

**From:** Official ESU Email

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020

**To:** ESU Students

**Subject:** Message to the ESU Community from Marcia G. Welsh, Ph.D. - May 13, 2020

To the ESU Family,

We made it. Despite the unsettling dynamics of a global pandemic that changed our world back in March, our East Stroudsburg University community rallied by implementing remote practices that kept our campus strong with a nearly seamless transition to provide our students with a solid academic experience throughout the spring semester. Congratulations and thank you to all of you for your tenacity and grit. Early on in our efforts, ESU adopted the phrase “Apart. But Together.” with the hashtag #WarriorStrong. Never have such statements been more true, and despite the extremely difficult challenges faced by many, we listened to one another, we worked together, we remained resilient in a time of unknowns and unrest.

Our work continues this summer. With Governor Wolf’s orders to continue remote instruction for higher education, our provost and faculty will continue to provide all students with online classes and academic support for the next few months to help many get ahead or to catch up if necessary. I’m so incredibly proud to say that ESU’s faculty and staff have not wavered in their support of our strategic plan to always put students first. The ESU Foundation and our Enrollment Management team also continue to review emergency fund applications for those students who are in financial need. Thanks to the CARES Act funding and the generous support of our alumni, faculty, staff and friends, we hope to help keep many on track to meet their educational and professional goals while dealing with other real life challenges.

But what’s next? What will Fall 2020 bring to ESU? That’s a question all institutions of higher education are facing these days. One thing is certain for ESU – we are making plans to bring our students, faculty and staff back to campus this fall. I can tell you that more than 1,400 of our returning students have already deposited for on campus housing and are eager to return to our beautiful campus. Many of our faculty and staff are eager to come back to their offices to resume work despite a “new normal.” It is for these reasons and so much more that we have started to make preparations for what an ESU education might look like later this year. Provost Bruno and a task force of faculty are already planning for classes, reviewing various models of delivery that may include some face to face classes as well as some online study and, perhaps, shorter but more intense class sessions in order to meet the needs of our students and their circumstances. Our facilities management team is re-imagining how we keep our campus sanitized and safe, identifying campus movement patterns and how we will meet social distancing guidelines to keep everyone healthy. Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence is reviewing best practices for our residence halls, dining services and the delivery of student activities in order to provide positive experiences for every student within pandemic guidelines. And, our administrative team continues to monitor Pennsylvania’s plans for eventually reopening every county. Our intent will be to bring personnel back to campus and put all of our plans in place as soon as we possibly can. But exactly when that will be is currently only a frustrating mystery!

While there are many questions still unanswered, our intent is to open campus this fall, with the health and well-being of our campus community a top priority. What we do know, and what will be critical to bring our campus back together again, will be that everyone will be required to practice the most basic of prevention practices in all we do:

1. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public place on campus.
2. Continue to utilize social distancing, remaining at least six feet away from other people, especially in the residence halls, all academic buildings and other common areas on campus.
3. Use a mask at all times indoors, and in all places outside when you are in the company of others.
4. Clean and disinfect your personal space, particularly areas that are frequently used.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth and if you cough or sneeze, always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow. Then, immediately wash your hands.

These are serious times and there will be serious consequences for those failing to follow these guidelines.

We will continue to update all of you about plans for Fall 2020 as they continue to develop. My hope is that you all remain stay safe and healthy and to continue to plan your educational journey as a member of the Warrior family. Thank you.

Marcia G. Welsh, Ph.D.  
President

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