

## **STUDENT AND FAMILY QUESTIONS**

**Do you anticipate a change in the fall academic calendar or remote learning in the fall? When will you make that decision.**

**DR. SAMHAT:** We all want to be back together in the fall! Unfortunately at this point, we don't know if that will be possible or not. We are following the guidance of health officials and governmental agencies to determine the best course of action. We will make a decision about the fall semester by early July.

**Remote learning has been overwhelming. Students don't have the same resources off campus, and technology is often frustrating. What can the college do to help students manage this situation?**

**DR. SOSULSKI:** As you can imagine, many faculty members adjusted the plans for the semester and some, especially those teaching labs and physical education, had to change original plans to make courses more conducive for remote learning. Each faculty member determined the most appropriate way to continue their classes remotely, including some who are consolidating topics to fit into a more compact schedule.

I know this a new experience for everyone associated with Wofford, and it isn't exactly why students choose Wofford. They did choose Wofford for the close-knit relationships with faculty. I recommend that students talk with their professors about the workload. We remain committed to this type of individual interaction even while we are away. Academic advisors also have strategies to help students with remote learning. Also, to help alleviate some of the stress, the faculty adopted a temporary grading policy that gives students options. That entire policy can be found at [Wofford.edu/coronavirus](http://Wofford.edu/coronavirus).

**When will students be able to return to retrieve their belongings? Other states are making exceptions for college students. Would Wofford consider that?**

**DEAN BIGGER:** South Carolina Governor McMaster has issued a shelter-in-place order, so the college cannot allow students to return to campus for their belongings at this time. The college has a relationship with new business called Storage Scholars, which is considered an essential business. They can pack and ship or pack and store your belongings.

We will continue to monitor the situation and will allow students back on campus to retrieve their belongings as soon as we are able. If you are a senior or a student who is thousands of miles away or has extenuating circumstances, please email [reslife@wofford.edu](mailto:reslife@wofford.edu), and we will find a solution to help you.

**Will Wofford have summer school on campus or will it be done remotely? If summer school is available online, would there be a tuition difference?**

**DR. SOSULSKI:** A decision will be made soon. Wofford's faculty are planning a variety of options now. We plan to make a decision and share that information before registration begins next week. Tuition will remain the same, but students would not have the additional room and board expenses associated with summer school.

**How are the Wofford staff faring through this event?**

**DR. SAMHAT:** The college is still operating in support of students and the academic program. Because everyone plays a vital role on campus, everyone is still working — either flexibly on campus or at home — to keep things running smoothly. We are doing our part to stop the spread of disease, so we are working responsibly, but we are still working. That means people are still being paid.

**Are juniors being made aware of what they need to think about next year in terms of tests for graduate school or preparation for job searches?**

**DR. SOSULSKI:** The college's Career Center and Office of Undergraduate Research and Postgraduate Fellowships are both in full swing. They are talking to students, scheduling zoom calls and sending emails about opportunities for internships, research experience and preparation for life after Wofford. For example later this evening, there's a zoom call that students were invited to attend during which they can learn more from a Wofford graduate who worked with the Peace Corps for a few years. We also have had zoom calls with students interested in law school and medical school. Those opportunities are posted in the college's Daily Announcements, and they're on student social media sites as well.

**When can we expect room and board refunds? We are receiving a refund for 7 weeks, but we technically were away from campus closer to 8 weeks. How do you justify that decision and will you change the refund policy going forward to prevent this confusion and to better protect students and families?**

**MR. GARDNER:** Room and board refunds should be available beginning the week of April 20. To calculate the refunds, we considered the totality of the spring term and the period during which residence halls were closed. We determined that residence halls were completely closed for seven of the 14 weeks of the semester, so refunds were made for half of the spring room and board. The college is calculating the family contribution for the semester by subtracting any applicable grant aid from the regular semester charges for room and board. Loans will not be

subtracted. This calculation produces what we call a discount rate, which we will then apply to the gross room and board charges to determine the net family contribution to room and board charges. We will refund 50% of the new family contribution to room and board charges. Grant aid includes all grants disbursed to student accounts this semester, including institutional, federal, VA, state and other outside grants.

We are continually examining our financial policies and comparing them to best practices among our peers. At the current time, our refund policies around room and board charges are probably more permissive than those of similar institutions.

**Can I use refunds toward credit for the fall semester?**

**MR. GARDNER:** Yes. If you wish to request that the credit amount be applied to your fall bill instead of receiving a check in the mail, there's a way to do that. Visit [wofford.edu/coronavirus](http://wofford.edu/coronavirus). The link is under the update on refunds. We will need that information by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 17. I should also mention that for certain students with specific financial aid situations, deferring the credit to the fall semester may result in adverse financial aid effects. If that is the case and you have requested to defer your credit until the fall, our Office of Financial Aid will contact you directly before we agree to defer the credit to the fall.

**Are you preparing for the chance that the fall semester will continue to be online due to social distancing? If so, will tuition be reduced and room and board be omitted?**

**DR. SAMHAT:** We are considering all contingencies, including the possibility that we may need to do some or all of the fall semester online. We sincerely hope this is not the case. Students certainly would not be responsible for room and board while they were off campus. We are still discussing tuition if that were to become the case. Let's hope it does not. We all want to be together again at the start of the Fall 2020 semester.

**Are there accommodations or strategies for students with ADD/ADHD that we should be aware of, since online learning is particularly tough for these students?**

**DEAN BIGGER:** Wofford's Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services has reached out to each student who has a documented need for accommodation. We are working individually with those students. In addition, faculty advisors have received additional information to help them advise and offer academic guidance to any student struggling with the move to remote learning.

**Are students who received a scholarship entitled to any sort of reimbursement?**

**MR. GARDNER:** That depends on the scholarship since each one has different criteria. We are happy to take a look at your particular situation. Email [finaid@wofford.edu](mailto:finaid@wofford.edu) to discuss reimbursements related to scholarships.

**What are the plans for Commencement, and how will students receive their diplomas?**

**DEAN BIGGER:** We are looking forward to celebrating the Class of 2020 and are exploring different scenarios for Commencement. Just yesterday I sent a message to seniors and this morning included it in the Conquer and Prevail e-newsletter stating that we are planning a special Commencement celebration on Friday, August 21 and Saturday, August 22. We are considering ways to squeeze everything — Honors Convocation, Phi Beta Kappa induction, ROTC Commissioning, the Baccalaureate worship service, Commencement exercises and a Class of 2020 party — into the weekend. Of course, all this is contingent on the ability to gather in August, but we are all hoping that we can hold a special event for the Class of 2020.

I'm going to turn the diploma part of the question over to our provost, Dr. Mike Sosulski.

**DR. SOSULSKI:** Degrees for graduates will be conferred at the end of the semester and students will receive an official digital diploma soon after the degree is awarded (in late May probably). Students who attend Commencement will receive the physical copy of their diplomas. We will mail physical copies to students who do not return for Commencement exercises on campus.

**Are staff in the Career Center focusing solely on seniors or are they also reaching out to freshmen?**

**DR. SOSULSKI:** I encourage all students to visit the Career Center site at [Wofford.edu/careercenter](http://Wofford.edu/careercenter). There's a four-year plan that will serve as an excellent guide. The staff in the Career Center prefers for students to begin the process in their first year. My suggestion is to take a proactive role and reach out to them. The Career Center is also reaching out to students, both individually and through social media. They are eager to support students.

**What are you doing about food left out in dorm rooms?**

**DEAN BIGGER:** Before they left campus, students were reminded that members of the residence life staff inspect rooms when we close the residence halls. When we did so this time, we removed any trash that was inadvertently left in the rooms. We respected students' privacy, and we did not open drawers or refrigerators. Therefore, any students who are aware of food that wasn't properly stored and sealed in their residence hall rooms or apartments should notify Residence Life at [reslife@wofford.edu](mailto:reslife@wofford.edu) and make arrangements to have us discard those items if necessary. Thanks for expressing concern about this issue.

**Will Wofford delay the admission deadline for incoming students? If students pay the deposit by May 1, will that deposit be refunded if students can't move onto campus in the fall?**

**MR. STILLE:** Enrollment remains robust, so we have no plans to alter the admission decision deadline of May 1. Some schools have extended that deadline to June 1, but we don't think that's in the college's best interest. We want our new Terriers to begin the orientation process as soon as possible. As for the second question, that deposit will hold your student's place for when we can resume classes on campus ... hopefully that will be in the fall.

**If remote learning is required in the fall and a student wants to take a gap year or a gap semester, how would that impact merit-based scholarships?**

**DR. SAMHAT:** Each scholarship is different, so I advise you to contact a professional financial aid counselor at the college. They are always eager to work with students. Email them at [FINAID@wofford.edu](mailto:FINAID@wofford.edu).

**How will study abroad be impacted in the fall and even in the spring?**

**DR. SOSULSKI:** We are continuing to monitor how the situation involving COVID-19 is evolving, not only in the United States, but internationally, including countries where our students participate in study abroad programs. We currently have nearly 80 Wofford students planning to study abroad in the fall. Decisions regarding study abroad will be made between the college and our study abroad partners based on data and recommendations from health experts. We are aware that some of our partners have canceled some study abroad opportunities that were scheduled for the fall of 2020 as those particular centers have closed, but no decisions have been made in response to COVID-19 concerns outside of the suspension of summer 2020 programs. Our Office of International Programs is a great resource, and staff are happy to do zoom conferences so students and families can ask individual questions regarding their particular situations.

**With individuals and families taking huge financial hits during COVID-19, is Wofford taking these factors into consideration when determining tuition for the 2020-21 academic year?**

**DR. SAMHAT:** We are considering a variety of options, but have no decisions at this point. Colleges and universities across the country are discussing these same questions, and we are sharing information and learning from each other.

**Is Wofford going to be more willing to accept “Core/Major” classes being offered via other colleges during the summer and apply those grades/credits toward a student’s declared major?**

**DR. SOSULSKI:** We have a process by which credit for courses taken at other colleges can transfer and count for credit in the major, with prior approval by the department chairperson. That process is described in the college catalog under the heading, “Coursework at other Institutions.” At this time we do not anticipate the need to alter that policy.

**If study abroad programs were canceled for Fall 2020 and with a large incoming freshman class, what would be the housing situation? Would the new dorm handle the increase?**

**DEAN BIGGER:** The new residence hall has 150 beds, so it will be a great addition to our residence life options on campus. Right now, as Dr. Sosulski mentioned earlier, study abroad enrollment is strong, so we are hopeful that we will have plenty of space on campus.

**Are all professors holding virtual classes each day? Is there a set schedule or does it vary by professor?**

**DR. SOSULSKI:** Most classes at Wofford follow a Monday, Wednesday, Friday or Tuesday, Thursday schedule. That schedule remains intact for remote learning. And as always, Wofford students and professors communicate during office hours or scheduled meetings as well.

**How do students handle returning rental books to the Wofford College Bookstore?**

**DEAN BIGGER:** Students should receive prepaid shipping labels via email at the end of the semester. Be on the lookout for the labels and the instructions for getting those books back to the bookstore. There will be no cost to return books rented through the Wofford College Bookstore.

**Will the remaining Terrier Bucks be refunded?**

**MR. GARDNER:** Terrier Bucks can be acquired in three different ways. First, many students receive an allocation of Terrier Bucks with their regular on-campus meal plan. Our refunds of room and board charges are intended to compensate students for these Terrier Bucks, since they were purchased through the Board fees on the student account. Second, students have the option

to purchase Terrier Bucks directly from AVI. Finally, commuting students have the option of purchasing commuter meal plans directly from AVI, which may include Terrier Bucks. Students who purchased Terrier Bucks directly from AVI, either as a supplement to an on-campus meal plan or as part of a commuter plan, will see those Terrier Bucks carry forward to future semesters. Graduating seniors who would like to request a refund of Terrier Bucks should contact Walter Miller at [wmiller@avifoodsystems.com](mailto:wmiller@avifoodsystems.com) to begin the refund process.

\*\*\* FINAL QUESTION \*\*\*

**As discussion begins on how to reopen and begin to return to school, will Wofford consider adopting a mask policy or other guidelines in an effort to get students back sooner rather than later? Will there be limitations on gatherings?**

**DR. SAMHAT:** We will do whatever it takes, if it is in our power and the best interest of students, faculty and staff, to open in the fall as normal. If that means mask protocols, then masks it is. It's difficult to limit gatherings on a college campus — gatherings of all kinds are part of what college is — but again, we want to be back together and are willing to consider a variety of safety options to make that possible. Still, the safety and security of our community must be our priority.