



CATE SCHOOL
commitment | companionship | scholarship | service

March 13, 2020

Dear Cate Families,

Like most of you I'm sure, I'm finding my inbox filled with messages that are intended to be informative but sound strangely menacing and anxiety-ridden. I prefer the notes that don't try to sugarcoat things all that much. The subject line of my favorite today read simply, "2020 sucks!"

I think it's a bit early to draw that conclusion, but I sure understand the sentiment. This is hardly the late winter and early spring we imagined, but there is some heartening stuff going on. We are seeing a number of students and families stopping by campus to pick up items from dorm rooms. Our questions@cate.org email address is getting lots of use.

And already our students are finding ways to connect with each other virtually. Wrote one junior to me yesterday, who is interested in facilitating meet-ups for students away from campus, "I remember how scared I was during my freshman year when the Thomas Fires were in full effect. The small gathering of Cate students in my region to raise money helped me maintain a sense of community in a stressful time and allowed me to reconnect with my peers." It's hard to imagine a more thoughtful gesture or intention.

Our student services team has been on the phone with all of our students who live abroad or who have significant travel challenges to help plan for the coming three weeks. In all cases, unless there are dramatic, extenuating circumstances, we are encouraging students who can go home to do so.

For some, that is a complicated endeavor, impacted by quarantine periods and limitations on travel. We do expect to have a small number of students living on campus in faculty homes, but our planning over the next several weeks and beyond is predicated on agility and adaptability.

We anticipate that we will have to adjust regularly and systematically. Our intention is to provide every student with everything he or she needs to learn and grow in the coming weeks. If they are safe and comfortable at home or in a place of their choosing, that intention is most likely to be productively fulfilled. So, we are not concerned that schedules and time-zone differences, international or even domestic travel limitations may impact our planning or program delivery.

With respect to support services for students during this time, we remain fully staffed and invested.

Dean'a Curry, our Director of Counseling Services, and her team of counselors are available for phone consultations as needed, as are learning specialists Marnie Woehr and Jana Ransom. While the virtual medium for such support is new to us, the substance of the outreach is not and will continue unabated throughout this off-campus hiatus.

Already teams of faculty are working on digital platforms for instruction. We are looking at lots of models and likely will build a program involving some combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction. I will offer more details on that next week as our work advances and our plans coalesce around particular techniques and schedules. In the meantime, we hope you will focus on all the things you need to do to keep your family safe and comfortable.

Next week may well find us with far more welcome news in our respective inboxes. I will be back to you then.

Servons,

Ben



<https://www.cate.org>

If you do not wish to receive these emails you may [unsubscribe here](#).