Dear UCA Students, Faculty, and Staff:

We know there have been many questions since our communication yesterday regarding class cancellations, moving to online delivery, and the continued operation of the university. This update provides additional details on previous communications and seeks to answer many of the questions that we have received. We will continue to update you as details emerge and other questions come our way.

As previously announced, UCA has made the decision to cancel all classes Friday, March 13 through Monday, March 16. Class cancellation is allowing us to set “social distancing” in motion and gives faculty some time to transition their classes to online. Social distancing is key to preventing the spread of disease and minimizing the number of people in close contact. A key piece of guidance that health professionals are giving higher education institutions is to allow classes to meet virtually, while maintaining normal university operations and student supports.

As a reminder, the amended instructional schedule is as follows:

- Friday, March 13 – Monday, March 16: All classes cancelled
- Tuesday, March 17 – Friday, March 20: All classes held online
- Saturday, March 21 – Sunday, March 29: Spring Break
- Monday, March 30 – Thursday, April 23: All classes held online
- Saturday, April 25 – Friday, May 1: Final exams, online

University housing is open, and all related student services remain in place. This applies to such things as Torreyson Library, Academic Advising, Counseling Services, HPER Center, computer labs, Student Health Center, etc. This is important to residential and commuter students who will continue to rely upon all of these services.

Students do not have to vacate university housing during this time. Dining services will continue to be available through Aramark, and they are taking extra steps to ensure safe food service and that good hygiene is observed.

Because students may remain on campus and use their food plans, no refunds will be available for those students who choose to return home for the remainder of the semester. One step that we are taking is ensuring that no student will lose any Dining Dollars. Any unused Dining Dollars from this spring will carry over to the summer and/or fall terms.

During this time, the university will remain open for normal business operations. University employees are expected to report to work, unless they are sick or exhibiting flu-like symptoms. Telecommuting opportunities may be approved on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the
division supervisor. Student workers may continue to report to work, and each supervisor should be flexible depending on the specific situation of each student working in their department.

There have been many questions about event cancellations. An event cancellation webpage has been created to update the community. Please check this webpage frequently for the latest event information.

Finally, many of you want to know about the status of May 2020 commencement ceremonies. The State of Arkansas is discouraging large group gatherings, especially those that involve thousands of people. Therefore, it is unlikely that traditional commencement ceremonies, such as the ones we hold in the Farris Center, will take place. That said, STAY TUNED! We are actively looking at options because we know how important this is to our students and their families, and we want to mark their achievement with some appropriate celebration.

Sincerely,

Houston Davis
President