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## COVID-19 Update: May 1, 2020

1 message

UCA President's Office <presidentsoffice@uca.edu>

Fri, May 1, 2020 at 2:28 PM

Reply-To: noreply@uca.edu

To: FS <fs@uca.edu>, student@cub.uca.edu

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff:

As we wrap up the spring semester today, I wanted to share a few new updates and remind you about several topics from last week that remain important.

**Update on CARES Act Funds** - Over the past week, we have identified another key way the CARES Act Funds can aid students during this challenging time. We understand moving the educational delivery to a remote environment may have created hardships, including the need for a laptop computer. In response to this, we are providing all spring 2020 Pell Grant recipients with \$400 emergency grants intended to help with expenses related to the COVID-19 crisis and educational and personal needs. Students do not have to apply for this assistance; these funds will be automatically applied to the eligible students' accounts in one lump sum. **Eligible students will receive a separate email with more detailed information in the next couple of business days.**

**Summer Classes** - Registration is ongoing for summer classes (including May Intersession). As previously mentioned, we will award up to 4,000 of our spring 2020 students with a \$600 grant for the summer semester. All you have to do to receive this grant is be one of the first 4,000 students (continuing from spring 2020) to register for at least one three-hour summer class. For the majority of students, we will award the \$600 grant and apply it to student accounts utilizing the CARES Act funds per U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) guidelines. For any registered students that are not eligible for use of the CARES Act funds, do not worry ... we've got your back. We will handle that with university funds and get your \$600 credit applied to your account. **Bottom line: Be one of the first 4,000 to register for summer classes and \$600 of assistance is coming your way.**

**Housing and Dining Plan Refunds** - The first round of account credits for student housing and meal plans has been issued, and all remaining credits are scheduled to post to students' accounts on May 8. For all students, the reimbursements were first applied to balances owed for the spring. If the reimbursement created a positive balance on a student's account, those excess funds have been issued as a refund via electronic transfer or as a paper check. Any questions related to the credits and refunds should be directed to the Office of Housing and Residence Life.

**Registration Holds** - In order to make the registration process easier and minimize delays during the pandemic, on April 10 we lifted all non-financial registration holds EXCEPT for immunization holds, academic standing holds (e.g. probation, suspension), and student conduct holds. Second, in order to alleviate some of the financial strain on students and families, we lifted some financial holds and allowed students to register who still owed up to 40% of their spring semester balance. Please note that - although we have allowed registration - those balances must still be paid in full or have an approved payment plan in place, otherwise the student is subject to an administrative withdrawal from summer and/or fall coursework.

**Academic Scholarships** - All spring scholarship recipients who were enrolled in the number of hours required by their scholarship as of March 20 will maintain their scholarship in the fall, regardless if they later dropped

below that number of hours. In addition, as long as scholarship recipients were enrolled in the number of hours required by their scholarships as of March 20, **their GPA will not be held against them** for scholarship renewal.

**Academic Suspension** - Any student currently on academic probation who does not meet GPA requirements at the close of spring 2020 to return to Good Standing, and who would under normal circumstances now meet the criteria for suspension, will be placed on **Extended Probation** rather than being placed on first, second, or third suspension. More information can be found in the [Undergraduate Bulletin](#).

**Commencement** - While we cannot hold our traditional spring commencement ceremony in early May and **have to delay honoring those graduates until August 7 and 8**, we are utilizing social media and other platforms to celebrate our spring graduates. **Tomorrow morning, graduates will receive a video message from me, the Provost, deans, and others that congratulates them on this momentous occasion and lists the names of each graduate by college.** These messages are also being incorporated into social media celebrations of the graduates' accomplishments that can easily be shared with friends and family. As in years past, all earned diplomas will be mailed to students at the completion of their degree requirements, along with the diploma cover, any earned university honors cords, and several other important items. We are finalizing the details regarding the schedule of commencement ceremonies on August 7 and 8 and will get those details to you as soon as they are set.

**Academic Instruction for Summer Term** - All UCA classes will be online for all summer terms including May Intersession, Summer I, and Summer II.

**Academic Instruction for Fall Term** - While final decisions have not been made regarding fall semester and will not be made until we have more information regarding the state's physical distancing requirements and COVID-19 conditions, the university is planning for several scenarios including:

- Opening for the fall semester on the normal schedule with contingencies to transition to online if required.
- Opening for the fall semester after Labor Day with a modified academic calendar for fall and with contingencies to transition to online if required.
- Conducting the entire fall semester online.

Right now, **it is our hope, intention, and plan to be in a regular operation for fall semester** and begin classes as scheduled on August 20. Quite frankly, much of that will depend upon how the U.S. and Arkansas handle COVID-19 in the coming weeks through late summer. The words "regular" and "normal" will need to continue to be associated with good hygiene, physical distancing, face coverings, etc., as those tools will be central to all strategies of colleges and universities throughout the country in the coming academic year.

Finally, I want to congratulate our spring 2020 graduates on this momentous occasion! Your unwavering commitment to your education has paid off, and I am proud of each and every one of you. While we are not currently able to come together to mark your achievement, we plan to celebrate and honor you during the August commencement ceremony, which will now be for our spring and summer graduates. I also want to once again thank all of our students, faculty, and staff for helping us complete the spring 2020 semester. I know it wasn't always easy, but I appreciate how you adapted and worked together to make this semester a success. I look forward to fall 2020, when we can hopefully all be together again.

Sincerely,

Houston Davis  
President