



TO: Rhodes State College Employees
FROM: Cynthia E. Spiers, President
DATE: March 25, 2020
SUBJECT: Revised Operations for Spring, Summer and Fall Spring Semester 2020

I have had a conversation with Jane Krites, Board Chair, about a difficult decision that we have made regarding Commencement. I am sincerely disappointed to inform you that Rhodes State's May Commencement will be cancelled. Unfortunately, our graduates are completing their degrees at a most challenging time. The uncertainty about when the COVID-19 spread will end is not clear. After talking to Cabinet, and based on our commitment to follow the Governor's recommendations/Executive Orders in the best interest of our students, faculty and staff, and communities, we believe we have no choice.

We all recognize that the Rhodes State Commencement is a very exciting and happy time for our graduates, their parents, friends, significant others, and all of you. It is a time to celebrate past accomplishments and certify our students' academic achievements; it is a right-of-passage for them. For this reason, we are looking at alternative ways in which we may still be able to confer degrees and find innovative opportunities to celebrate our graduates' successes.

With this uncertainty, we will continue to deliver all Spring semester courses online as well as all Summer session courses. Much is going on, and we are all working diligently, as Rhodes State knows how to do. We are reorganizing all of our work in an effort to meet all of the demands for our students learning and support. We are moving paper forms to electronic forms, redesigning processes making them more student-centered, and developing online group orientations for new students as well as a virtual tour of campus. We are advising students face-to-face on Zoom rather than in an office, and faculty are using it to teach along with other platforms; all of this to maintain a sense of social interaction with our students. Our faculty are video-taping what they can to offer labs online or using new software designed for online lab instruction. It is an interesting and innovative landscape right now. But, when we get through this, we will be better off for it. We will have moved into a more technologically driven environment that prepares us for the future and any other crisis... we will have a more comprehensive and innovatively dynamic continuity plan.

Below you will find the **Revised Operations for Spring, Summer and Fall Spring Semester 2020:**

Spring Semester 2020

1. Classes will be delivered online and/or remote through the end of Spring semester. CDIL is available to help faculty with Canvas questions.
2. Finals exams will be held from April 25 to May 1. The CDIL will be available to help faculty as the design their online finals.
3. The Testing Center is closed. Final exams and other course exams will be administered through Canvas. Placement tests are under discussion and are currently on hold.
4. Grades are due Sunday, May 3, at 6:00 p.m. CDIL will be sending out additional information on grade submission prior to the deadline, approximately the week of April 6th.

5. Incomplete grades should be given only for students who at the end of the semester are successfully passing the course and have limited assignments or exams to complete. Students should not be given an Incomplete and then be instructed to repeat the course. Please note that an Incomplete grade may impact a student's financial aid. The student has six weeks into the Fall 2020 semester to complete the coursework for Spring 2020.
6. Students who have successfully completed all requirements will have their degree conferred on their record the week of May 11. Further discussions will be held to determine actions of students who receive an Incomplete.

Summer Session 2020

1. All classes for Summer 2020 will be delivered online and/or remote as approved by the Division Dean.
2. All Classes will start June 1, 2020, and run for either 8 weeks or 10 weeks.
 - a. 8 week classes will end on July 24 and Finals will run from July 27 - July 31.
 - b. 10 week classes will end on August 7 and Finals will run from August 10 - August 14.
3. Registration for Summer will open April 6 for all students.
4. Divisions have until March 30 to get schedule changes to the Registrar's Office.
5. Only courses that have a strong chance of running should be added to the schedule. If departments have any concerns about a class running, either it shouldn't be offered or it should be capped at 0.
6. If there are any questions regarding course setup in Banner, please work with Alissa Zimmerman in the Registrar's Office.

Fall Semester 2020

1. At this point we are anticipating Fall 2020 will be delivered either Face-to-Face; Online, or Hybrid (normal schedule).
2. Courses will start on Wednesday, August 26. Classes will end on December 11 with Finals running from December 12 - December 18.
3. Registration for Fall will open on May 4 for all students. This is a change from in the past.
4. Divisions have until April 24 to get schedule changes to the Registrar's Office.

Through all of this, our mission – Rhodes State College changes lives, builds futures and improves communities through life-long learning – stays Rhodes Strong. It speaks to the relevance of this institution and the importance of our communities to the College. You are a part of this relevance, and we will get through this together.