

WEEKLY UPDATE



August 3, 2020

Happy Monday!

Please join me in thanking the COVID-19 Response Team for their efforts over the past several weeks. While we have been considering our approach to fall for quite some time now, the work has certainly intensified as the time has drawn near. The feedback provided by our staff and faculty has been invaluable in our decision-making, so thank you for sharing your perspectives. Please be aware that face coverings will be required in our “open” public spaces at all locations, including our classrooms, beginning next Monday (August 10). Our goal is to offer face-to-face instruction for as long as possible this term. It is far better to exercise every reasonable precaution in seeking that goal than to wish we had done so when it is too late.

Many of you will remember our colleague, Bill Loring. After many months away, Bill has fulfilled all the necessary steps for his safe return to the classroom. He will be rejoining our Cougar Family in his former Information Technology Instructor role this fall. When you see Bill, please welcome him back to campus.

Later this week, Nicholas Gilbert will arrive in Scottsbluff to fill our newly created Residence Life Area Specialist position. Nick will be living on campus in our residence halls, providing supervision and support. He will be reporting to Molly Bonuchi, our Housing Director and will live in Horizon Hall (Pioneer addition). We are so excited to have Nick join our team! He brings a newly minted Master of Arts degree in Higher Education from the University of Michigan, prior experience with student development and live-in learning communities, and a passion to serve students. By Tuesday, we will have twelve international students living in the halls completing their required fourteen-day quarantines, so Nick is arriving just in time. With 170 students assigned rooms and 47 still on a wait list, there will be much activity in the halls over the next few weeks, including training for our Residence Assistants (RAs). Welcome, Nick!

On Monday, the Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) will hold its quarterly Board meeting in Lincoln. While visiting with my president colleagues by zoom over the summer has been just fine, it will be so good to see them in person. In addition to hearing updates on the ongoing legislative session from Executive Director Greg Adams, the Board will also likely discuss the NCCA Annual Conference. This event is currently scheduled to take place in Scottsbluff in October, with a planned presentation by Higher Learning Commission (HLC) liaison Dr. Tom Bordenkircher. Suggestions of postponement due to pandemic conditions have been made, necessitating a go/no-go decision by the NCCA Board this week.

As always, if you have questions, concerns, or insights to share, please let me know.

Hope you have a great week!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Carmen M. Simone'.

Carmen M. Simone, Ph.D.
President