited to the campus community.

Our planning remains fluid and we must expect that work to continue right up to the beginning of the semester given the rapidly evolving nature of both the disease and our understanding of it. While everyone craves certainty and a return to the familiar, the best advice from experts is that both will be in short supply over the coming months. Thus, we ask for your patience as things come together. We are aware that our College community will have additional questions, and we are working on a

comprehensive set of frequently asked questions (FAQs), which will be located on our website (www.wabash.edu/covid). We invite you to submit questions that you would like to see answered by sending them to covid@wabash.edu.

All of us at the College are excited to welcome our new students to campus and to catch up with our returning students. As we have prepared for the fall semester, we have been reminded of a marketing slogan the College once employed: “Wabash. It won’t be easy. It will be worth it.” Indeed, bringing our roughly 1,200 students, faculty, and staff back to campus won’t be easy. But as we all know, our hard work and sacrifices will be worth it because we will accomplish so much together.

Remember: Each of us is little. Together we are giants.

Sincerely,

Gregory D. Hess, President
Scott E. Feller, Dean of the College and President-Elect

