



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear Spartans,

As president of Michigan State University, it is my ultimate responsibility to protect the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff. That has been my guiding principle since I arrived at this great university last year, and even more so since the coronavirus pandemic turned our lives upside down.

Our decision in March to transition to remote classes and have more employees work remotely was the right one. Since that time, we've worked diligently to create new approaches to educational and enrichment opportunities for our students, while always keeping health and safety foremost in mind. Our entire process stems from values-based decisions and constant evaluation and re-evaluation, as the nature of the pandemic changes.

But given the current status of the virus in our country — particularly what we are seeing at other institutions as they re-populate their campus communities — it has become evident to me that, despite our best efforts and strong planning, it is unlikely we can prevent widespread transmission of COVID-19 between students if our undergraduates return to campus.

So, effective immediately, we are asking undergraduate students who planned to live in our residence halls this fall to stay home and continue their education with MSU remotely. While a vast majority of our classes already were offered in remote formats, we will work the next two weeks to transition those that were in-person or hybrid to remote formats.

There will be some exceptions for the colleges of Law, Human Medicine, Nursing, Osteopathic Medicine and Veterinary Medicine as well as all graduate programs. Those colleges and programs will learn more details soon. In addition, our research initiatives, which are done in the very safest possible conditions, will continue. We will also work with our international students on their student visa status and those needing labs, studios and performance-based classes that are required for graduation.

Through Residential and Hospitality Services, we will provide information to all students who are impacted by this decision. Refunds or credits will be issued to individuals who have already paid for the fall semester. We also realize that for some students, MSU is their home or they need to be on campus for employment. Just like we did this spring, we will continue to provide a safe place for a small number of students in our residence halls. We remain committed to our students, their success and their safety.

We have more decisions to make in the coming days about how best to make this transition, and we will share additional information with you as soon as we can. Right now, we want to make sure our students, faculty and staff have the ability to change any needed plans as we work toward a Sept. 2 start date for remote undergraduate education.

For our off-campus students, we also encourage you to consider staying in your home communities if that is a safer place for you. We are working with our partners in the city of East Lansing and the Ingham County Health Department to create the safest community possible. For our MSU employees, we continue to encourage everyone who can work remotely or from home to do so.

This transition may not be easy for some, and we will make sure students have access to needed support areas such as mental health, information technology, student services and financial aid. The virus has impacted all of us in some way, although some groups have been impacted more than others. I urge everyone to continue showing their compassion and support for one another as we collectively get through this time.

We have seen that it is difficult for colleges and universities, and other areas of education such as K-12, to be open successfully right now given the prevalence of the virus. While I have faith in our students and all of the members of the campus community, we know that this virus is relentless and is easily spread. We're seeing on our campus and in other areas of the country that a few mistakes by some are having large impacts on many.

This was an extraordinarily difficult decision, but the safety of our campus community must be our paramount concern. Please know that we are making choices based on reliable public health data, updates from local and state officials and our understanding of the science and research available to us on the novel coronavirus.

Finally, we remain committed to each student's success and have confidence that we will deliver a high-value educational experience regardless of the format. And rest assured we will continue to make decisions and take actions guided by our core values. I am very proud of the collective Spartan spirit shown over the past six months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. L. Stanley Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D.
President