

*Resolution from KSU Chairs and Directors Assembly, passed on May 15, 2020
Sent to and acknowledged by Provost Kat Schwaig*

Whereas, chairs and directors have been asked to develop contingency plans for reopening the university and offering classes in the fall when they have not been invited to participate in the Presidential Task Force on Reopening the University and have no information regarding plans for protecting the health and safety of faculty, staff and students, the Chairs and Directors Assembly recommends the following:

Any plans to reopen the university must adhere to CDC and OSHA recommendations for employers to include social distancing (6-12 feet), health and temperature scans, adequate ventilation, provision of PPE (especially facemasks and gloves for faculty and staff, masks for students and visitors), additional sanitation and cleaning of classrooms, offices and laboratories between class meetings, plexiglass for all instructor consoles, adequate supplies of hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes, and marked social distancing requirements in all buildings and classrooms to be enforced by university personnel other than academic faculty and staff. Ideally the university will also require contact tracing and increase ventilation following CDC guidelines for the health and safety of faculty students and staff. Offering classes in person this fall will not be possible given the physical limitations of our classroom spaces and given that we are already scheduled to capacity in our classes unless we reduce student enrollment now. We do not have enough large classrooms to be OSHA and CDC-compliant. CDC guidelines also recommend that employees should be permitted to continue teleworking if possible especially those at higher risk for severe illness and those with children. The CDA recommends flexible sick leave policies for faculty and staff and flexible work hours to minimize contact.

As Chairs and Directors have no information about the steps the university has considered to assure the health and safety of students, faculty and staff, the Chairs and Directors recommend that plans to reopen the university first be based upon CDC and OSHA recommendations for safety in the workplace. Further the Chairs and Directors recommend that a plan for reopening should primarily rely on remote or online course delivery.

The Chairs and Directors have a primary responsibility to assure academic integrity of the programs they oversee. The request that we consider developing plans for offering courses in multiple modalities and multiple contingencies does not assure academic integrity or provide opportunities for student success. It places an unnecessary burden upon faculty and staff who are expected to offer and support instruction in the fall. Expecting faculty to prepare face-to-face classes which may then shift to online classes, creates an inordinate amount of work. As demonstrated this spring, it is difficult (at best) for faculty to prepare to teach in two different modalities and it is not a pedagogically sound or student-centered practice because it is disruptive, creating more stress. Planning to rotate smaller groups of students through one classroom in the same course, also increases the burden on faculty. Doing so primarily exposes faculty and makes them a vector of transmission. Furthermore, doing so creates an unsustainable amount of work to meet varying students' needs because faculty likely will be asked to teach in-person and also offer online materials to a significant contingency of students who could not attend in-person classes due to childcare issues, due to being immune-compromised, or due to caring for others who are. Given that there will be no new resources, it seems that ensuring social distancing will be problematic and unenforceable.