MEMORANDUM

TO: ECU Community

FROM: Dr. Philip Rogers, Chancellor

DATE: March 18, 2021

SUBJ: Planning for Fall 2021: Return to Campus

The history of East Carolina University is defined by challenges met and overcome. The challenges of this past year have been significant, but through it all the strength and determination of Pirate Nation have been on full display as together we adapted and responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for your commitment this spring to following the university’s community expectations and doing your part to keep campus safe. It is encouraging to see the low rate of COVID-19 cases in the campus community and the increasing rate of vaccine availability. Take advantage of the opportunity to get vaccinated as soon as it is available to you. Employees and current students should check the ECU vaccine information site regularly for updates on campus vaccination clinics.

The same energy and focus that defined our response to COVID-19 will now be directed to planning and preparing for a return to campus operations for the Fall 2021 semester that will hopefully look more like the ECU experiences we expect. Based on the guidance of local, state and national public health experts, we are planning for a return of students, faculty and staff to campus for the fall. We will take all precautions necessary to keep our community safe.

Simply put, our goal is to begin transitioning back to regular on-campus operations following state and UNC System guidelines. While safety remains our top priority, we must now also work to re-establish the wonderful sense of community that comes from our shared on-campus experience.

To that end, I am directing our university leadership to prioritize preparations for the resumption of on campus operations. Soon I will charge a Fall 2021 planning team to focus on the related operational aspects.

Details will be provided in the coming weeks, but today we can share the following goals:

Courses: We intend for the university to return to pre-pandemic modes of course delivery, such as face-to-face classes with safety precautions in place. Registration for the fall semester begins March 29 for all current students.
**Housing:** Residence halls will return to normal capacity with double-occupancy student rooms and safety protocols in place. Some single-room options will be available, mostly for returning students. The housing application process is open: [https://campusliving.ecu.edu/](https://campusliving.ecu.edu/).

**Campus Life:** Dining Services will return to normal operations with safety protocols in place. Student Recreation Centers will also return to full operations.

We are already taking positive steps in this direction. Our ECU Pirates have begun hosting athletic events with a limited number of fans in attendance; we are hosting several Pirate Aboard sessions for prospective students and families; and some face-to-face student activities are occurring on campus. Be assured that each step we take is the result of careful planning and consideration.

As we move forward, I must stress that our optimism for continued improvement must be matched by continued vigilance. Stay informed. Comply with all health and safety guidelines.

It will be common to hear the phrase "return to normal" as we envision the next few months, but I want to encourage us all to think of this moment as something more than simple nostalgia for what things were like before the pandemic. While much has been lost, much has also been learned.

The challenge now is to return even better than we were before.

And Pirates always rise to the challenge.

Dr. Philip Rogers
Chancellor