

Greetings colleagues and Happy Friday!

The sun is out, the temperatures are rising, and another week of remote instruction is largely behind us. At last night's Governing Board's meeting, the Trustees unanimously expressed their appreciation and commendations for the tremendous work of our faculty and staff in serving students during this pandemic. I echo their accolades; you are doing fantastic work ... Thank you!

As we come to the end of another week I managed to find a little time to get outside briefly between meetings today - to enjoy the sunshine and prepare another [video blog](#). Especially to those of you, who like me, have found yourself behind a zoom screen all day long – I do hope you're able to find some moments outside. Now to some updates ...

First Commencement - after much discussion we have made the difficult decision to move the 2020 Commencement ceremonies to a virtual format. We did consider several options but concluded that this one provided the greatest certainty over the uncertain month ahead. Each colleges' planning committee has student representation and we have asked them to develop ceremonies that include elements of traditional graduation and that most importantly recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of our graduates. The date will still be Friday, May 15 and now we needn't worry about the weather as we'll be celebrating our graduates from the shelter of our homes.

As you know from previous updates – out of an abundance of caution to reduce the need for staff or students to come to campuses, both Colleges have continued to aggressively transition remaining student services to remote/online formats. At this time all of WCC services are being provided online, and all of Yuba College services, except for limited library hours have transitioned online. Both college have worked with local food banks and health clinics to support those basic needs. One of the challenges to moving everything online is making sure that all students have the necessary technology. Kudos to Devin Cosby and the IT Team and to Jay Lowden and the Foundation for their efforts to procure, prepare and distribute laptops and Chromebooks to the campuses to loan out.

Yesterday we received the initial guidance on the CARES Act allocation – we will receive a total of \$5,371,992; of which the first half, the portion allocated directly to student relief, has been released and we will receive these funds in the coming days. College leaders are working with their respective financial aid teams to identify the best ways to disburse relief grants and other forms of support to students. We should learn more about the other half - the allocation for institution relief – in the coming weeks. As we receive more guidance and make decisions we will keep you informed.

My thanks to all of you who engaged in the first two Town Hall meetings; I especially appreciate your patience for those of you who endured the audio configuration challenges in one earlier this week. The next one is scheduled for Monday, April 13. Here is the zoom information; I hope that you can join:

YCCD Town Hall 3.0; Monday, April 13 at 4:00 PM Pacific Time

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/313287518>

Or iPhone one-tap (US Toll): +16699006833, 313287518# or +13462487799, 313287518#

Or Telephone:

+1 669 900 6833 (US Toll) +1 346 248 7799 (US Toll) +1 312 626 6799 (US Toll)

+1 646 876 9923 (US Toll) +1 253 215 8782 (US Toll) +1 301 715 8592 (US Toll)

Meeting ID: 313 287 518 Or Skype for Business (Lync): <SIP:313287518@lync.zoom.us>

Finally, I would like to once again acknowledge that this hard work is leaving us all pretty tired. We are all dealing with a great deal of stress in our personal and professional lives and I do humbly thank you for your dedication and your endurance. I have heard from some students who, as you know better than I, tell me just how hard these times are for them. Just like us they are struggling with this disruption, with their own health concerns as well as those of family and friends, with lives lost, job loss and employment uncertainty ... all the while striving to stay engaged in the very education that holds the promise of employment stability. Policy strategies like the P/NP waivers and the Excused Withdrawal and the CARES Act economic relief are certainly great supports for students during these challenging times. But

what is of greatest support for them is your compassion, your patience and your example of tenacity and success ... these may be my words but this is what they are saying to me.

Again, I cannot thank you enough for all that you are doing, and the care and grace that you are provide students and that you show to one another. Have a wonderful weekend, you deserve it.

Dr. Douglas B. Houston, Chancellor
Yuba Community College District