MEMORANDUM

TO: ECU Community

FROM: Ron Mitchelson, Interim Chancellor

DATE: March 20, 2020

SUBJ: Announcement regarding May 2020 Commencement

This academic year has presented multiple challenges individually and as an ECU community – hurricane in the fall and now this pandemic that is moving across the globe. It is disrupting our everyday lives and our time on campus, including in-person classes, internships and graduation. But we must continue to focus on protecting the health and safety of our Pirate family and on continuing the education of our students.

Based on current federal and UNC System guidelines regarding the evolving nature of COVID-19, ECU’s May 8 commencement ceremony will move to a virtual event and we are discussing an in-person event (or events) for later this year. We will keep you informed about those later in-person events as soon as the plans are finalized.

May’s in-person commencement celebrations, including unit and departmental ceremonies and Grad Bash, will not be held. We know you are disappointed. We are, too. Faculty and staff enjoy seeing graduates taking photos and celebrating with their families.

We know commencement weekend is important and you have had it marked on your calendar for a long time, but your education from ECU is more than just one day. We are incredibly proud of you and your academic accomplishments and realize this is an important milestone for you and your families.

The university is working to develop a plan to recognize and celebrate your accomplishments. In addition to the virtual event in May, we are also discussing events in August and December to recognize our graduates. We will provide more details as those plans are finalized. Our ECU Commencement website, https://commencement.ecu.edu/, will be updated with the latest information.

Like some of you, I am a first-generation college graduate. Commencement on a university campus is a wonderful tradition, and we remain committed to celebrating this day with the Class of 2020 when we can ensure the health and safety of our graduates and their family members. Until then, thank you for your understanding and patience.