



April 29, 2020

Aggie Family,

As we learned last week, the State of North Carolina's stay-at-home order has been extended until at least May 8. We were also informed that public schools around the state are required to continue distance learning for the remainder of this academic year, just as the campuses of the University of North Carolina system had already decided to do.

These, of course, are only the latest effects of the coronavirus pandemic, which over the past two months has caused profound changes to the most basic aspects of our daily lives. Our university's adaptation to those necessary and abrupt changes has been truly remarkable. Because of those and similar actions around our state, we have begun to realize a turning of the COVID-19 pandemic tide.

Earlier today, UNC System President William Roper [released a statement](#) providing guidance for how the system's campuses will reopen and reminded each campus that our steps forward will be contingent on what we discover through ongoing monitoring of infection rates and North Carolina's testing and treatment capacity. President Roper's communication provides flexibility for all campuses, including ours, to take actions that meet specific needs of our institutions within a broad framework that prioritizes the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff.

We are doing our part. We have taken appropriate steps to minimize the virus' spread, moving coursework online and implementing teleworking, while still continuing to educate our students and conduct the business of the university. I am optimistic about the ongoing effects of those actions going forward.

We are now making plans to reopen our university for fall 2020 and to engage comprehensively on our mission of teaching, research and service. As we undertake that planning, we are cognizant that the virus is unlikely to be gone by this fall, and while research is underway on potential treatments, none are likely to be available then. All of this means that as we approach the fall term, we will need to do so with creativity, reimagining the way that we engage in learning, research and service in a campus environment designed to foster human interaction, even while health concerns may dictate that we continue to practice social distancing.

I have appointed a planning committee charged with development and implementation of contingency plans that will allow the university to reopen safely. The committee will oversee working groups focused on broad-based planning to ensure that we are thoughtful concerning all aspects of the university's operations in academic affairs, budget and finance, student affairs, enrollment, athletics and communications. The planning committee and working groups will ensure that we continue to remain focused on the health and wellbeing of every member of the Aggie Family.

Because of the wide and diverse range of people within the A&T community, our planning will also take into account a diversity of modalities for engaging students and needs for employee workplaces that will be critical to maintain a healthy campus. Likewise, each of us will continue to have a personal responsibility to practice preventive measures such as social distancing, handwashing and isolating when we are manifesting disease symptoms.

One of the most important and fundamental tasks we undertake at North Carolina A&T is answering complex questions. Whether in the laboratories, the classrooms or in the digital environment that characterizes our current state, our faculty and staff define, articulate, examine and attempt to understand perplexing dynamics, mysterious natural phenomena and more. Coronavirus presents us with myriad questions across a broad scale that will require attention and input from all of us and draw upon the best of our strengths to plan successfully for reopening.

We won't have to do it alone. Colleagues at institutions around the state and across the country are engaged in similar planning. Drawing on their experience and looking closely at how they are meeting similar challenges will speed our processes of discovery and innovation. Likewise, as we identify new and different approaches, I will count on you and all of our colleagues to share generously.

I look forward to you joining me in this challenge and seeing you on campus this fall.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Harold L. Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Harold L. Martin, Sr.
Chancellor