



December 11, 2020

Dear Students,

I hope most of you are enjoying some well-deserved rest and relaxation after an intense fall semester! For those currently enrolled in a D-term course who have not had the opportunity to rest just yet, we all wish you the very best as you finish-up your courses next week. A nice, long break is quickly approaching!

As you are aware, the country continues to experience significant spread of COVID-19. This means we must continue to be flexible and adapt to new recommendations, mandates, and safety measures to continue with in-person activities at the College. This email is intended to be the first of several messages to communicate the College's plans for spring semester. Additional communications will go out next week with more details related to our planning.

**Spring Semester Academic Schedule:**

Based on the prevalence of the virus and new testing plans, the College has decided to move the start date of spring semester classes back by one week. We will now begin classes on **Monday, January 25**. The last day of class will be April 30th with finals the week of May 3-7 with Commencement scheduled for May 9th. Also based on the student feedback from many of you and your SGA leaders; we plan to build-in a couple "days-off" from classes throughout the spring semester. The dates for the scheduled days-off have not yet been finalized, but we want you to know we are listening.

*Please note that these plans are subject to change based on local conditions or a mandate from the PA Governor or Department of Education.*

Just like the fall term, we will continue to rely on our four primary mitigation strategies: **1) face coverings, 2) physical distancing, 3) good hygiene and sanitation, and 4) screening and monitoring for symptoms.** These strategies are based on science, and your adherence this fall serves as proof of their effectiveness.

**Phased Arrivals to Campus:**

In addition to our existing mitigation strategies, we will also be following new Department of Health (DOH) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance related to testing and quarantining, which will require a phased approach for bringing students back onto campus. Aside from several small groups participating in winter sports and other activities, students will be assigned days to move back the week of **January 18 – 24**. Specific move-in dates for the general student population will be communicated and posted on the College's [coronavirus updates](#) webpage by January 06 to allow for planning. Below

are the current move-in dates for winter athletic teams and other early-arrival groups.

- Men's Basketball – Sunday, January 10
- Women's Basketball – Monday, January 11
- Wrestling – Wednesday, January 13
- Resident Assistants – Monday, January 18
- Sophomore Retreat Participants – Monday, January 18 – *please note that sophomores must be registered and approved to participate in the retreat, or you will arrive with the general student population.*

For students needing to make flight arrangements prior to January 06, please email me at [mmckinney@thiel.edu](mailto:mmckinney@thiel.edu) and I will connect you with a staff member from student life to work with you on your arrival date and plans.

As mentioned, additional messages will come out next week to communicate more details of our planning. On Monday, December 14, you should look for information regarding testing and pre-arrival requirements. On Wednesday, December 16, you can expect a message about new quarantine timeframes and what to expect when you arrive to campus.

In the meantime, the College is also scheduling a series of zoom meetings for students to speak with College staff about any questions or concerns they may have.

Some programs like athletic teams, resident assistants, and performing arts organizations will be contacted by their coach or program leader with dates and times for zoom meetings specific to those groups. Other zoom meetings open to all students will take place on the following dates and times:

**December 16 @ Noon** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81473298782?pwd=Ylp0bkdLNWdVeTl1VWRvaWQxbydBQT09>  
Meeting ID: 814 7329 8782  
Passcode: GXB0tA

**December 16 @ 4:00pm** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82104843318?pwd=eGVINXltUkNueHZWTFd3NWthWWQ1QT09>  
Meeting ID: 821 0484 3318  
Passcode: FHKNs1

**December 17 @ Noon** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83123291834?pwd=b1ZuMjBhL21XTVpOUFduYXY0bFgxQT09>  
Meeting ID: 831 2329 1834  
Passcode: EAc7FX

Each zoom meeting will be recorded and posted to the [coronavirus updates](#) page in case you are unable to participate.

Again, I hope you are able to enjoy some time for rest and relaxation over the break, and we look forward to another great spring semester together as we continue our efforts to “Make it to May!”

Best Regards,

Dean McKinney

