



March 11, 2020

TO: Leadership Council

FROM: Devinder Malhotra, Chancellor

RE: Minnesota State Academic Continuity

I wanted to share with you the following information regarding our own Academic Continuity planning as all of us continue to receive questions about our operations.

All operations at Minnesota State colleges and universities will continue this week. On **Friday, March 13 at 8:00 a.m.**, I will convene a call with all presidents and will provide additional guidance.

In addition, today at 4:00 p.m., Interim Vice Chancellor Maki will convene a call with your COVID-19 campus contact. I understand many of you will also be joining where we will discuss this issue in addition to other questions we have received around domestic travel and suspension of large group gatherings.

As a reminder, to date, there have been no positive cases of COVID-19 reported at any Minnesota State college or university or at the system office. All faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to heed the guidance of the [Minnesota Department of Health](#), and in particular, staying home when sick, covering your cough, and practicing good hand hygiene.

The Minnesota Department of Health issued the following message today to higher education partners:

With five coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases reported in Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) knows there is increasing concern around what the next steps are for institutes of higher education, given that other colleges and universities across the country are taking various measures including tele-learning and closures.

At this time, MDH is not recommending those measures. Minnesota currently does not have evidence of ongoing community transmission, nor are there any cases currently in a college or university setting. If an institute of higher education has a case in a student, staff, or faculty member, MDH will work closely with the impacted college or university to provide guidance. Moreover, depending on how transmission and spread evolves in the state, we will work with colleges and universities throughout the state on our recommendations.

Academic Continuity

We are all committed to the success of our students, and want to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on their progress. For this reason I am asking all colleges and universities to provide, by this **Friday at 2:00 p.m.** the following information:

- A roster of spring 2020 courses and the ability for the course to move to online delivery using D2L Brightspace, Zoom, or one of our other academic technologies.

- If the answer is no, then please indicate whether an alternative method of instruction.

While I recognize that not all courses and disciplines can move instruction online, we must take seriously our responsibility to ensure the safety and security of our campuses by finding ways to limit in-person interactions. I fully recognize that this may require additional resources and investments to mount an alternative delivery at such a scale.

Senior Vice Chancellor Anderson will be convening a call on **Thursday, March 12** with all Senior Academic & Student Affairs Officers to discuss and answer questions.

I am tremendously grateful for all of the hard work you have engaged in to address this challenging and dynamic situation. We will continue to monitor the situation and will share updates as new information emerges.