

June 5 Update – Presidential Update - Phase 2

Dear Faculty and Staff:

In accordance with Gov. John Bel Edwards' plan to start Phase 2 today of reopening Louisiana after the shutdown created by the pandemic, Northwestern will begin Monday moving into the second stage of its return-to-campus strategy.

The purpose of the phased approach to reopening businesses and institutions is to move toward normal operations while working to ensure the safety and wellbeing of personnel and the public as the state and its entities reopen.

Your assistance and cooperation in the university's implementation of Phase 1 has been invaluable and is much appreciated.

During this initial stage of our return to campus, we have attempted to operate at 25 percent of capacity by bringing personnel back to university offices through schedules of alternating days, staggered hours and other modifications.

Our goal is to bring more personnel to campus as we work to expand the number of offices that are open and the services provided by those offices to faculty, staff, students and the public.

Work schedules will be coordinated by the vice-presidents, who are reaching out to department heads and other personnel for their input on efforts to increase on-campus personnel.

During Phase 2, there will still be limited access to buildings, and large gathering places on campus will remain closed. Employees are encouraged to wear face coverings when in contact with other individuals or groups, and physical distancing protocols will remain in effect. All university events on campus have been canceled through June.

Some student-athletes will return to campus Monday for voluntary workouts and preparation for fall sports seasons. Those activities will be closely monitored by strength coaches, athletic trainers and others to ensure that all safety protocols established by state and national health advisers are carried out.

The university will operate under the Phase 2 plan until the governor extends the current directive or moves to Phase 3, which will allow us to continue our progress toward normal operations before the fall semester.

Attached is a two-page flyer with detailed information on Northwestern's return-to-campus plan, including office hours and services on the Natchitoches, Shreveport, Leesville-Fort Polk and Cenla campuses.

Discussions are continuing about the possibility of rearranging the Fall, 2020, calendar to complete the semester before the Thanksgiving holidays. A number of other schools across the nation are enacting or considering that change in fall scheduling.

A number of factors are involved in these considerations, including delivery of classes, testing schedules, commencement dates, the impact on residential life, rescheduling of university programs and events and other issues.

There must be a decision on the fall calendar as soon as possible. Your input is needed and will be appreciated. Please share your thoughts and concerns with me, department heads, deans, vice-presidents and others as we move toward finalizing plans for the fall.

Thank you for the unwavering valuable assistance and unwavering support that you have continued to provide over these past several difficult weeks and for your ongoing efforts on behalf of our university.

Sincerely,

Chris



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