

Minot State students,

Greetings from the MSU campus. Regardless of where you are, near or far from Minot, I hope you are doing well, staying safe, continuing to use best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19, maintaining appropriate physical distancing, and enjoying a good start with the online/distance completion of the Spring Semester. Please remain in close communication with your professors, and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions you might have. Open lines of communication will be a central part of everyone's success as we navigate the remaining weeks of the semester. Here are a few recent updates:

1. **Spring Commencement Ceremony:** Unfortunately, we had to make the very difficult decision that it will not be practical or realistic to plan for a May Commencement ceremony at the MSU Dome. Our graduating seniors and graduate students have my deepest apologies as we find ourselves in this situation. Your final semester is supposed to be a special one, full of opportunities to connect with classmates and celebrate each other's achievements. There is no bigger symbol of that achievement than Commencement, so it is most disappointing to have the semester end in this manner. Please know we are working through various options to find alternative ways of celebrating our graduates. We are aware of the current petition requesting a ceremony next fall. All options are on the table right now and we will continue exploring the best way to appropriately recognize our graduates, but please know **there will not be a traditional Graduation Ceremony in May.**
2. **Housing:** For those students in the Residence Halls this semester, my thanks to each of you who have already either moved out or contacted the Housing Office letting them know of your plans if you were unable to move this week. For those who have still not contacted the Housing Office, please do so as soon as possible. We need to hear from you and know your plans. We fully understand not everyone can make it back to MSU and move out at this time. **Our Housing Office is very flexible in granting you the time you need, but we simply need to hear from you about your plans.** If you have not yet done so, please email the Housing Office at [msu.housing@minotstateu.edu](mailto:msu.housing@minotstateu.edu) or call the Office at 701-858-3363 as soon as possible (email is preferred).
3. **Housing and Dining Refunds:** We continue sorting through the final details of refunds for those students who had residence hall and/or dining services contracts. Our hope is to have that information finalized and communicated to the impacted students by later next week.
4. **Student Emergency Fund:** Thanks to the generosity of alumna Mary Quandt, a special fund was established in 2017 to assist students experiencing unforeseen financial hardships. Now, thanks to Ms. Quandt, Robert and JoAnn Skabo, and other generous alumni and supporters, we are growing that fund as we know many students have recently experienced unexpected negative changes in their finances. If you are in that situation, please feel free to apply to the Student Emergency Fund; the application form and further information is available here: <https://www.minotstateu.edu/finaid/pages/student-emergency-fund.shtml>. You can also learn more about our fundraising campaign here: <https://give.minotstateu.edu/pages/home-2037>
5. **Campus Buildings:** The campus buildings are all locked, with the exception of the Student Center and the Administration Building. If you do need to reach someone on campus, your best bet is to **call or email first rather than physically coming to campus.** As the virus continues spreading across the nation, most MSU employees are now working from home so there are not many people on campus.

6. **Online COVID-19 Resources:** From the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/share-facts.html> and from MSU: <https://www.minotstateu.edu/health/covid-19/>

Take care, best wishes, and stay safe,

Steve

*Steven W. Shirley, PhD*

*President*

*Minot State University*

*701-858-3300*

[www.minotstateu.edu](http://www.minotstateu.edu)

**Go Beavers!**