
3-20-2020

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Recommended Citation

Weinstein, Mark D., "Student-Centered Focus Leads Cedarville University During Coronavirus Pandemic" (2020). *News Releases*. 1094.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 20, 2020

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Student-Centered Focus Leads Cedarville University During Coronavirus Pandemic

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- In a heart-felt letter to the Cedarville University community, including faculty, staff, and students, Cedarville University President Dr. Thomas White announced this morning the university will teach online for the remainder of the semester. He also announced all campus events this semester have been canceled or moved online, commencement will be postponed, and a detailed plan for students to move out of their residence halls by Saturday, May 2. The university will refund money for unused room and board fees, and there will not be a graduation fee this year. The university hopes to hold a celebration event in honor of the 2020 graduates at a later date, and diplomas will be mailed to graduates in May.

Below is the letter from Dr. White to the Cedarville University community that outlines Cedarville's decisions:

March 20, 2020

Dear Cedarville Family,

Proverbs 16:9 states, "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps."

My heart wants us to be back on campus. I long to sing praises to God alongside you, celebrate with you at Elliv and graduation, and shed a few tears with our seniors as they experience the joy and heartache of knowing their next chapter begins as their 1,000 days at Cedarville ends.

For reasons that we may never understand, a rare and dangerous pandemic has derailed our plans. You have seen the same news, guidelines, and reports that I have. Restaurants, fitness centers, and businesses have closed to slow the spread. The CDC has issued guidance requesting that all events consisting of 50 people or more should be canceled or postponed for the next eight weeks or until May 10, 2020. Our attempts to mitigate the spread of the virus will also lengthen the time frame of infection. Infectious disease experts estimate that it may not peak until May.

In all transparency, we know what needs to happen, but we don't want to finalize it. We know what we have to do, but writing, typing, or speaking it seems to take away the hope of what we deeply want. These weeks have been painful. We feel for our seniors who are missing moments that we cherish together, musicians who will miss that senior recital, athletes who will not have that final game to celebrate, and so many others who will miss special events that may never happen.

But we know that our ultimate hope and joy lie not in temporal events but in an eternal Savior. In times like these, we must lean on and live out our theology.

Our theology requires and our core values affirm that we need to love God and love our neighbor. Part of this includes doing our part not to infect others or to escalate infections to the point where hospitals cannot handle the needs.

The sooner we make these decisions the more time it will allow for faculty, staff, students and families to plan for what lies ahead. We simply have no choice but to take the following actions:

- **Classes** - All classes for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester will be delivered through remote or online education. The few remaining students in clinical experiences will receive specific information from their respective School.
- **Events** - All on-campus events through the spring 2020 semester are canceled or moved to an online format.
- **Commencement** - Commencement will be postponed, and no graduation fee will be charged. Degrees will still be conferred at the end of the semester, and we will send diplomas in May. If possible, we hope to schedule a celebration event at a later date. As we consider possible options now, perhaps we will have a weekend with a senior chapel, worship evening, and graduation ceremony. We cannot set a date yet because we don't know how long this pandemic will last.
- **Summer School** - Summer school classes currently remain scheduled but may need to be offered through an online format. Nursing classes with a clinical component will be determined at a later time.
- **Global Outreach** - Summer 2020 Global Outreach trips are canceled or postponed to a future year.
- **Residence Halls** - Residence Halls are closing as soon as possible. All residential students should plan to clean and check out of their residence hall rooms by Saturday, May 2, 2020. For more information regarding move out and to register for a move out date, please visit cedarville.edu/moveout.
- **International Students** - The International Student Services office will work with you to facilitate your return home as soon as possible. In cases where it is not possible to return home in the near term, be assured we will continue to provide you support during your time in the United States.
- **Students Currently on Campus** - RDs will coordinate move-out plans.
- **Chapel** - We will continue to stream live chapels on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday through the remainder of spring semester.
- **Campus Updates** - We will continue to update you on decisions and provide information and resources via the cedarville.edu/COVID-19 blog.

We want you to know that we will do everything we can to help you adjust to this semester of distance learning and to succeed in the pursuit of your degree program. We cannot wait to have you back on campus, Lord willing, in the fall. Toward that end, we are taking the following steps:

Financially:

- We are issuing a refund for the unused portion of your room and board that will be credited to your student account. This will be applied to any outstanding balance, or you may leave this credit on your account for next semester. If you are a senior and/or will end the semester with a credit balance, we will deposit the balance to your bank account upon your request.
- We will not charge *additional* late fees nor interest on unpaid balances through the summer. We will also not place holds on registration for past due balances. We will work with you to help you continue to succeed.

Financial Aid:

- We will be sending your financial aid and anticipated tuition cost later this spring.
- Our Financial Aid office stands ready to assist those who may have experienced severe economic impact as a result of the Coronavirus. We want to make sure you succeed in your educational pursuits and will help as we can. Please contact the Financial Aid office if you fear that you may not be able to return in the fall.
- No students will lose their Cedarville academic or need-based scholarships for the 2020-21 school year as a result of poor academic performance this spring semester.

Academically:

- We are watching the transition to distance learning closely to make sure we maintain academic excellence in balance with student success.
- We have extended the opportunity to withdraw from a class through April 3.
- For those who may have trouble adjusting to online classes, I am asking the Academic Division to develop a pass/fail (credit/no credit) option, similar to what Duke and MIT have provided for their students. This would include an option that allows you to choose to have a grade if you prefer. Do your best, work hard, and know that we will do all we can to help you succeed.

We expect that you will demonstrate excellence in effort and integrity in your conduct. You need to pass these classes and learn the material to stay on track toward graduation, so I encourage you to work diligently toward that end. At the same time, we understand that this transition may be difficult on various learning styles. Some of you will have to watch siblings home from school and may not have quiet study environments. Others will struggle with sub-par internet access or other uncontrollable situations. We remain committed to helping you succeed and, Lord willing, returning to campus this fall in Cedarville.

We will be praying for you and stand ready to help as we can. I am praying that during these unprecedented times, your words and life will be a witness to your stand for the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Thomas White
President

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,380 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more

than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.