A Message from the President

In March, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis disrupted the normal operation of Alabama State University. In the wake of this pandemic, consultation with the Board of Trustees, and collaboration between the President’s Administrative Cabinet, and a special called Task Force including federal and state health officials made the decision to allow students to return home and close the ASU’s campus prior to the end of spring semester. Despite the challenges and uncertainty of COVID-19, this decision was made to preserve the health and safety of our faculty, staff, and students.

Our academic leaders worked efficiently to move instruction to online and other alternative delivery platforms for the completion of the spring semester and for the summer session. Our professors and students are to be applauded for adapting to the challenges that were before them. The University’s staff swiftly transitioned to flexible schedules, alternating between teleworking and on-campus work schedules, continuing to provide services to our students.

As we have arrived at a pivotal point of planning for the fall semester and the reopening of our campus, including the opportunity to welcome our students back to Alabama State University, the health and safety of the faculty, staff and student body is our first priority. With this in mind, the ASU 2020 Reopening Guide is a culmination of weeks of consultation with health officials, participation in national webinars and research of best practices by cabinet members, academic deans, department heads and other relevant areas of the campus. Feedback from university stakeholders has been utilized to assist in the development of the strategies to maintain a safe campus environment.

Additionally, this guide is data informed using the results from the ASU COVID-19 survey administered by the Office of Institutional Research. Furthermore, the Guide, is a phased approach intended to inform the campus community about access to the campus, health and safety priorities. It further articulates the responsibility of each person on campus to help maintain a healthy environment and preventing the spread of COVID-19, and critical information relative to each divisions operation. More importantly, it is designed to inform the campus community of the campus enhancements forthcoming to assist everyone to be mindful of social distancing efforts the institution is undertaking.

While we are excited about returning to campus, this must be done under the auspices of a new normal. Therefore, we are committed to taking extreme measures to ensure that we provide a safe environment for all our ASU family and the community at large. To ensure that we take all precautions to keep the campus community safe, the contents of this document provides guidelines under which we will operate beginning this fall. Notably, this will involve behavioral changes for the campus...
community, which will be critical to our safe reopening, and modifications to student interactions and the student experience. To that end, ASU will be a Mandatory Mask wearing campus. This is being done to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus and aligns with the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and the recently passed City Ordinance.

Finally, I would like to thank all of those who worked so diligently on the development of this Guide as a working document. As we continue to move forward, the institution will rely on the latest guidance from the CDC, ADPH and health experts to adjust and modify our guided approach. To ensure that you are keeping up with communication updates, you are welcome to visit our ASU COVID-19 web page for updates as they become available (https://www.alasu.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates).

I am confident that our continued work will lead us to our goal of keeping our campus community healthy and safe. We will continue to move ASU forward, and we will emerge from this time of crisis as a stronger Hornet Nation. Stay Aware, Stay Safe and Stay Hornet Strong

Sincerely,

President Quinton T. Ross, Jr.