

Subject: Update: HACC's Preparation for the Coronavirus – March 26
Date: Thursday, March 26, 2020 5:15:11 PM

Good afternoon, colleagues!

I want to start today's email with a reminder: **HACC is NOT closed.** Please repeat this message to anyone who may be under the impression that we are. Access to our campuses is restricted to essential and approved employees while we will provide remote instruction and remote services to our students. However, it is "business as usual" for most HACC employees – but using remote resources.

I know it can be difficult to process all of the information that is coming at us every day. Listening to and reading the news and spending time on social media can be emotionally and mentally draining. In the midst of this very real crisis, we are gathering positive stories from HACC employees and students. Stay tuned as we launch a special "HACC Heroes" series that celebrates members of our community who are going above and beyond during this challenging time.

As you have come to expect, following are the commonly asked questions and our responses to them. Please note that some of these responses are tentative and subject to change.

If you have additional questions and you do not see the answers on the website, please submit the online form located on the website. Please see the webpage section called "[Information for Employees](#)." If you would like to see the information being communicated to students, please see the webpage called "[Information for Students](#)."

We will continue to update you regularly via email, the aforementioned website and Zoom sessions.

Thank you!

John J. "Ski" Sygielski, MBA, Ed.D.
Pronouns: He, Him, His
President & CEO
HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College

1. How will students be able to register for classes next week if they can't meet with their advisor?

Counselors and professional advisors are working remotely and are available to support students with their academic planning and registration needs. Students who need support should contact the College at 800-ABC-HACC and then select their campus affiliation using the number option for the counseling and advising office. It is important to note that these counselors and advisors are temporarily serving as the primary point of contact for student advising questions during this time so that faculty advisors can focus on the transition to remote instruction.

2. What is being done to make students aware of counseling services during this time of transition?

In February, every HACC student received an email about the availability of mental health counseling services through Mazzitti & Sullivan EAP Services. In addition, on March 12, the [student email](#) announcing the extension of spring break included a reminder about these services. Additional outreach is planned in the coming days and weeks. The College encourages employees to remind students of these services at this challenging time. More information is available at hacc.edu/Wellness.

3. Will those with the intent to retire still receive their notifications for signatures in April, or has that been pushed back? Will those retiring still be entitled to receive their payout packages with all of the ramifications to the budget due to COVID-19?

Yes. We are still on track to issue retirement agreements in April 2020. The [2019-20 Retirement Incentive Offer](#) remains in effect. All employees who submitted the retirement incentive acceptance form will be offered an agreement.

4. Are the second six-week and eight-week summer classes canceled?

No. We plan to hold summer classes in the second six-week and eight-week parts of the term.

5. According to the definition on [myHACC](#), shared governance is “a philosophical framework that includes the College’s internal stakeholders in various levels of decision-making which promotes transparency, maximizes inclusivity, fosters mutual respect, and allows the College to operate with the collaborative input of all those involved.” How was shared governance followed in the decision to cancel 12-week and the first six-week summer terms when faculty organizations were not consulted for input?

We have never worked with the Faculty Organization on the summer schedule, because working with the logistics of the schedule of classes is an administrative task. Scheduling classes is the work of the deans, and the deans were consulted before making the decision to narrow the scope of the 12-week classes to those classes required by programs in the School of Health Sciences that needed the clinical time. We did not cancel all 12-week summer classes.

The rationale for the decision to limit the number of summer classes was explained in Dr. Ski’s [message](#) on March 23.

6. Why haven’t faculty been engaged in decisions about the transition to remote teaching?

Faculty have been engaged. In fact, we could not have made the transition as well as we did without faculty engagement. Before this situation, the associate provost of virtual learning worked with a group of virtual faculty to improve student engagement and expand faculty mentoring. Those processes ramped up last week as faculty led panel discussions, worked with instructional designers on training and staffed walk-in consulting for their faculty colleagues both online and on campuses.

Faculty in the role of department chairs have a seat at the table of Academic Council. Also, the Office of Academic Affairs update meetings have been expanded this week to include other faculty who are part of Academic Council, the assessment coordinator, the developmental education coordinator and the Faculty Organization president.

The Faculty Organization was asked to weigh in on how to handle student course evaluations this semester. It recommended not using them, and the provost is following this recommendation, which is an example of shared governance in action.

7. As we move to all classes being delivered through remote instruction until the end of the semester, are there resources that faculty can access to help them create inclusive environments for learning?

Teaching remotely in times of crisis brings specific challenges. The following resources will be useful to faculty as we create inclusive and equitable learning environments using remote teaching methods.

- <https://diversity.sdsu.edu/resources/inclusive-pedagogy>
- [Inclusion, Equity, and Access While Teaching Remotely](#)

***Quote:** Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world. All things break. And all things can be mended. Not with time, as they say, but with intention. So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you.*
~L. R. Knost