

COVID-19 Update: 03-31-2020

Good evening Stone Academy Community,

This past week has been a period of great adaptation for all. The vast majority of our faculty and students had never utilized an online learning platform but, with great patience and understanding, we have made incredible strides together.

Today I want to reiterate some of my comments from previous communications while answering questions from both students and faculty that have come to my attention.

Graduation Dates

One of the most common questions we have received from students is whether their anticipated graduation date will change. At this moment I can say that we have no plans to change graduation dates for any classes. This does not take into account students that need to repeat courses, or those that have withdrawn from their program.

The truth is that the healthcare field needs our graduates more than ever as the increasing strain on hospitals is creating employment gaps in doctors' offices and long term care facilities. We are working with the State of Connecticut to address these needs and have provided the National Guard with a report on the number of practical nursing graduates that we anticipate by June 1, 2020. At the moment I do not have any further updates on how this will effect graduation dates, but there appears to be an extensive push from the government to ensure their timeliness.

Clinical Experiences

The last time I wrote you, our plans to provide clinical experiences deteriorated upon the Governor's executive order for residents to stay home. We recognize that many students are currently working in the field or are being called to volunteer their time and are currently weighing options to provide students with credit for clinical hours based upon this time. I hope to provide an update on this before the end of the week.

Longevity of Distance Education

I believe Dr. Fauci said it best when he said that we do not make the timeline, the virus makes the timeline. We have every intent of resuming on-ground courses as quickly as possible but will not do so until we are confident that it does not pose a substantial risk to any member of the Stone Academy community. I expect that the toughest weeks are directly in front of us and will look to readdress our timeline once we are past it.

Visitors on Campus

Personnel on campus is still limited to our Campus Directors and other select staff. I need everyone to make sure that they call prior to coming on campus. Scheduling a time to visit campus is the only way we can ensure a reduction in face-to-face interactions.

Away from Stone Academy I know that so many of us are dealing with the isolation that our prevention measures require and that this has kept us from the our friends, family, and colleagues. At times when

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this reality overwhelms you, I urge you to look forward, as every dusk has its dawn. This will pass and we will be better for it.

Take care of yourselves and your loved ones and please remain healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Bierbaum
President