

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Michael V. Drake, MD
President



Dear Buckeye Community:

As the spring semester comes to a close and we prepare for final exams, I want to express my gratitude and admiration for how you have all adapted to the unprecedented challenges of the last several weeks. We are particularly thankful to our Wexner Medical Center personnel and first responders for their courage and sacrifice at this time. The resilience of our university community and your commitment to our academic mission and each other are truly incredible. I look forward to our virtual commencement celebration on May 3 starting at noon. A pre-ceremony program with special messages from students and university leaders will begin at 11:30 a.m. I know we all also look forward to gathering in person to recognize the Class of 2020 at a future date when it is safe to do so.

Thank you, Buckeyes — one and all.

University state of emergency

We are making tremendous progress against COVID-19, but our work is not yet complete. We are extending the university state of emergency through

Friday, May 1. This declaration enables us to utilize Disaster Leave ([Policy 6.28](#)) and is essential to providing the university with flexibility in making a variety of financial decisions over an extended period if necessary.

Post-pandemic planning

As shared last week, the university has launched a [post-pandemic operations task force](#) for the transition back to on-campus operations. Part of the task force's work is to use a data-driven approach for recommending when it is safe to begin transitioning back onto campus. This subgroup is led by Amy Fairchild, dean of the College of Public Health, and Bernadette Melnyk, dean of the College of Nursing and the university's chief wellness officer, with members from the Wexner Medical Center's Division of Infectious Diseases and other colleges, departments and offices.

The university will also continue to closely monitor state and federal guidance on this matter. Last week, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced that the state would begin considering a potential partial reopening of certain businesses on May 1. As the state administration shares details of this plan, which we anticipate next week, we will continue to communicate to you any effects this may have related to Ohio State. As a reminder, all university events are currently canceled through July 6, and until further notice all non-essential university employees are to continue teleworking. We will continue to reevaluate based on evolving conditions.

Student financial support

We know that COVID-19 has caused significant disruptions, including serious financial hardships. For students with unexpected or other financial challenges due to COVID-19, we have created the [Together As Buckeyes emergency grants program](#), funded primarily by the federal Coronavirus Aid,

Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. It is available to undergraduate, graduate and professional students — subject to eligibility requirements — through our Student Financial Aid office. The size of these grants will vary based on each student's circumstances.

For eligibility details and more information, please visit the [COVID-19 financial aid webpage](#).

Budgetary contingency planning

The duration and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic are unknown at this time, and we continue to engage in financial contingency planning. No source of revenue for the university has gone unaffected. We are planning for multiple scenarios while maintaining and advancing patient care, research, teaching and learning. The university has asked all colleges and support units to prepare a range of budget projection scenarios for fiscal year 2021, including potential 5%, 10% and 20% reductions in spending. This approach aligns with the governor's instruction to all state agencies.

The Wexner Medical Center is engaging in a separate and coordinated budgetary control and contingency planning initiative. This effort is intended to address immediate patient-care needs during the pandemic as well as plan for the resumption of necessary health care services.

The university has already taken several proactive financial steps in the midst of this crisis, including a pause in some capital projects and a pause in hiring with exceptions for essential services and key faculty and research positions. These steps were made necessary by substantially reduced revenue in the wake of the pandemic.

While preparing for all scenarios, we are hoping for the best and remain committed to moving forward as a community. Once again, we have been leaders in the fight against COVID-19. We will be leaders in forging the path toward a stronger and safer future.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Drake, MD

COVID-19 Resources

- [Information about coronavirus and the university's response](#)
- [Guidance for students, faculty and staff](#)
- [Resources for faculty](#)
- [Resources for COVID-19 research](#)
- [Resources for students](#)
- [Resources for staff](#)

Wellness Resources

- Faculty and staff can use the [Human Resources Keep Well website](#), the [Chief Wellness Officer Health and Wellness page](#) and [Your Plan For Health](#).
- Students can use the [Counseling and Consultation Service](#) (CCS) and the [Buckeye Peer Access Line](#) (PAL), which operates Monday through Friday from 8 p.m. to midnight.
- CCS also provides guidance for [ways for faculty and staff to support students](#).
- The Ohio State: Wellness app is designed for students but offers tips and guidance useful for all members of our community. It is available for [Android](#) and [iOS](#) devices.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

© 2020 | **Office of the President**

205 Bricker Hall, 190 North Oval Mall, Columbus, OH 43210

president.drake@osu.edu

president.osu.edu

Office of the President



The Ohio State University

