

March 14, 2020

Good Afternoon,

First, allow me to introduce myself to those I haven't met. My name is Jason Wilson, VP of Student Success Services at MCC. As some of you know, I have been assisting Academic Affairs during Interim VP Michelle Glenn's absence. Michelle sends her best and is very proud of the work we are all doing in these challenging times. By this time, you should have received emails from Dr. Beverly regarding the college action plan (daily updates will continue), various institutional leaders regarding movement toward alternative instructional delivery, and today a training calendar from the CTL detailing sessions to assist you with moving from an in-person teaching approach to alternative instructional delivery. Please understand this has been an unprecedented effort of coordination to ensure that we continue the quality instruction our students have come to expect. You will continue receiving instructional themed updates, but I felt it was important to share information regarding our efforts in assisting students with this quick transition

Several efforts are underway to gather and distribute self-help resources to students regarding alternative instruction expectations and internet access options. We are working on a quick FAQ regarding likely student concerns with moving to alternative instruction such as not having access to a computer or the internet, financial strain due to loss of employment hours, and mental/emotional fatigue from this pandemic. Please be confident in knowing as you are moving to alternative instruction, Student Success Services is moving to an "alternative delivery of student support." Examples of this are and not limited to **virtual advising and counseling appointments using video conferencing, automated student emergency fund assistance, food delivery from Mott Eats (partnering with UAW), increased bandwidth in online tutoring support, and limited Chromebook checkouts for the remainder of this term.** Starting Monday, we will send a "virtual college needs survey" daily that covers these and other items, so we can begin connecting students to the supports they need.

Later this week, I will send an email reviewing how to send an Early Alert. We all know the importance of early alerts, but their value has just skyrocketed with this environmental shift. In short, faculty are strongly encouraged to send early alerts by **Wednesday March 25th** if

a student has not responded to your new instructional delivery. We are creating a special “flag” for reporting purposes as our retention efforts in this endeavor will be questioned by various regulatory agencies.

I’ve also kept abreast of our federal, state, and regional compliance obligations. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has provided guidance on how we document and report college-wide movement to an alternative instructional environment and the Deans will ask you to document your new methods of instruction. We have also received guidance from the Department of Education (DoE) on reporting requirements related to financial aid hardships, term extensions, and other catastrophe protocols when a term is disrupted. Finally, we are confirming alternative guidance on maintaining compliance for student populations whose benefits require a percentage of face to face instruction (F-1 visa, some veterans).

The Deans will be your primary guide to individual questions during and after our “prep week” is completed. They have been up to the challenge and deserve a salute for their leadership. I’ll conclude with personal anecdote. Some have asked me very plainly, “Jason, why don’t we just close?” My answer is and will continue to be “Because our students depend on us for more than just an education.” For so many of them we are the “light” and we must exhaust all means to remain “brightly lit” in this dark time. This has been an unprecedented week in my 20-year career in higher education. I’ve learned through my cumulative experiences with colleagues like you that community colleges are built for moments like this. Let’s rise to the occasion and write a new chapter of success in the history of this great college.

Humbly and Respectfully Yours,

Jason

Jason Wilson
Vice President Student Success Services
Prahl Building 1130
Mott Community College
Office: 810 232 2590
Fax: 810 232 9503