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Kenyon News Bulletin April 1, 2020

Office of Communications

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COVID-19 Update from President Decatur, April 1

1 message

News Bulletin <newsbulletin@kenyon.edu>

Wed, Apr 1, 2020 at 3:45 PM

To: employee-info@kenyon.edu, student-info@kenyon.edu

Dear members of the Kenyon College community,

Much has been said about the “new normal” that is emerging in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. I am in awe of the ways members of the Kenyon community are finding a new equilibrium after the shockwaves of the past month, and yet I recognize the very real, and often disproportionate, challenges these circumstances present, especially to our students. Homes have been uprooted, schedules disrupted, new responsibilities assumed. And then there are the financial realities of living and learning off campus. It would be impossible to insulate any of us from these realities, but we have taken steps where possible to provide a buffer for our students.

Grading policies

After much consideration and thoughtful debate, the College has further adjusted its grading policies to give faculty and students maximum flexibility in deciding the most appropriate way to handle evaluations given the realities of the semester. Where it is impossible or very difficult to render a meaningful grade, faculty may convert their course to credit/no credit (CR/NC) with approval of the Curricular Policy Committee. All other courses will shift to pass/fail (P/F); in P/F courses, letter grades will be submitted to students and the registrar at the end of the semester but will not appear on the transcript unless requested by the student. We recognize that there are many valuable and divergent perspectives on this subject and the faculty considered them carefully in revising our policies; we feel this solution best serves Kenyon students at this unprecedented time. For details, read [Provost Klesner's message](#) to campus.

Room and board credits, grants for living expenses

Many students will be eligible for a credit of the unused portion of their spring 2020 room and board fees, which they may apply to next year's tuition or receive as a refund net of any balance due on their account. Students who received need-based scholarships or grants that covered all or a portion of room and board fees, and who therefore are not eligible for a refund, will receive a grant toward living expenses to assist in the transition to distance learning. Credits will be applied to student accounts by April 15 as applicable; instructions for receiving refunds or grants have been sent to the billing contact for each account. Students should contact the Student Billing Office at student.billing@kenyon.edu with any questions.

Continuity of student employment

We are committed to ensuring that students are not cut off from income they had expected to earn on campus this semester. Last week we confirmed that we will retain all current student employees as remote workers, whether or not their position is a work-study position, and that we will [continue to pay](#) them as regularly scheduled through May 8. We recognize that some duties will not be able to be performed from afar, but ensuring continuity of income is one way we can provide a buffer in this unsettled environment. Students should reach out to their supervisor if they have any questions.

Need-based financial aid

At Kenyon, we are committed to meeting 100 percent of demonstrated financial need with a combination of grants, scholarships, student employment and student loans. We recognize that families may have very recent and immediate changes to financial circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and our financial aid staff (finaid@kenyon.edu) is available to discuss your emerging situation. Those who have not applied for financial aid in the past but who face new financial concerns are also encouraged to contact the office for guidance. Kenyon will continue to accept [financial aid applications from returning students](#) throughout the summer months.

Student emergency assistance fund

Kenyon has, and is actively deploying, a Student Emergency Assistance Fund to support students for whom these and other circumstances present special financial challenges. To access these funds, students should contact the Office of

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at odei@kenyon.edu. We are able to direct these funds to COVID-19-related needs thanks in part to the generosity of alumni and other members of the extended Kenyon community, who asked and acted early in this crisis to [assist students in these uncertain times](#).

Computer hardware and internet access

Before remote instruction began, the College conducted a survey of students' technology needs. We have since shipped loaner computers to students needing additional hardware and put together a guide to free and discounted internet resources. To learn more about these and other resources, students should visit the [student resources page](#) maintained by Library and Information Services.

Counseling

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to adjust the services provided by the Cox Health & Counseling Center. It is not currently possible for our counselors to work with students who are located outside the state of Ohio due to state licensure requirements. We are actively exploring other therapy options and hope to have more to report soon. While we cannot offer students outside Ohio clinical services at this time, we can assist them in connecting with a local provider; students should contact the Cox Health & Counseling Center at counseling@kenyon.edu for assistance. As always, no matter your location, you have 24/7 access to ProtoCall, which provides a licensed clinical behavioral health professional to assist with immediate support, crisis intervention and stabilization. ProtoCall can be reached by calling Campus Safety at 740-427-5555 and requesting to be connected.

Ongoing updates

As a reminder, we are updating our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) regularly.

While the COVID-19 crisis will most assuredly impact our individual lives in different ways, we will continue to take steps as a community in the direction of our shared values. I have appreciated the many voices who have helped keep our course true over several challenging weeks, and I am proud of the collective compassion that has propelled us forward.

Yours truly,

Sean Decatur
President

Prepared by the Office of Communications, April 1, 2020