

April 24, 2020 Update

To the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of Wabash:

A person who works on the Wabash campus has tested positive for COVID-19, and that person is currently quarantined at home. We are following all CDC guidelines, and contact tracing is being used to notify those who might have come into contact with the individual. Persons identified through the contact tracing also will be subject to CDC guidelines and appropriate quarantine protocols. We similarly will follow all applicable CDC, state, and local public health guidelines with respect to any additional persons in the campus community who test positive for COVID-19.

This development underscores why we have carefully prepared for COVID-19 for many weeks and made the decisions we have. We will continue to heed the advice of our campus healthcare professionals, Montgomery County Health Department, Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which guide all of our planning and decision-making.

While our online calendar here at Wabash is sadly empty of most of our traditional April events, my wall calendar indicates that today was to be the opening of the Senior Art Majors' Exhibition. The show allows our seniors to share their artistic work – a cumulative four-year study of art and how various styles have influenced them. It's always a joy to see how much pride our seniors have in their work – and how much the students, faculty, and staff enjoy celebrating these artistic accomplishments.

It is unfortunate that we won't have that opportunity this month, as well as other planned spring activities: lacrosse and baseball games against DePauw, the Peck Banquet, our production of *Public Enemy*, the 50th anniversary of the Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies, and a host of musical performances, to name a few. Some things can be rescheduled, while others are simply lost to time.

Yet, we have each other – our most important gift from Wabash. Each week I am reminded of the many ways we are staying together and supporting each other through the COVID-19 pandemic. This week we had a staff member drive a student to Indianapolis for an urgent appointment; dozens of people participated in online webinars for prospective students and their families – including Trustee Bob Grand '79, who led a pre-law panel; teams are working to plan for our safe return to campus in the fall; and many people pulled together so that we could hold our Awards Chapel last night. Indeed, while it would have been great to have our community in the Chapel last night, it was still uplifting to celebrate our College's excellence.

As I said in my Chapel Talk yesterday, "Each of us is Little. Together we are Giants." Let's stay together, Wabash.

As we head into the last week of classes, I thought I would give an update to our seniors in the Class of 2020: we continue to plan for an on-campus ceremony in the fall, at which time we'll distribute your regalia and diplomas. In the meantime, our virtual Commencement Ceremony will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 17. I hope you will tune in to watch the ceremony with your family. Your classmate, Artie Equihua, will speak; we will present the Frank Hugh Sparks Award and the John Maurice Butler Prize; and each graduate's name will be read with an on-screen photo.

I know that virtual graduation will probably not make it on your lifetime highlight reel. But, more often than not, from sadness emerges joy, from disappointment grows hope, and from anger spurs joy. You'll find it, in time, because everything in life that happens to you is a resource. Use these experiences wisely.

Stay safe, stay healthy, and stay home. I promise you, in return, Wabash will stay strong.

With best wishes,

Gregory D. Hess  
President and Professor of Economics  
Wabash College