UWS Campus Community Town Hall
The Present and Possible Future Effect of COVID-19
Background Leading to Now

- February 26: Cancelled South Korea study away program
- February 27: First message to students about COVID-19
- March 11: Decision to extend spring break one week and move classes online starting March 30
- March 16: Decision to minimize employee presence on campus and begin telecommuting
- March 18: Online through the end of the semester
- March 20: First confirmed case in Douglas County
- March 23: Wisconsin Governor’s order to shelter safe until April 24 – extended on April 16 to go thru May 26
- April 20: Decision to cancel/move online on-campus events through July 31
The Present Effect on the Campus

- Costs for campus
  - Refunds on housing and meals to students
  - Waiving late fees on payments by students
  - Increased purchases of technology
  - Forgone revenue from facilities (e.g. MWC, YU, Wessman)
  - Cancelled travel
  - Several weeks ago—$1.3 million

- Costs in the process
  - Stress on employees and students
Guiding Principles

- Our people are important
- Maintain our financial capability to withstand worst case
- Maintain our strength
  - Robust and innovating academic offerings
  - Supportive student services
  - Strong core functions
- Continue to serve students well
Now – June 30, 2020

- Federal Relief
  - $1,488,367: Split 50/50 between student and institutional aid
- Federal and state advocacy continues
- We are a discretionary part of the budget
- There are many economic demands which will escalate in proportion to the length of the stay safe order
- Strategy – do all we can to support and retain students, recruit them, and get them ready for fall – now is not the time to pull back on innovation or recruitment
July 1, 2020 – Fall 2020?

- Enrollment for the fall is the big unknown!
- Influences
  - Peak time of the virus?
  - When the shelter order is lifted and extent?
  - If lifted, can on-campus classes resume?
  - What will the NCAA say about fall competition?
  - What will happen with international student visas and finances?
  - What will happen with financial capacity of our students and families?
  - Will students and families think it’s safe to live on campus?
Challenges with Enrollment—Now and Future

Prior to COVID-19
- Challenges with traditional on-campus freshmen recruitment (decrease in high school graduates, increase competition)
- Transfer and international recruitment challenges leading into this year

Present Challenges
- Inability to recruit in high schools, community colleges and on campus

Future Challenges and Unknowns
- Some experts projecting 10% decrease in yield nationwide
- Potential for gap year
  - Fears of attending a residential campus
  - International visas, travel bans, study abroad concerns
- Transfer market
Admissions Funnel

YOY Comparison

- Freshmen Apps down 11%
- Freshmen Conversion up 5%
- Freshmen Yield down 1%
- Transfer Apps down 13%
- Transfer Conversion down 1%
- Transfer Yield down 2%
Current Efforts

Focus on retention
- Increased use of Navigate and its capabilities
- Financial aid reevaluation/repackaging for affected students
- Use of emergency funds from our SEOG capability
- Use of NTW

Enhanced marketing
- Content marketing
  - Website, social media, content/story development, earned media
- Paid media
- Virtual visits and tours
- Virtual recruitment events/fairs
- Virtual SOAR planning
Current Efforts

- Seeking flexibilities on the financial side – provider contracts and fund transfers
- Programming to meet different scenarios
  - Rapid deployment of aggressive marketing and packaging of IDS/IDM
  - Mobilizing top potential and in-demand majors online
  - Identify growth opportunities to package micro-credentials within majors (stackable chunks that can lead to a degree)
  - Packaging of “gap year” “can’t attend in-person” courses
- Focus on high-quality experience for students
- Efficiencies in course offerings – monitoring
  - Size of courses
  - Spending patterns
Tentative Milestones

- May 4: Minnesota order expires (or before or later)
- May 26 (or before or later): Safer at Home Order expires
- Mid-June: NCAA decision about fall sports
- July 10 (tentative): UW System deadline for deciding about going online in the fall
- August: Monitoring incoming class; assess options
- September 1: Incoming class arrives
Potential Impacts on our Budget

Assumptions

- Graduate enrollment should experience a minimal impact
- If classes move online for fall, there may be a lower retention rate and higher default rate
- If classes are moved online for fall, we may have issues with segregated fee collections
- Given the uncertainty of the economy, we could see revenue collections decrease and our accounts receivable increase
- We do not know if other state funding will continue in the short-term
Implications for Budget

- 17.5% of every dollar of our fund 102 operating budget is supplies/expenses
  - Control expenses and make use of fund flexibility

- 82.5% of every dollar of our fund 102 operating budget supports salaries; UW System Policy passed
  - Employee reassignment and/or redeployment
  - Non-refilling of vacant positions
  - Reduce FTE of person
  - Non-renewal of contracts
  - Furlough
    - Voluntary
    - Targeted
    - Across the board
  - Layoff
Next Steps: Leadership

- Continue financial and scenario planning—at leadership, division and department levels—and determine what levels will best protect the campus
- Divisions are evaluating vacancies and determining if they need to be filled in the short term
- Using benchmark dates for when we would readjust/reevaluate our options
- Continued strong efforts toward supporting enrollment for fall to mitigate worst case scenario
- Additional town hall meetings when there are new developments
Next Steps: Employees

- Continue to support a culture of care for our students and each other
- Share your best ideas with your Cabinet Officer
- When asked to help with academic programming, please do your best to help
- When admissions asks for your help with engaging with students, please be available
- Carefully monitor your supplies & expense spending between now and the end of the fiscal year
- Continue to use Navigate for early and ongoing alerts
- Advisors: Please engage with your current advisees to complete next semester enrollment
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We need to be thoughtful, careful, and intentional in our next steps
Thank You and Questions

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