

April 5, 2020

Dear Vanguard Community,

As you know, the health and safety of our students and employees has to be our number one priority at this time. For that reason, I need to share information about how we will complete the Spring 2020 semester.

Alternative Methods of Instruction/Remote Learning for the Remainder of the Spring 2020 Semester

At this time, all indications are that cases of COVID-19 will continue to rise in Arkansas for the next few weeks. For that reason, all Spring 2020 courses on all ASU-Beebe campuses will complete the semester through Alternative Methods of Instruction and remote learning. As much as we would like to have students back in our classrooms, laboratories and shops to learn together in person, it is not safe to do so. Our primary objective is to keep our faculty, staff and students healthy while we minimize the negative impact on your educational experience. Faculty members will continue to communicate with students through their ASU-Beebe email and/or through CANVAS with specific instructions about how to complete their remote instruction options.

I know this is not the learning format many of you signed up for. This is not the semester any of us signed up for. But I want to assure you, your faculty and staff are working diligently to help each student through each course. I ask you to stay engaged, give this a chance, and ask us for help when you need it. Please, do not drop any courses without consulting first with the faculty member of that course and your advisor. These aren't ideal circumstances, but we stand ready to assist each of you in making progress on your educational pathways.

Spring 2020 Commencement Altered

Because of the current environment, our Spring 2020 traditional commencement exercises will not take place in the usual way. Though I have anticipated this would be our course of action for weeks, as a person who lives to shake our graduates' hands as they cross our stage, I am heartbroken that we will not be able to gather in-person as the Vanguard Community on May 8 and 9 to celebrate your accomplishments.

That said, our Commencement Committee has been hard at work designing options for us to safely celebrate your graduation. In a few days, we will share those plans with our Spring 2020 graduates. I keep saying we are "doing things differently" and "learning something new." I look forward to the different way we will honor the Class of 2020. The Committee has planned something very special, and I believe each of you will be very pleased.

I want to make sure our Spring 2020 graduates understand that though your commencement ceremony will be celebrated remotely, you are still graduating. Commencement is a celebratory

ceremony, but it is not a requirement for graduation. If you have completed your requirements to graduate, your diploma will be mailed to you on the same schedule as it would if we did have a traditional commencement ceremony.

New Restrictions on Student Housing

In order to continue to protect the health and well-being of our on-campus community, ASU-Beebe is restricting on-campus housing. Students must petition to stay in the residence halls. Only those residents who meet the following criteria will be permitted to remain in housing:

- the resident has demonstrated they have no other room/board options; or
- the resident has demonstrated they do not have ready access to computers or the internet away from campus; or
- the resident has demonstrated they would be at risk for significant personal or financial harm away from campus;
- and the resident is in good standing with the Dean of Students.

All students who are not granted permission to remain on campus will have until April 17, 2020, to check out and to remove their personal property from the rooms.

For students who will no longer live on campus, ASU-Beebe will provide a room/board credit to their student account for the upcoming Fall 2020 Semester. This is a complicated procedure because the sources of funding for each student's housing is unique and must be calculated individually. Our Finance and Administration division will calculate the exact individual pro-rated amounts over the coming weeks. So, while we are unable to tell students exactly what the amount will be today, please know that we are working on determining what each student's housing credit will be. We are also using similar guidelines to calculate refunds for students who will be graduating this semester.

Students who will no longer live on campus must schedule an individual meeting with housing staff between Tuesday, April 7, 2020 to Friday, April 17, 2020 to be able to return to campus and complete the check-out process. To ensure a safe and orderly move-out process, Director of Student Life, Zackery Tucker, will send a separate email to residents directly with all the details on how to coordinate the check-out process.

#VanguardStrong

The Spring 2020 semester will go down in the history books as a very difficult one, but our students and our faculty and staff have proven that they are #VanguardPrepared and #VanguardStrong. Thank you for your grit and determination. Let's pledge together to make the most of the rest of the Spring 2020 semester.

Stay safe, Everyone!

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