



**ALBANY COLLEGE
OF PHARMACY
AND HEALTH SCIENCES**

Coronavirus Update # 12 – 4/29/20 Employee Furloughs, Tuition, Salary and Hiring Freezes

To ACPHS Community,

The COVID-19 pandemic has required the College to make difficult but necessary decisions to protect the health and safety of our campus community. While our immediate focus was protecting our community and transitioning to remote instruction, we must now address the financial ramifications this pandemic has caused.

Tuition Freeze

Since the pandemic has caused many unforeseen financial hardships for our students and their families, we've decided to not increase tuition for the upcoming year. It's important we do this to help our current students and attract prospective students since many colleges are also freezing tuition.

Projected Budget Shortfall

Like so many colleges and universities across the country, we must take steps to try and recover the unexpected losses and expenses associated with the pandemic, including providing student refunds and moving to remote instruction. We must also make up for the projected budget shortfall expected due to estimated declining enrollment.

Employee Furloughs

After extensive discussion, we've decided to temporarily furlough 20 employees who, through no fault of their own, are unable to perform their job duties due to the Governor's mandated social distancing requirements. This is about 6% of our workforce. Salaried employees being furloughed will be paid through April 30, and hourly employees being furloughed will be paid through May 1. At this time, the furlough period will be until July 31, but this date may be adjusted if we're able to return to campus sooner.

Employees being temporarily furloughed will be contacted in the next day or so and provided support and guidance so they can take full advantage of the benefits being provided to employees impacted by this pandemic. These benefits including being able

to immediately apply for unemployment and receive the \$600 weekly supplement provided by the federal CARES Act. These benefits will enable furloughed employees to receive income comparable to their current weekly earnings. In addition, ACPHS will continue to provide health insurance benefits for employees during the temporary furlough period. Furloughed employees will get additional information when they're contacted by Human Resources.

Salary Freeze

We've also decided that we're not providing any wage or salary increases for FY2020-21. In no way is this lack of merit pay a reflection of your efforts. It is just another measure being taken to ensure our financial security.

Hiring Freeze

We've also imposed a hiring freeze on faculty and staff positions for the remainder of this fiscal year. There will be limited exceptions to ensure business continuity and grant funded positions are not affected by this. Employment offers already extended will be honored. Specific positions affected by the hiring freeze will be discussed at the upcoming board meeting on May 8 and communicated to search committees. We're not considering at this point furloughing or laying off any full-time faculty.

Halting Construction Projects

As previously mentioned, we're halting construction on the Master Plan projects including renovating the Gozzo Student Center, the Campus Green, labs and library. While we'll continue to get plans and permits for these projects, we're postponing these campus renovations not only due to recent restrictions on construction, but as an additional cost savings measure.

These are the financial decisions we've made to date. There will be further discussion at the Board of Trustees meeting on May 8 about what else must be done to tighten our belts while continuing to fulfill our mission. We'll inform the community of these decisions soon thereafter.

Returning to Campus

I know we're all wondering when these social distancing requirements will end and what steps will need to be taken to reopen our campuses and our communities. While the current NYS PAUSE period is through May 15, it's unclear what will happen after that. We continue to monitor the guidance closely and will take whatever precautions are required to safely resume on campus instruction and activities. Even if Vermont opens sooner than New York, we'll continue to operate as one college and open simultaneously.

Fall Semester and Commencement

While I know there's a lot of uncertainty, we'll definitely be starting the fall semester on time. If we must extend remote instruction into the fall, we'll adjust our curriculum so didactic instruction is at the beginning of the semester and the lab requirements are later. Our decisions regarding the fall semester will continue to adhere to the Governor's requirements to protect the health and safety of our campus community. We'll likely be making a decision on how we're starting the fall semester in early August.

We're continuing to work with students on planning a fall in-person commencement ceremony. For students on the Albany campus, the ceremony will be October 11 - the Sunday of Columbus Day weekend. This was the date chosen by the majority of Albany graduates. The venue is still being determined. We're still discussing with students on the Vermont campus what date they'd prefer. The Registrar's Office will be mailing students their diplomas the week of May 11.

I know these are trying times for all of us and the uncertainty is a big part of it. As I mentioned in today's town hall meeting, I truly believe we'll come out of this stronger and there will be a greater appreciation for how important our programs and our students are to improving the health of our society.

Greg Dewey
ACPHS President