

Transcript of CC Safe Return to Campus: Online Town Hall on Classes and Academics

This webinar was held on July 8, 2020.

This is an unedited transcript of the town hall.

Pedro de Araujo: We're just going to be waiting another three minutes or so to allow people to come into the room. There are a lot of people that signed up for the town hall so I'm just waiting to allow everyone to come in to get started.

Pedro de A.: Welcome, everyone, to our Town Hall on Academics and Student Support. My name is Pedro, vice provost and associate professor of economics. Before I introduce my colleagues, I want to make sure that if you need to watch this with closed caption, you know, you can go down to the bar in the Zoom and there is a closed caption tab for you to be able to hit that and have it – have the presentation be closed captioned.

So we're very excited to be able to have conversations with you today. I'm joined by four other colleagues that will help me answer a lot of the questions that I'm sure you have. So one, I'll do the introductions for now and then I'll explain the structure of this Town Hall and hopefully we can go from there.

I'm joined today by Teresa Leopold, Director of Student Support that oversees the student opportunities and advising hub. Jan Edwards Director of Accessibility Resources and ADA 504 Coordinator. Dr. Traci Freeman executive director for center for academic excellence, and Dr. Allen Bertsche Director of Global Education. The way that we've been receiving a lot of questions already before the Town Hall started, and what we decided to do is format the presentation the following way.

I will start by giving some remarks about the general structure of some of the announcements that have been made around academics at Colorado College for next fall. And by doing that, I'll be answering already a bunch of questions that have been asked and are coming in as I speak.

Pedro de A.:

Then I will turn to my colleagues and they will kind of describe the works of their office and also how their office is going to be supporting our students next fall, right, from a potentially from a different structure than we typically have, and so how under COVID, are they going to be able to provide those services.

And, again, once they do this, I think a lot of the – a lot of the questions are going to be answered that way. After that, we're going to open then to be able to try to answer the questions that are coming in.

Now, for full disclosure, there are most likely a number of questions that we won't be able to answer today, simply because of the volume of questions that are going to be coming in, but also that there are some questions that we currently don't have the answer to. We're going to do our best to try to answer them in writing as we see the questions coming in, and perhaps even later in the next couple of days and share that in our COVID response web page.

What I want to start is by kind of reviewing in our phased approach to our return to campus looks like currently. As with the information that we have currently. So the college has announced the first-year students, the student athletes for NCAA Authorized Sports, RA, New Student orientation, mentors, new transfer students, and our international students that are currently living on campus, are welcome to return to campus by Block 1.

Then all remaining students are welcome to come to campus by Block 2. Right. So that has been an announcement that has been made.

Also, if students are planning to travel for fall break, so if a student is on campus taking classes on campus and decides that they want to travel for fall break, that Block 4 class needs to be taken via distance learning, and then the student would be welcome back on campus by our January Block.

Summer, the college has formed a few Working Groups that are meeting throughout this month to discuss academic endeavors. One of these groups are looking at the academic program and policies or looking at course grids, looking at some policies related to classrooms and so forth to be able to see if we can accommodate that, you know, given the circumstances.

There are also a business group also looking into courses moving in the fall semester, you know, from one block to another. You know, how registration is going to occur under that environment, and so right now there is a lot of information being gathered for us to be able to make some determinations. There is also another group looking specifically at first-year students, how to on-board, CC100 and CC120 class, new student orientation, and so forth.

Pedro de A.:

Of course, there are also other groups looking at COVID prevention, testing, treatment, and response. This is not really the scope of this particular Town Hall but of course it relates to the academics at Colorado College. So the new calendar that the College has announced is very, very important for us to understand the flexibility that we're trying to provide here.

So for the 2021, and I'll give you a visual here of what that looks like. For the 2021, what we're saying is that students can take up to 10 blocks worth of credit and that's included in the comprehensive tuition. The way to visualize this is think of the fall term as being Blocks 1, 2, 3, 4, and our new January term where you're going to have an option to take a full-unit course or half-unit course during the January Block.

The spring term then has four blocks as formal. Blocks 5, 6, 7, 8, and then there is the summer term with three blocks, and so there is a 12-block grid students can choose 10 out of the 12, right, and that's going to be part of their comprehensive tuition for the year.

So students can – if a student, for example, decides that they want to return to campus in Block 3, that student could either take distance learning classes in Block 1 and 2 and then come to campus and choose a face-to-face course in Block 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, right, and that would be almost a full – it would be a full year's worth of credit. Or a student could not take classes in Block 1 and 2 and start their year in Block 3, and students could still have eight blocks worth or more of credit by doing it in that particular way.

When we talk a little bit about classes and classroom instruction, there are already some questions about this that I want to address, which is number one, faculty have been given the authority to choose the most appropriate course format for their classes, right, so are those classes going to be via distance learning, classes going to be face to face or have face-to-face components. Every faculty has been instructed to be able to deliver their course via distance learning if needed, right, depending on the circumstances next fall. It's possible that we would have to go to a complete distance learning campus, and in that case, faculty would have enough preparation to be able to do this as they're preparing for it right now.

Now, what's been a question about this already is that this also includes the CC100 and CC120, and so even if first-year students are on campus, it's still possible that a first-year student will be taking distance learning classes in Blocks 1 and 2. Right. So we're going to try to do the best that we can to think about students preferences and faculty preferences for teaching, but it's possible that that is going to be the case.

Pedro de A.:

All Block 1 classes, remember that students not just first-year students may be on campus by Block 1, but all Block 1 campus except for some CC100 classes will be taught via distance learning, and so a student that is not a first-year student that's on campus for Block 1, will be taking a distance learning class.

We are also looking at doing some analysis in buildings and classroom spaces. We are, as I'm speaking, we're starting to look over buildings and looking at classroom spaces to make sure that classrooms are configured to follow guidelines for appropriate social distance for distance learning class, for face-to-face classes, and so this – we're hoping in the next two to three weeks we have a kind of nice map of campus, right, to allow us to understand the capacity of course – of our classrooms in terms of the number of students that are feasible in order for us to deliver our curriculum.

Because of that, we are also looking at large conference spaces, spaces that are traditionally not classroom space, theater spaces, conference room spaces that could potentially be converted to classrooms.

Another piece that is important for everyone to know is that we're also looking at, even though buildings may be configured to distance learning, we are looking at the possibility of staggering class times, right, so as if classes are in the morning, would there be a possibility for us to think about classes starting at different times in the morning, right, so to avoid, you know, abundant foot traffic in the hallways of academic buildings.

Of course, you know, I'd be remiss to say that all face-to-face instruction is going to follow, state, local, and college safety protocols and guidelines. What that means is that, when you imagine a face-to-face course, that you potentially took as a student listening to this last year, a face-to-face course next fall is going to look different. Right. It's not going to be the same. Right.

So you are going to have that experience where faculty may be in the classroom, but there is going to be less students in your classroom most likely, and you're going to be separated with appropriate social distancing, there is going to be masks or some protective barrier, right, and so I think the classroom environment is going to look a little bit different and that's something for us to all think about.

Pedro de A.: As I mentioned before, there will be some relevant academic policies that we're already currently investigating. For example, you know, registration for Block J, and how is that going to look like. Our grading policy in terms of our grading track policy and students being able to choose their grade track all the way up to the last day of the block, which we did in Block 7 and 8. We're looking into the possibility of continuing this practice for next fall.

So, this – I hope this gives everyone a good overall view of the announcements that we've made already, and perhaps some picture of how – how academics is going to function at Colorado College, but I want to turn now to my colleague, Dr. Traci Freeman to have a conversation with you about our Center for Academic Excellence

Traci Freeman: My name is Traci Freeman and executive director of the Colket Center. I collaborate with other directors on initiatives related to advising and faculty development and teach courses periodically in education and in the first-year program.

The Colket Center is the umbrella for academic support services on campus. It includes the Quantitative Reasoning Center, reading center, a specialist who works with multilingual students and thesis writing specialist who works with students completing theses and capstone presentations. We also run the sophomore jump program and council on academic skills. Professionals and 90 peer consultants. It offers one-on-one tutors on drop in and process. We offer to students and writing fellows tutors connected to specific courses and work closely with faculty members.

We offer in-class and out-of-class for students and teach adjunct courses in read, writing, and math. Professional staff also collaborate on faculty with course assignment design. We support faculty research and writing, and we service resources on issues related to teaching and learning. Each year we work with between 75 and 80% of the students enrolled at CC. And we serve students throughout their four years as well as a number of graduate students in education and alums.

We work with an extraordinary number of students compared to academic support services at other institutions. Our statistics are a testament to the rigors of the block plan and quality of our services but also speak to the teaching and learning culture of the institution. Students at CC believe in the value of learning from their peers. They see help-seeking as a sign of strength and the very best students know how and when to seek help, and students are invested in creating a vibrant intellectual community and one that extends beyond the classroom and across individual blocks.

Traci F.: Can you advance the slide, please. Thank you.

So until last spring, almost all of the academic support services we offered were primarily face-to-face. But we were able to pivot fairly quickly in the spring and begin offering our services remotely. During the fall semester, we plan to continue offering most of our services online. We believe doing so will not compromise the quality, and will allow us to be accessible to students who are studying remotely or who are at high risk and would prefer to limit their exposure to other students.

Of course, our situation is fluid and so are our plans, depending on the course the virus takes in the fall, we may be offering some limited in-person services and you can consult our website to see what our modalities will be.

For now, you can access the writing center through WC online, we're open all summer. You can access the port for quantitative reasoning through the QRC website and all of the professional staff are accessible by email and we'll be happy to meet with you remotely.

I'm going to turn it over to Teresa now.

Teresa Leopold: Thanks, Traci. As Pedro mentioned my name is Teresa Leopold and I'm the Director of Student Support and Student Opportunities and Advising Hub. Also known as the Hub. The Hub is a little more than a year old and called Hub because it's center of holistic advising and partnership across campus. It was created to offer additional and more equitable support to all students and consequently we report to both Academic Affairs and Student Life. We partner with faculty members and advisors in order to ensure students have consistent advising and access to information and opportunities. We collaborate with all student-facing CC offices, my staff and I pride ourselves in knowing CC policies, procedures, and resources across campus so we can share that information with students, but also know where to refer students when more depth on a topic might be needed.

As a part of holistic advising, we encourage students to explore interests, goals, and personal aspirations, and we assist students in connecting with faculty member, advisors, career coaches, and other staff members and offices across campus in order to achieve their goals.

We do support students throughout their entire CC career. We want to help students make the most of their CC experience, but we also support students who might be struggling at a particular moment or with a particular issue. This could be academic or otherwise.

Teresa L.: Overall, we want students to do more than survive at CC. We want them to thrive. One of the staff members in the Hub works with students to earn grants, fellowships, and support them as they work to find summer research opportunities with faculty members. We meet with students throughout the year, but it is especially true when students start to make academic plans for future semesters. Pedro, will you switch the slide, please.

What will be different? To be honest, I'm not sure that there is going to be a lot different except for possibly meeting location. We will be – we will be and we did meet with students on Zoom for Block 7 and 8 and continue to do so over the summer. If it's possible for us to meet on campus, we will definitely be six feet away and wearing something like this.

All of the Hub support services remain the same. Again, just depending upon COVID. So, students can talk to any Hub advisor for consistency of support. We do recommend that the students talk to their Hub staff advisor if they have one. We are definitely also talking with returning students about their future plans and we are currently talking with incoming students who already have a Hub Staff Advisor assigned to them, we're talking to them about their academic plans and personal plans starting in the fall.

And I will hand it over to Jan Edwards.

Jan Edwards: Good afternoon from Colorado! I am Jan Edwards director of the Accessibility Resources Program and we're the office that supports students with disabilities on campus. And our philosophy is that we appreciate that disability is integral to the diversity of our campus so we partner with students, faculty, and staff to create a community that welcomes the orientation of students with all process of the students., we work with students are learning disabilities, mental health concerns, chronic health conditions, brain injuries, Autism, physical mobility types of disabilities, students who are Deaf or hard of hearing or borderline. This is not an exhaustive list, but we also support students with a number of conditions and this may include students with concussions to, you know, the right if they need support obviously.

So the situations vary widely (audio breaking up.) Pedro, would you please advance. So, as I said we provide support for distance learning and in-person classes. Some of the accommodations that our office manages are extended time, distraction in an exam setting, use of a computer for exams and assignments, notetaking as well, accessible format text, displaying audio for a student that needs. – (audio breaking up).

Jan E.: We have for students a Smart Pen that records a class and links the recording to a student's written notes, so it's a pretty cool piece of technology. Sometimes we get copies of another student's notes to share with the student who might need that support. We work a lot with assistive technologies and an example of this and one of the most used in our office is a program called Read and Write, and this is a software platform that you provide access – (audio breaking up) – we also offer accessible housing in our office.

Pedro de A.: So Jan is having some issues with audio, so what we're going to do is I'm going to ask Jan to record her presentation and kind of so that we can share – we can share this with everybody else, you know, either on the Colorado College Web page or Facebook page. I'm going to move to Allen Bertsche as our next speaker.

Allen Bertsche: Thank you, Pedro. Hopefully my sound works well. I'm Allen Bertsche. I'm the Director for Global Education part of the Center for Global Education and Field Study. Our office handles essentially three main areas. We work on all education abroad, whether that's semester away programs or faculty-led block programs during the year or the summer. We work with faculty-led field experiences and field study, and we work with our international student population with our student and scholar support on pretty much a holistic approach to all types of issues that international students may encounter.

You may know us because of our coordination of things like international student arrival, orientation and support, or through our faculty-led study away experiences whether domestic or international. Pedro, if you could move the slide for it, I'll talk a little about what we're doing this year. Most of you are probably already aware that we have been because of the COVID-19 pandemic, closing programs, suspending programs, canceling programs overseas and that is true through the fall, our spring and summer and fall programs have been suspended. We have guidelines in place, a series of eight requirements that our spring and summer programs will have to meet next spring in order to be able to operate, so we're continuously monitoring the situation regarding travel restrictions as well as health and safety in each of our program destinations. We're hoping to be able to return to study away programming as soon as it's safe to do so.

We also have developed a set of requirements for all field experiences associated to CC classes, and so that will be in place to ensure that all of our course that are taking students out into field are following appropriate health regulations. Our office is spending a lot of time on international student population on immigration, and arrival issues and we'll continue to do that throughout the year as we see changing expectations or

requirements from the Federal Government related to international student enrollment.

Finally, we're really within the sort of student face-to-face contact that we have during the year, we're planning several things that will allow us to use distance, including regularly scheduled drop-in advising hours where students can log in on Zoom and meet with our advisers to talk about either study away issues or international student and immigration issues. We're going to be running some virtual workshops as well as virtual study away fairs this year, which will still allow students to get to know the different providers and partners we have around the world and talk to them about opportunities either this spring, summer, or the following school year, so that's a little bit about how we're working with students, but of course, all of our staff is available to students through email and we're all happy as other offices have said, to have virtual meetings with students in order to be able to discuss whatever is of interest to them.

I think now we're going to move on to some of our question and answer session unless Jan is going to be coming back in.

Pedro de A.:

We're trying to still figure out her microphone, but it may just be that we'll just jump into some of the questions.

There are a lot of questions coming in so I'm going to try to do my best to direct traffic here. One, there is a common theme in terms of questions. There are some questions related to registration and related to what's going to happen to fall registration as new course grids, you know, come on board. So as you know, students currently are returning students, and that's why I think I can try to address it, returning students have registered for the fall semester, and so currently, returning students have their classes set for the fall. Of course, some of these classes may change, you know, given that, you know, departments may be moving and thinking about different types of instructions and things of that nature. Of course, the college is committed to trying to honor these student registrations, right, and so as much as possible, right, we're hoping that there is not significant movement in fall classes, right, to allow for a lot of those registration patterns to remain the same.

We don't intend at this point to reopen, right, registration for all students, right, and have students register again for the fall semester. We are looking at the possibility if a course moves completed from one block to another, for example Block 3 to Block J or Block 3 could Block 7, that we would give preference currently stt tunts enrolled in those classes to be able to move that and give them priority registration for those courses, right, to the best of our ability.

Pedro de A.: We're also looking at the possibility of allowing and looking for bottleneck courses, courses with high demand and that may be useful for us to offer in different blocks so we're trying to see if those courses could be offered, for example, in J Block and then we could potentially get students on the wait list and move them automatically to, to courses during Blocks J. We're also investigating the possibility of thinking about enrollments for online class, and of course we don't want the enrollments to be large because we still want to, even if a course is delivered via distance learning, we still want the intimate experience but there is more wiggle room for distance learning courses than we would have, you know, for face-to-face, so we plan to hopefully by the end of this month, we should have an announcement or we should have a plan in terms of how we are going to be reallocating students to different classes in the fall. Spring registration should still happen in Block 3 and so that gives us some flexibility to think about what that grid is going to look like, and we're going to allow then, you know, students through our normal mechanism, right, to register for courses in the spring semester.

Let's see. Now I'm going to have to go back and see some of these other questions here here that we have.

So, there is a question here for Teresa. Is the Hub open this summer to provide support for students?

Teresa L.: Yes. We are definitely -- well, open virtually. So we are having Zoom meetings or WebEx meetings with anyone who wants to talk with us. If you go to the CC website and search The Hub you'll get to our web page and scroll down a little bit and there is a spot to schedule an appointment with a Hub Staff Advisor.

Pedro de A.: Thank you. There is just another question about the January Block and I think I can answer this one.

Will we be able to see during registration for those classes if the class will be online or in person?

Yes. We are working with departments to be able it and allow, like I mentioned before, faculty are going to have the authority to choose the format of courses that they deliver, and we're going to this month, we're going to compile what's the format of those courses that are going to be delivered and we're going to be able to upload this description of the course, right, or that is the format of the course so that students would be able to, as you are looking at classes, to be able to know if those classes are going to be via distance learning or not.

Pedro de A.: Traci, there is a question about the sophomore Jump Program. Are we going to have the Sophomore Jump Program next year?

Traci F.: Yeah. We will. All of the programs that make sense online, we will be hosting online next year. So, we have a few in-person events, a celebration of choosing a major and a major's fair, but we're going to get creative around the major's fair but we haven't quite figured out the details around the technology yet. Stay tuned because we usually update that website for the fall semester's programming in August.

Pedro de A.: Thank you. There is a question about CC100. There is a question related to will CC100 be offered in a different block? As of right now, no, the answer is CC100 is going to be offered in Block 1 and a couple of CC100s offered in Block 5 for the students that are winter starts. So the way that CC100 may be offered is that it could be – some of the CC100s could be online and others distance learning and others face-to-face. And so for first-year students, right, first year students would have the option, right, to come to campus in Block 1 and take one of these classes, stay at home and take distance learning version of a CC100, right, and potentially defer to a winter start with our approval, right, and then take a CC100 when it's offered in Block 5, but there is not going to be as of right now a CC100 offered in Blocks 2, 3, or 4.

Just browsing through. There are so many questions. So I think I've answered, let's see. There is a question about student athletes. Can student athletes, what do we mean by student athletes and NCAA approved sports? The best way I can answer that is that those are fall sports plus tennis and hockey. Those are the NCAA authorized sports for students that are or will be welcome back to campus by Block 1.

So, there is a question about our point system in registration, a lot of registration questions. There is a question about our point allocation and what, you know, what does it mean for how is that going to operate if we have to change some of the registration patterns?

One of the working groups is actually working on this, and currently there is no plan to change spring registration in terms of what we do for points. But there is – there is a conversation about the J Block and how that registration would occur. Could we use a different selection mechanism to allow students to be able to register for J Block and so this information is still going to be available hopefully at the end of the month, you know, and students then should know exactly how they're going to be able to register for these courses.

- Pedro de A.: A question for Allen. Are blocks abroad – so blocks abroad in the spring, will they be available?
- Allen B.: Currently, we still have our full listing of spring blocks abroad as active and some are still recruiting students for those blocks. We set up a process wherein we will be reviewing all the spring blocks before pre-registration in November to see if any of them are not viable because of the COVID-19 pandemic. There are about eight requirements that any program will have to be able to pass in order to be considered viable and be able to run.
- And so, we'll do that assessment before the November pre-registration and then again 60 days before departure to determine if we have to suspend a program or if we'll be able to run a program. But at present, we are planning for the best and having strategies in place for the worst-case scenario.
- Pedro de A.: Thanks, Allen. Stay right there. There is another one for you. How is the Executive Order for international students going to impact incoming current CC students?
- Allen B.: Well, new first-year students are perhaps one of the groups that is least impacted by the new immigration guidelines because they haven't begun their academic careers yet. So if students are able to arrive in August, if they're in a country, for example, where there is no travel restriction, we recommend that they do arrive in August for international student orientation and to begin Block 1 with CC100, and those students who are not able to arrive in country due to travel restrictions, we're recommending that they defer their arrival until January, but that does not mean that they have to defer their academic program until January. They have the choice of either taking a gap semester and beginning their courses in January, or they can begin with online courses this fall, and doing that will not impact their immigration status to when they plan to arrive in January. And so that particular group, first-year new students, we believe will not be impacted. They are still impacted by some of the travel restrictions.
- Pedro de A.: Thank you. There is a quick question about C Block in the summer as you remember the academic calendar, during C, there are 12 – the grid has 12 blocks, right. So 3 blocks in the summer. Is that for sure going to be offered at this point?

Pedro de A.: The plan is to have some classes during Block C. Of course, I think that the number of classes that will be offered in Block C may not be as large as in Blocks A and B, but that's also going to depend on registration patterns from students, you know, in the fall and spring semester. So, for example, if students between Blocks 1 and 8, right, those 9 blocks, right, there is J Block there but those 9 blocks, if students for example only take 7 out of those 9, that student could potentially take Blocks A, B, and C, right, in order to get 10 blocks-worth of academic credit. So I anticipate there is going to be some movement in terms of the summer blocks, but for sure I anticipate offering summer C blocks.

Traci, there is a question for you. Can you talk a little bit about how – and you touched on this in your presentation, but could you talk a little bit, I'll extend the question, about the services that may be provided at the QRS and then I guess you could talk about the writing center as well next fall.

Traci F.: So, in Block 7, the QRC was experimenting using a technology called Discord and it did not seem that students were using that resource anywhere nearly the way they were using the on-campus services, and so what we ended up doing was creating a lot more positions for learning assistants who were embedded, for better or worse, to say that they're embedded, in a class that was already – and so that the students who are in individual classes knew exactly who their tutors were, and we're working with them on a much more regular basis. And that seemed incredibly effective for students, and so for the fall, I think we're going to be starting with individual tutoring followed by or alongside a lot of the learning assistants that are attached to the classes.

But if you had a question, I would be interested to hear about experiences with Discord if you want to email me offline. And the Writing Center is working through WC online in synchronous to tutoring sessions. Students can schedule an appointment and meet for 45 minutes to an hour with a writing tutor over a platform that's very similar to Zoom that also has the capacity to share screens, and so those sessions have been working really well.

Pedro de A.: Thank you. So many buttons for me to manage here, but I'm dealing with it.

Pedro de A.:

There is some concern about, and this I think I can answer this one, or I can take a stab at it. Concern for seniors that may need requirements to graduate, seniors that are into a particular schedule that requires, you know, prerequisites, one course and then another and so forth. My best answer, you know, my best answer to this is that we are going to – we're going to work with every senior that's on a case-by-case basis in this particular situation. We're going to work with departments here on campus, they're very accommodating, faculty are very accommodating, and really in Block 7 and 8 did a fantastic job and are required to change their format, the format of their courses pretty much within a couple of days and they did it. And I think that for seniors, right, that are going to be – that potentially could be missing a requirement or doing things of that nature, right, we do have a process by which we can analyze every senior on a case-by-case basis. It filters through my office and then in conversations with departments we can try to figure out the best solution for that particular senior. What we don't want to happen is if a senior has planned and is currently registered to graduate by the end of the academic year, and are in those classes, right, that we would not want to for that senior to come back in the fall to finish their work, so we're going to do the best that we can to make sure that we can accommodate seniors and that they can be able to graduate on time.

Let me try another one here.

There is a question about Block 4, and what does that mean? So Block 4, I believe in terms of the academic calendar, it kind of starts – there is a week of Block 4 and then fall break and then 2.5 weeks, and there are questions about, you know, could a student start Block 4, travel, and then finish Block 4 remotely? The answer to that question is it depends because it depends on the type of course that the student is in.

So, for example, if it is a class where the first week is face-to-face, but then the last two weeks is actually online, then absolutely that student could finish Block 4. If that's not a possibility, my advice would be to have a conversation with the faculty member. In general, like if a course is face-to-face, it's not for certain that a student would be able to stay home and take the course online, right, while other students are taking the course face-to-face, right. So my recommendation or my advice to students would be to really have a conversation with the faculty teaching in Block 4, right, and probably by Block 1, right, to be able to figure out what would be the best course of action if students intend to travel out of state for Block 4.

Pedro de A.: Scrolling through. All right. There is a question about summer wild card for seniors and have we changed that policy at this point. The answer to that question is, no. Currently the same policy in terms of wild card usage is the same, but I do want to emphasize that we are – that we are offering up to 10 blocks, so for example, if a senior was – if a senior wanted to use let's say their wild card for the summer and take eight blocks out of the year and then use the wild card for the summer, that senior could still do that right now, right, because we're offering 10 blocks. So in a sense, right, we are extending that policy, right, to all students that would allow a student to take 9 blocks out of the year and then take the A Block, right, as part of the – as part of the comprehensive tuition, right, for the college.

I don't know if Jan can come back? Hopefully it works, but there is a question about vulnerable students that are not seniors, you know, living off campus. Jan, I don't know if you can address that question?

Jan E.: Can you hear me now? Awesome! (Laughing). Apologies for the earlier difficulty. I have absolutely no idea what happened. Can you repeat that question, please?

Pedro de A.: Yes. Absolutely. So there is a question about vulnerable students that are not senior potentially living off campus, and is that a possibility or is there a mechanism for that? Could you explain some of that housing aspect? I mean, it can be broader in items of your answer, but kind of how does that work?

Jan E.: Absolutely. So, the college is looking at a variety of housing options for students. Our office is working very closely with Residential Experience and Housing Office and we'll be looking at each student individually. Off campus options that are still available for college housing may be expanded, so we have many more options than we had. So my recommendation is to have student for housing related to health or mental health, please raise the question with our office and we're happy to work through that process with you with the housing office and residential experience.

Pedro de A.: Thanks, Jan. At the end you broke up a little bit. If you could type the answer in terms of the back channel and Drew can upload the answer too, and we can do that.

There is a question for Allen. If if the school adopts an online-only model pathway through the year or for the second semester, will all in-person classes be made available to international students so that they're not deported or forced to leave?

Allen B.: I think we have to remember that the guidelines that were sent out, the ones that have talked about students having to leave are only valid through the fall, and we anticipate that the Federal Government will be putting out new guidelines for the spring sometime later this year. If they have similar patterns, meaning that the students are required to take some in-person courses, we will certainly work with our faculty to ensure if there is some option for those students who wish to remain in the United States if the COVID-19 pandemic is still continuing to be an issue.

So, again, we have – with our mix of online and in-person courses, we can minimize the impact of the type of regulations that are currently in place and they’ll continue in the spring.

Pedro de A.: Thanks, Allen. There is a question here from a first-year student, and I think I can answer this one.

Can I only take Block 1 online and be on campus for Block 2? I don’t see that as an option, right. So this is really going to depend on your pairing for the CC100 and CC120, right. So if, for example – if you’re not going to be on campus, right, by Block 1 then your CC100 must be taken via distance learning. If you plan to come to campus by Block 2 if your CC120 is in person, then you would be taking that class in person. But if your CC120 is delivered via distance learning, then you could potentially be on campus, right, but taking CC120, you know, via distance learning, and so in that sense, you would have the option to be on campus by Block 2, right, or be on campus in Block 3.

There are more questions talking about will students be able to have the complete information about courses in terms of their format? Absolutely. But we’re just going to take some time to be able to do it, like I mentioned before, so give us this month or so to be able to determine how courses are going to be taught, and that information is going to make its way into our banner system for sure.

There is a question about the updated spring course grid. Will that be sent out with the fall course grid? You would have a spring course grid for sure. We’re asking all departments to work on their course grids for the year, so we would have availability, right, of that course grid for everyone. However, I must emphasize that we’re living in uncertain times, right, so even if we do have – and the longer the horizon the more uncertain we are, right, so even though we may be able to – even though you may be able to have access to the course grids in the spring to make some plans, my advice is for students to be flexible and understand that certain things may change, right.

Pedro de A.:

Certain courses may move around, right. So what the college currently has are the course grids that were available at the time when students were planning for the spring semester, and so we understand that right now which courses have high demand that are currently in our books for the spring semester that we're going to try to do our best to preserve them. Right. So that students would be able to take them. But it's possible because students are no longer – they're not registered for these courses yet, there is some movement, there is a larger movement in spring classes than we're going to see in the fall.

So I think we have time for maybe two more – two more questions.

So there are – the college is – there is a question about and I think it would be remiss if I didn't. There are two questions here that I don't have the answer to, but we will have the answers, you know, moving forward, but I want to be able to acknowledge that. You know, one is, like what would happen if a student needs to go into isolation and the student is taking a particular class, right? We are, like I said, there is the academic policies group that is looking at how we would deal with that particular situation, right. So there is, of course, the safety aspect of making sure that everybody else has less of a risk of contamination, but there is also – we have to also take into consideration that we want to make sure that that particular student could perhaps be making academic progress, right. So we're going to try to figure out at this point a way, right, to allow to treat some of these on a case-by-case basis in terms of the academic progress piece, right. Of course, we're going to have in place protocols and guidelines for safety. There are spaces on campus that have been designated for isolation, and some of those spaces are going to be utilized in that case.

There are also questions about gap years. We're also having conversations about that piece. What are the rules and what are the guidelines about gap years? So once all the information is out when the course grid is out, if a student, for example, is interested in taking a gap year, the college is in the process of developing what that means and how is that going to – how is that going to work. So if we could just wait, you know, for a couple more weeks, we should be able to have an answer for that one.

I think we have room for one more question. So, there is a question and I think this is a good question for us to end with. There is a question, will faculty be advised to be thoughtful about the fact that this pandemic is traumatic along with other factors in decisions that are made that can impact student performance? More specifically will faculty extend grace and to be intentional about workloads and deadlines?

Our faculty is very generous. Our faculty understands that these are difficult situations. Our faculty has been very accommodating to students regardless of the situation that we are in. I guarantee that faculty are going to be very accommodating. However, right, faculty are also going to preserve the rigour, right, of our academic – of our academic institution and of our academic curriculum, right. So if that means that there could potentially be extensions to assignments and things of that nature, this already occurs, right. Faculty are very sympathetic to students individual needs, and I thank all of my colleagues and I think they would agree with me in the way we support students and the way faculty communicate with them about the support that is necessary for some students in the classroom. I anticipate that to continue. I anticipate that to be enhanced, right. And I anticipate that, you know, given certain circumstances the college is going to work with faculty and faculty are going to be the first ones to let administrators know that we need to adapt, you know, that we need to be reasonable, that we need to be humane to students, right, under this particular situation.

And so I don't see that as being – I don't see that as being a problem. I don't see that the faculty need to be advised to do this. I think they've been doing this in the first place.

So I want to thank everyone for – if anyone could put back their – could come back on video so we could say good bye. But I want to thank everyone, you know, for participating. We didn't get to answer all the questions. There were just so many questions, but we're going to try to do your best, you know, through our COVID website to try to provide some answers to some of these questions that are – some of these themes that are being asked. But if there are other things that you would like for us to – for us to do, make sure that – here are some potential links for you to be able to ask questions, for you to be able to browse and help us in planning for next academic year. So, again, I want to thank all of my colleagues, you know, for participating in this panel. I really appreciate you taking the time to do this, and I want to thank everyone for participating. Be safe out there. Thank you.
