



Dear CSUSM Community,

I know you have been waiting for more information on next steps about fall semester. Today California State University (CSU) Chancellor Timothy White affirmed in the CSU Board of Trustees meeting that the CSU will be open and ready to serve students with safety as a top priority across all 23 campuses.

As Chancellor White said in his statement to the board, “Our planning approach will result in CSU courses primarily being delivered virtually for the fall 2020 term, with limited exceptions for in-person activities that cannot be delivered virtually, are indispensable to the university’s core mission and can be conducted within rigorous standards of safety and welfare. There will be hybrid approaches, and there will be variability across the 23 campuses due to specific context and circumstances.”

With this news, I want to share with you CSUSM next steps:

- All lecture-based instruction will occur online in the fall. This summer, faculty will have the opportunity to engage in professional training and integrating additional online pedagogy into their courses to enhance student learning, with support from the Faculty Center and IITS. We expect that the student virtual experience will be enhanced given that there is more time for planning compared to earlier this spring when we transitioned to online learning in just a matter of days.
- For certain lab, clinical, art studio and performance-based courses, we will be seeking exceptions for a hybrid approach that includes in-person experiences, working under the guidance of the CSU as well as local and state public health officials to ensure rigorous safety measures are in place. These measures are critical to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to keep our students, faculty, staff and greater community healthy. Thanks to the leadership of our provost and each college dean with their respective faculty, we have already identified which experiential courses we are seeking to deliver in person. Following consultation with facilities experts, health and safety experts and the CSU, we will be able to update the course schedule and indicate the modality of each course.
- On-campus housing will be available for students, although with decreased density and increased health and safety measures to allow for appropriate social distancing. For students who have already indicated their interest in living in housing this fall, you can expect to hear from us shortly with more information.
- We are working to expand, enrich and improve online student services and experiences. We are committed to offering ALL of our students a welcoming and robust academic experience where they can continue to pursue both their personal and academic goals. This summer, we will continue to have academic advisers and student support services available for our students who may have questions about the robust financial aid options available to them, as well as housing options and much more.
- We are investing in classroom, technology, testing and health and safety infrastructure so that we can deliver limited in-person courses and experiences in fall.
- We will continue to put the health and safety of our entire campus community first as we continue to be flexible and responsive to ongoing information about COVID-19.

I want to acknowledge the vital contributions of our faculty, staff and expanded Emergency Operations Center (EOC) team for all of their work as they have planned for several fall semester scenarios. They are all CSUSM heroes for the way they are thoughtfully making plans to ensure we have a safe, healthy and robust learning environment this fall.

I continue to be impressed by your collective resilience. Together, we are navigating one of the most complex challenges higher education has ever faced. I am proud to be leading a campus alongside so many caring individuals. In all that we do and all decisions we make, we will continue to focus on health and safety and the academic and life-long success of our students.

I want to thank Chancellor White and the CSU system for providing us with this guidance now so that we have ample time to prepare. As he noted, “There are some people today who will say that we are moving too far too fast in our planning... But it would be irresponsible to approach it the other way around and wait until August to only then scramble and not be prepared to provide a robust learning and support environment for our students.”

As dedicated and creative leaders, we will continue to pave a path forward. I am committed to consulting with Academic Senate, ASI, and faculty and staff union leaders as we plan, putting health and safety first for all our communities. As more information is available, I will continue to communicate frequently with you over the summer.

With appreciation,

Ellen Neufeldt
President

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