

To: College of Dentistry
Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2020
Subject: Important Communication

Faculty, Residents, Staff, and Students,

I suspect that all of you have been at Oklahoma Mission of Mercy (OKMOM) at one time or another, helping all those in need. For every OKMOM, we begin to prepare almost a year in advance; it takes that long for us to be ready to serve. The question is: at each year, what time do we finish OKMOM? We finish when everyone is taken care of.....we finish when the job is done.

That is the mark of a true professional. We give of ourselves and immerse our lives into serving others. Our foundation and armament is that we prepare in advance to serve those in need.

CV19 is challenging our profession, in both how we serve, and how we educate. Because our college is based on both the public we serve, and the education of future professionals and colleagues, eminently demonstrates this challenge.

We were planning on returning on April 6th. However, and by now, you all know the Mayor of Oklahoma County has placed a 21-day suspension on businesses, including all elective medical and dental procedures.

From the mandates, our current environment, and looking at information from key stakeholders, we will follow that order and continue to suspend our operations through April 19th. We are now projected to begin full operations on Monday, April 20th, 2020.

We will be reducing our personnel here to minimum levels of operation. Those who can telecommute, will be doing so and others will be requested to stay at home, per the orders of the governor and mayor.

To our students, my future colleagues, we will get through this. Each class will receive an email from me very soon on how we plan to address this lapse in your dental education and again.....those we serve.

As I address each one of your classes, remember the first paragraph. We finish the job when it is done.....we finish when we have prepared ourselves to take care of those in need. This is not only required through our own university standards, but the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). CODA's requirements to be an accredited program are very specific. Incidentally, in order to receive licensure, one must graduate from an accredited program; thus, you see the critical aspects of why maintaining accreditation is paramount. As future professionals, I know that you consider your preparation paramount for the success of your career and your patients you will serve. Therefore, we will be extending our year into the May intercession, and we need each of you to prepare your time accordingly. Expanding into the May break is the only way that we can keep you on schedule to graduate at your planned graduation time. We, including each of you, are professionals and I hope that we all respect what it takes to be "granted" the incredible opportunity to be a professional. Again, I will be emailing each class to provide further information specific to your class.

Faculty and Staff, you will be receiving instructions from your Deans, Department Chairs, Division Heads, and Directors. An email will be sent to you very soon that will provide necessary information from HR including reporting of time for salaried and hourly individuals.

I have met with many of you and indicated that when we return, we will need to "make up lost time." This is true with any entity, business or educational institution. We will be doing anything necessary to help address this period of suspension. I would expect that you would not challenge any of your administration if requested to stay additional time, or go outside of our normal working hours, or responsibilities.

This is a challenging time for all of us. Many are without jobs and income. Many are scared for their families. Many are not worried about what is remaining at the grocery store when their thoughts are surrounded with not having money to even consider going to the store.

We are all blessed here beyond imagination. As I have said prior, we have all worked hard in years past so that we are secure in our positions and income now. In times such as these, we are definitely in the minority.

All of us – faculty, staff, residents, and students are blessed.

Smile, laugh, take a walk in the beautiful sunshine – enjoy what we have.

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