Dear Cardinal Family,

Yesterday, Oct. 26, Gov. Beshear announced a list of red zone counties and Jefferson County was on that list. Red zone counties are those with 25 or more average daily cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 residents.

The university is monitoring the situation very closely. At present, we have not seen an increase in COVID-19 cases among our university population. Should the need arise, we have 38 isolation beds available on campus and a great deal of capacity in a local hotel for housing our COVID-19 positive residential students in isolation. We will continue maintaining an open, de-densified campus. We additional actions we are taking to minimize the spread of the virus on campus:

- **We have updated our definition of exposure** to be in accordance with the CDC. Exposure to COVID-19 is now defined as an interaction that takes place between individuals spaced less than 6 feet apart in a single or in multiple episodes for more than 15 minutes regardless of masking. This will increase the number of university members who will be contacted during contact tracing when positive cases arise on campus resulting in an increased number of individuals in self-isolation or quarantine.

- **We continue to ask all deans and vice presidents to allow staff who can work remotely to do so.**

- **We ask for better mask compliance in all campus libraries and the Student Activities Center** on the Belknap Campus. Many have reported non-compliance in those spaces and we ask you to double-down on compliance in these areas so that everyone feels safe when they are studying or hanging out. (See below for more mask reminders.)

- **Winter commencement ceremonies will be conducted virtually** on Dec. 12. We regret, again, not being able to physically conduct this special tradition this year. We look forward to celebrating in person when it is safe to do so.

- **Visits and tours on campus** should be postponed unless they are essential. If it is indeed essential for you to host a visitor on campus, you must follow the COVID-19 Requirements for Hosts and please have your visitor(s) review our Requirements for Visitors prior to their arrival on campus.

Additionally, all students, faculty and staff should continue doing the following:

- **Remember masks must be worn** in all indoor, public areas, including hallways and restrooms. Even if you are the only person occupying a public space, masks must still be worn. You may be asked to leave a public area if you are not wearing a mask.

- **Practice physical distancing** both indoors and outdoors.

- **Remember all events and meetings should be virtual** unless it is necessary to be in person. If
you are organizing an event, meeting or study group, please follow the [Campus Procedures](#) for organizing events and meetings.

- **Report your travel** to [Campus Health](#) if you will be travelling to a location with a positivity rate of 10% or higher. Carefully research the [state-wide positivity rate](#) or the [international warning level](#) of a destination before choosing to travel.

- **Get your free flu shot.** Flu shots are required for all students, faculty and staff who are coming to campus. Many [common symptoms of the flu](#) are also symptoms of COVID-19. If more people are vaccinated for the flu, it will allow our healthcare system to remain agile this season. If you have already had a flu shot with an off-campus provider, if you are not coming to campus or if you are seeking an exemption, complete this [waiver form](#).

- **Contact the Business Operations COVID Support Team** if you have questions or concerns.

We have found that most of our university’s disease activity happens when university members engage in close contact activities off campus and out of state. Please remember, our responsibilities to each other during this time don’t stop at the edges of campus. Wearing our masks, practicing physical distancing and washing our hands frequently are our best defenses against the virus.

We are just four weeks away from Thanksgiving Break. We know that teaching, learning and working in a pandemic has been hard. Thank you so much for all your efforts to help us safely fulfill our educational and research missions this semester.

**Beth A. Boehm**  
Executive Vice President and University Provost

**Kevin Gardner**  
Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation

**Mary Elizabeth Miles**  
Vice President, Human Resources

**Phillip Bressoud**  
Executive Director, Campus Health Services