Student and Family Town Hall

July 16, 5 p.m.

Good afternoon and welcome to this virtual town hall to answer questions about back to college plans.

I'm Jo Ann Brasington, your host and moderator. This event is supported by the marketing and communications team and Kaye Foster, who is the co-host and technical specialist.

Joining us our panelists, Dr. Nayef Samhat, President; Dr. Mike Sosulski, Provost; Roberta Hurley Bigger, Dean of Students and Richard Johnson, Director of Athletics. We will begin with opening remarks from President Samhat, followed by pre-submitted questions. We have lots of questions. But if we have time, we will take live questions. Please use the Q&A feature on your ZOOM window. This will last no more than an hour. If you cannot stay for the event, we will post a recording and transcript at https://www.wofford.edu/coronavirus/ under the town hall icon. Let's begin.

Nayef Samhat: There we go. Thank you, Jo Ann, and thanks to everyone for being here this evening or this late afternoon. You know, every day, we're watching the coronavirus statistics and reading public health reports and articles debating the rewards and consequences of reopening in person in the fall. We are considering all the feedback of students, families, faculty, staff, trustees and medical professionals in our community and we know everyday facts and opinions are changing. So, can I tell you today that we will definitely return to campus in the fall, I cannot. But I certainly hope we can and we are continuing to monitor the spread of the pandemic, looking at the curve of new cases, public health directives, the capacity at Spartanburg Regional Medical Center, new therapies and treatments and the decisions of colleges and universities across the country to help us make a final decision. We are planning on it. And that is our first priority and that is our assumption that we will all be back together on campus in the fall in the next month or so. But we're also planning for the alternative. We want to be prepared for the best case and the worst-case scenario and the uncertainty of the moment requires that. I'd like to say how much I appreciate the students who have offered their suggestions and their time to offering their help. I'm proud of the campus union leadership's as well. Students who are creating videos and posters and messages to share with their peers about encouraging healthy behaviors and the commitment to our community's health. We have faculty and staff at work on this as well. But I firmly believe our students hold the key to our return in the fall. So, thank you very much to everyone who was with us this afternoon and please know our commitment is to open in the fall, but to ensure the safety, health and well-being of everyone in our Wofford community.

Jo Ann Brasington: Right, let's get started with our questions. First question. Will Wofford be offering an online option for students this year, especially considering that students won't be in single room dorms or will the college reconsider the double room plan. We will start with Provost Sosulski and then Dean Bigger can finish up.
Mike Sosulski: Great, thank you Jo Ann. So, faculty have been given the opportunity to petition to teach remotely if they have underlying health conditions or have some other compelling reason why it would be a bad idea for them to be teaching in person. So that means that a small number of faculty will be teaching our courses remotely. We also anticipate that a small number of students who have serious health conditions will also be needing to take courses remotely. All of these kinds of decisions, though, are going to be situation specific. So, while some remote instruction will take place, it will not be just a preference-based option. The other thing I want to hasten to add here is that all faculty have been told to be prepared to support any students who need to quarantine or isolate themselves due to COVID-19 during the course of the semester so they will be supporting that through remote instruction in those in those ways. I'll toss it to Roberta now to answer the dorm room question.

Roberta Bigger: Thanks Provost Sosulski. Students and families should have received an email from the college, on July 2 which included an update on our residence life situation. Because we've had great success with student enrollment Wofford does not have the flexibility to significantly decrease the capacities of our residence halls. We welcome new students to our campus, more new students to our campus than we ever have before and retention is very high for current students And lastly, we had almost 100 students who are planning to study all around the world and those programs have been canceled. Therefore, we have removed any restrictions from for students who'd like to request to change their residence life status from resident to commuting. And anyone who would like to do that is encouraged to email reslife@wofford.edu to let that staff know that you would like to change your status. We have already begun a waiting list for students who want to live on campus and who are waiting to learn if we will have space for them. So, if you're thinking that you would like to commute from home or to get an apartment in Spartanburg, please let us know that. Thank you.

Jo Ann Brasington: With the fall semester being cut short how that impacts student athletes during their seasons? Basketball student athletes normally stay on campus for much of thanksgiving and winter break. Is this still an option? Athletic director Richard Johnson. 

Richard Johnson. Thank you, Jo Ann. Well, the college is still reviewing our options for the upcoming athletic seasons and we're still looking to play a Southern Conference schedule. However, this is a very fluid situation so that could change. If, and we get updates daily, if it continues as planned, we should be able to play the seasons, despite the shorter semester. To answer the second question about basketball, we often have our basketball student athletes here over Thanksgiving break and Christmas holidays anyway, so this would just be a longer break where we would house our student athletes at that time. And that's assuming these schedules continuous currently configured. 

Jo Ann Brasington: How will mask wearing be enforced? President Samhat.

Nayef Samhat: Well, that's a great question. Mask wearing will be the norm on our campus. We will cultivate a culture of mask wearing. Faculty and staff are already wearing them on campus. Construction workers are wearing them on campus. Students will not be allowed to attend class without one. And enforcement will include consequences for non-compliance that could eventually lead to a student returning home. Students are also being very helpful in leading a
culture of compliance with mask wearing and personal responsibility and so I would recommend
everyone to look at Wofford Together on our website and you will see our plans for mask
requirements, but in particular, I am delighted we all are, with student leadership in wearing
creating a culture of mass compliance on campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: Masks are expected on campus, will they be required for student athletes
during athletics practices or competitions? Beyond masks how will the college minimize risk to
student-athletes, especially those who participate in sports where it is impossible to maintain
physical distance? Richard Johnson.

Richard Johnson: Our sports medicine department has developed a return to play document that
spells out mask requirements. They developed this document in consultation with DHEC
guidelines, that's the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and it
would obviously there's some sports would be not appropriate to wear them. We wear them in
the weight room. But when we're conducting high intensity workouts, we don't. But we do
socially distance. But some sports, volleyball, basketball, football, soccer and others, definitely
don't provide opportunities to do that. So, we are testing with the apps and temperature checks
and we'll have other ways to monitor their health. We're still on this and we're still getting
guidance from DHEC and that is being updated as is the guides we get from the NCAA. So, we
don't have all the answers, but we've been working on this for quite some time.

Jo Ann Brasington: Will the college be enforcing social distancing policies in areas, including
Greek life, athletics events and other places of potential large gatherings. What's the maximum
allowed gathering size? Dean Bigger

Roberta Bigger: Thank you, Jo Ann. And yes, the college will be enforcing social distance
policies. Our staff has been working all summer with student leaders and Fraternity and Sorority
Life, with Wofford activities council, with Wofford Live to plan for what will be a very
different fall semester for them. The maximum gathering size for any event is going to depend
upon the location of the event. And we are in the process of getting estimates and evidence of
how many students could attend an event say on the mall between Shipp and Dupre halls, or on
the lawn of the Greek Village. We have notified the fraternity and sorority presidents that their
houses will not be open because those chapter sizes would not be able to social distance in their
houses. And we have not committed to a specific timeline of when that could change, but we are
exploring issues and situations. I was on a call with the president of the student body this
morning, Drew Reynolds and we were, you know, he and a group of students are helping us
figure out what locations would work outside, whether we could rent tents, use the Ben Johnson
arena for specific events because, as many of you know there are some traditional student events
that the students just would love to see continue if at all possible this fall.

Jo Ann Brasington: What social opportunities will be available for students if the Greek villages
close and large gatherings are banned? That one's back to you, Dean Bigger

Roberta Bigger: Thank you. As I just mentioned, we are working with the staff and the student
activities office and in the Fraternity and Sorority Life office to put together a process. We are
still planning to offer events what we used to call the first 54 days of the semester, which are
extremely important to student success, but especially our new student engagement. And so, we are looking at for the first two weeks we'll probably have some special ZOOM meetings and events for students that first two weeks. We're going to ask students to really practice social distancing as we, you know, get through that, that first 14-day period. We've already come up with a plan to instead of having our large interest fairs, as we've done in the past, we're going to break that into four or five different events. And so, we can concentrate and have students socially distance as they learn about what student organizations on campus and how they can get involved in those. The fraternity presidents and sorority presidents have been challenged to help us come up with ways in which their organizations can continue to meet. I know that they are looking at how they can do their philanthropy projects this fall and how they could possibly have some socials or pre-recruitment events to let students know what their organizations are about. And Dean Hammett in that office is working with the representatives of the national offices as we look to be able to meet their guidelines and standards for their organizational events.

Jo Ann Brasington: Are there any plans to have students, faculty or staff tested for COVID-19 and or antibodies before returning to campus this fall? President Samhat.

Nayef Samhat: Currently the CDC and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental control do not recommend universal testing of students, faculty and staff. Their recommendations are being monitored regularly and if those agencies change their guidelines, of course we would require that testing before the fall semester. But we're also exploring options on testing and we'll be meeting, in fact, with public with health officials from Spartanburg Regional Medical Center in the next week or so to discuss testing regiments for campuses in the Spartanburg area and in particular Wofford College

Jo Ann Brasington: I'll add to that that we have gotten a lot of questions, very specific questions about testing. And at this point, we don't know any more than what President Samhat just said. But all of those questions I have forwarded to the working group. So, as more information becomes available, they have your questions and they're going to address those.

Jo Ann Brasington: What will move-in look like this year? Are there different plans for different classes? Dean Bigger, this one's for you. And would you also answer one that popped up about how orientation will be modified?

Roberta Bigger: Sure, and I see there's one about international students and I’ll try to incorporate all those. But we, the staff has done a great job and has a draft outline of how move-in and return to campus will be. For the students who are on the call and for their parents, if you are part of a group or if your athletic team gets permission to return to the campus early you will receive an email with specific instructions, specific dates and times that you would be allowed to move back to the campus. So do always check your Wofford email for our official notifications. For special groups like orientation staff, residence life staff, Gateway scholars, Bonner scholars, you will receive specific emails when we can confirm that you will be moving back to the campus. Orientation, as everyone knows, Dean Wallace runs orientation and we have a great leadership group and orientation staff who've been meeting weekly all summer via ZOOM to recreate orientation. We loved how we have done orientation in the past, but the students are not going to be allowed to Camp Greystone has been closed all summer. So, we will not be going to
Camp Greystone. So, orientation is going to look completely different. There is an abbreviated orientation schedule on the FYI site for any new students who are on this call. If you want to check that out. It was posted two days ago, and it's not detailed, but it will give you some idea of what we're going to do on various times. What we're also going to do is stagger move in. So, any students in the upstate area, and this is incoming new students will move into campus, will be allowed to move belongings into their room on Tuesday, August 25, but they will not be allowed to stay in their room that night. And then on Wednesday we'll have another third of the class move in and then on Thursday morning will have the remainder of the students moved in. So everyone will be pre-assigned a day to move in and that means for the 25th, 26th and 27th of August are dedicated to new students and then the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday of that weekend are dedicated to returning students and transfer students being allowed to move into their rooms and apartments on campus. So, look for those emails, the first week of August, with specific instructions and there will be an opportunity, if you have a personal reason that you need to change a day, but you'll have to go through that process with Dean Lemere and Mr. Lawless in the Residence Life staff. And then international students, we're so looking forward to having our international students return and new students come in and Dean Lancaster and Sarah Malani will be sending you communications and you will move directly into your rooms when you get to campus. We will not have preseason rooms this year, or any special rooms. When you come to the campus will move directly into the room you've been assigned for the fall semester. Is that it, Jo Ann. Are there any others?

Jo Ann Brasington: I think that was it for now. Let's see if you have the next one, too. I think you might. It’s inevitable that someone on campus will test positive for COVID-19. What protocols are in place should that happen? How students be cared for if they contract the virus?

Roberta Bigger: Thank you, the Wellness Center staff has developed a thorough plan that will include sending students home if it's feasible for them to do so. If it's not, we will provide quarantine and isolation spaces that the college owns. We have identified several specific rooms and places for this purpose. We're also in the process of studying contact tracing per DHEC guidelines and are looking at and investigating several apps to help us do this effectively. The Wellness Center will notify students, faculty or staff who have come into close contact with a student or faculty or staff member who has tested positive for COVID-19 so we can give them the proper instructions about what they should do next. As always, the Wellness and the medical services staff will assist students, whether they're sick with anything, not just COVID-19. We have a great team in the Wellness Center, and there'll be very responsive and there's information online. We're doing telemedicine now and we asked that the students, you know, follow the procedures on the Wellness Center site in contacting the staff for an appointment.

Jo Ann Brasington: Ha Family weekend and Homecoming been officially canceled? If so, will there be a virtual event, or will they be postponed until this frame?

Jo Ann Brasington: You know what, I'll go ahead and answer that, unfortunately, yes, these events, it's looking less than likely we're going to be able to do them. They haven't been officially canceled, but it's just not looking good for big group gatherings right now. So, the advancement staff is trying to be really proactive and come up with some fun alternatives. Same for Terrier ball. The Terrier Club, they're looking at fun options or moving things to the spring.
We want to celebrate as much as all of you do. We also have a question here about making orientation fun for students because it'll be different this year. Trust me, Dean Biggers staff, they're trying to come up with all kinds of fun things, you know, we're all looking for fun things to make this as special as possible. Knowing that things are complicated right now.

Jo Ann Brasington: Will parents be allowed to visit students during the fall semester? Dean bigger back to you.

Roberta Bigger: As we’ve noted on our COVID website, that we are going to limit visitors to the campus this semester. In addition, we're going to limit students’ card key access - they will be given card key access to their residence hall, but not every residence hall and every apartment house on the campus. We're going to ask that families after they helped move in their student that that be the last day that they return to that room and we are not going to be able to do the traditional move-in processes. We've done it in the fall with the orientation staff and the residence staff and the coaches helping us to move students in, so that's why we're staggering, leaving to allow families to have more time to move their student in and to get settled in the residence hall room.

Jo Ann Brasington: What is Wofford doing to monitor and assess the spread of the virus, day to day? President Samhat.

Nayef Samhat: Thank you Jo ann. The first thing I'd like to say in general is that the folks on campus here the working group, the Wellness staff, the athletic staff, faculty, everyone across the campus, including students are working very, very hard to create conditions to bring everyone back on campus in the safe and healthy manner and to ensure that the students have do an extraordinary experience under the circumstances. These are very challenging circumstances for all of us. And they are doing their best, and I commend the folks here on campus and appreciate the patience of parents and students looking forward to coming back. In terms of monitoring and assessing the spread of the virus, day-to-day our staff are following all the metrics and the daily numbers reported by the State Department of Health and Environmental Control. And those numbers include case totals moving averages percentage of positive tests, we're looking at it across age groups and kind of the nature of the case or individual cases. And so, we are following that data on a daily basis and trend data. All of our members of our campus community will also be required to participate in daily check ins regarding their health by a patient portal before reporting to campus and the Wellness Center will monitor those daily responses as well. We are looking at having students check in on a daily basis and report their health to the Wellness Center. All of this of course is confidential. Information will not be shared. But part of it is to cultivate a norm of compliance across the campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: Can seniors opt to live off campus second semester? Dean Bigger.

Roberta Bigger: This relates to, I think the first question I had, and that we have removed the restrictions that have normally been in place for students to request to live off campus. So, any student wishing to change their residential status for the fall, or the spring semester can email reslife@wofford.edu.
Jo Ann Brasington: If cases continue to rise, is there a possibility that Wofford will move to remote only?

Mike Sosulski: So fundamentally, we're committed to resuming our on-campus operations this fall with students, faculty and staff. So that's our that's our position. Currently, and we are really hoping that we will not have to go to remote instruction as we did in the spring, but we have to consider the possibility that it could happen and so, we're looking at the academic calendar in new and creative ways and we have made some changes to that. One of those changes is that we are going to be ending face-to-face instruction before Thanksgiving and planning to finish the term remotely. And like the rest of the higher education world, I have to say that we will be continuing to watch very closely the situation in our region. And we will be planning for both the best and the worst-case scenarios. We're going to do that because it's paramount that we protect the integrity of the academic program, but also the welfare of everyone who's a part of our community. So that's, that's my answer to that.

Jo Ann Brasington: Provost Sosulski, would you also pick up this kind of addendum to that question? Will it be indicated on the course list used to register which courses are online? You mentioned that earlier and I probably should have caught that one then

Mike Sosulski: No problem. No, it's a natural question. And yes, we're going to have to make it clear which classes are available remotely and which ones are going to be in person, so will be sharing information about what that will look like in the coming weeks.

Jo Ann Brasington: I'm a commuting student. Will we be screened or tested every single day upon arriving on campus? Dean Bigger

Roberta Bigger: All students and all employees, which include all the faculty and staff are going to be asked to perform a daily health check in through our medical patient portal. And as President Samhat noted a few minutes ago that this is very confidential and is running through the Wellness Center. So, once a student checks in and they are symptom free, he or she will receive a green light after checking in and be free to report to class. Students, faculty or staff who report symptoms or who do not check in will receive a red light and the Wellness Center staff will be monitoring these reports. And I think I mentioned earlier the contact tracing apps that we're looking at that will help the staff be able to advise and help students, faculty and staff.

Jo Ann Brasington: Will there be a mask exception for students who participate in band, concert or choral groups? Wearing masks will be make musical performance difficult. Provost Sosulski.

Mike Sosulski: Yes, it would make it difficult, if not impossible. Whoever this questioner is has put their finger on one of the most difficult areas. And so, we are we're evaluating these programs right now to determine how they can be safely offered, and if they can be safely offered during the academic year. The chair of our music program Gary McCraw is developing rules for these kinds of classes and activities and he's basing this thinking upon the best guidance of organizations like the American Choral Directors Association and other professional organizations all of which had been devoting a lot of thought to this very question since the
beginning of the pandemic. So, stay tuned. We will have more information about how these programs can be delivered soon.

Jo Ann Brasington: What will dining look like during the fall semester between Burwell renovations and coronavirus? Dean Bigger

Roberta Bigger: As students know AVI is our culinary services partner and they've done a great job in responding to this situation, both with the construction, the renovations and the COVID situation. But dining will can continue in our Burwell upstairs dining room with reduced seating capacity, a new entrance, and additional takeout options. We're looking at putting out additional furniture outside where students can sit when the weather's great to socially distance while they enjoy their breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Jo Ann Brasington: When will we make a decision about Interim and the Spring semester? Dr. Sosulski

Mike Sosulski: So, we expect to make decisions regarding what Interim 2021 will look like and the travel programs that are usually featured during that period, we want to make those decisions by the end of October. Plans for the spring semester should be available by the end of the fall semester, if not sooner. So that's kind of what our timeline for planning looks like.

Jo Ann Brasington: Will tuition, room and board be reduced if students must leave early? Why isn't there a reduction in room and board already because of the decrease in the time on campus? President Samhat

Nayef Samhat: Thank you Jo Ann. At this time, we're planning to complete this semester, to have a full semester. And if that's the case, tuition and fees will remain as listed. To maintain social distancing during move in, we're opening the campus earlier. The costs associated with bringing students, faculty and staff back to campus during COVID-19 is also considerably greater in terms of food and housing and facilities and cleaning and sterilization and the like. So, we'll continue to monitor the situation and make adjustments as necessary during the semester.

Jo Ann Brasington: Are students required to get an influenza vaccination and, if so, is there a date by which they must be vaccinated? Dean Bigger.

Roberta Bigger: The college offers the flu vaccine annually at no cost to the student. We have ordered additional doses. This year flu vaccines are also available at local pharmacies. The Wofford Wellness Center has applied to be an administrative site when the COVID-19 vaccine becomes available. And so hopefully we'll be able to administer it also.

Jo Ann Brasington: What will the student do if they suspect that they have the coronavirus? Dean Bigger, this one's also for you.

Roberta Bigger: Students who suspect that they have it should immediately contact the Wellness Center through their patient portal or direct phone call, so the staff can give them the best course of action to take. The Wellness Center has been operating by appointment only since March and
so the staff are contacting students and employees through the patient portal or by phone, and they will, you know, this will help us in assisting to make sure that the risk of infection is decreased. Faculty have as the privacy mountain to have agreed to work with students and manage their academic responsibilities should students become ill. And I saw in the Q&A where a parent asked about how that would affect you know the number of absences and I know that the Provost can add to this, but this the faculty will be working with students who are sick or unable to attend the class because of COVID-19.

Jo Ann Brasington: There's also a question if a student is sent home due to infection, what's the protocol for returning to campus?

Mike Sosulski: I'm wondering if the question is aimed at the academic protocol or the health protocol for returning to campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: I think it was the health protocol. Check wofford.edu/WoffordTogether because I think it says there. I don't want to jump in. But I think it says there that you have to be a symptomatic as well for a while and then you have to you know get in touch with the Wellness Center and talk to them about it.

Roberta Bigger: I was looking at the question on the screen. Yes, if someone is set of a student is sent home or a faculty or staff member test positive, then they have to quarantine, self-isolate for minimum of 10 days up to 14 days and the last three of those days have to be fever free, but that the Wellness Center has a plan and would be checking in with those students and employees before they were allowed to return to campus. Does that answer that question?

Jo Ann Brasington: Yes. Got it.

Roberta Bigger: Thank you. Sorry.

Mike Sosulski: So, the next question is for me and it's what happens if a faculty member contracts COVID-19 and how's the class work going to continue? Sorry Jo Ann, I just jumped in.

Jo Ann Brasington: Go right ahead. I'm getting lost with all these great questions.

Mike Sosulski: Yeah, no, I just want to be helpful. So faculty have been told that they really need to have a plan for asynchronous learning in place in the event that they themselves become ill and are unable to come to class I've also given them the advice that would be very good to have a backup in mind in the event that you become ill, and this is honestly something that faculty do all the time anyway. In our regular lives we become ill, we get the flu and we are unable to continue, and our colleagues are gracious and wonderful, and they step in, so that everyone is preparing to be ready to do things like that.

Jo Ann Brasington: Can students wear shields instead of masks? Dean Bigger
Roberta Bigger: Thank you. The policies and procedures will be that face coverings must be worn in the classrooms in lab. So, this could include traditional masks, gaiters, scarves, or shields. I've already seen students who've been very creative and made special Wofford masks that we've ordered through Facebook. We also have put up posters around campus for the proper way to wear masks and so students are being going to be asked to wear masks or face coverings except when eating, sleeping or performing personal hygiene.

Jo Ann Brasington: Are there anonymous ways to report, people who are disobeying guidelines, again, Dean Bigger

Roberta Bigger: For any of these parents who may not know this Wofford has a tremendous software program called Starfish and this is a system open to students and faculty and staff use. And so, people will be allowed to what's called raise a flag in starfish, if someone is engaging in unhealthy behaviors. And then we have, by the time the students report to the campus will have a protocol in place that will involve staff and the campus life and Student Development division, our residence life staff who are always available 24 hours a day. But as President Samhat mentioned earlier, he and I, and the, I think the entire cabinet are just so excited about the student leaders who have stepped forward and volunteered to create a campaign for their peers about the importance of following healthy precautions. So he mentioned, we want the students to be back on campus and we want to complete the semester and what that's going to take is students to know that it's very important for them to protect themselves and in that way, you're also protecting others.

Jo Ann Brasington: Are students going to be allowed to know how many cases are on campus. If so, will we get daily or weekly reports? I can answer that one. Yes. There's something called the Cleary Act and we follow that. And that requires us to do some reporting. So, when students are on campus on that wofford.edu coronavirus site, we will have a tab that we will update weekly that's mandated that we update it. We don't have to update it daily. We don't even have to update it weekly but we're going to update it at least weekly just so that everyone can check that and know what our totals are. Hopefully not many.

Jo Ann Brasington: What will grading look like this semester? Dr Sosulski.

Mike Sosulski: Yes, that's a really good question. So, grading will be normal. It'll be our normal A through F grading scale. And the reason for that is that we plan to be on campus teaching and learning. You know it's a reasonable question to ask, what's the difference between the spring semester and the fall. Well, the difference is that in the spring, we made a fairly sudden shift to a very new learning environment and we gave faculty professional development in order to do it as best they could. but it was new to everyone. And it was quite a surprise. This time we are going to be much better prepared for that. And everyone knows I think better what to expect in an environment like that. So, for that reason, we will be using the normal grading scale.

Jo Ann Brasington: Will there be a doctor on campus, seven days a week during the COVID pandemic that can evaluate students if they have symptoms? Dean Bigger
Roberta Bigger: The Wellness Center staff who are all listed, and their photographs are listed on the Wellness Center web page, if you'd like to review that. But we are staffed by a medical services director, a nurse practitioner, other registered nurses. The accessibility offices are also located in the Wellness Center and the counseling offices and so the students can make appointments with any of the staff in that center, they can call them, they can make telemedicine appointments, they can you know and they can receive instructions on how to make an in-person appointment. We also have a partnership with a local family practice group and then Spartanburg Regional Medical Center is adjacent to the campus and they have been a tremendous partner in our Wellness Center program the entire time I've been at the college

Jo Ann Brasington: Okay, that was our last pre submitted question. We have about 10 more minutes for questions. I'm going to try to lock these together, we have had quite a number of students. I mean quite a number of questions about rules for leaving campus, going to the grocery store, coming to campus back and forth, will faculty and staff be under certain regulations off campus. Maybe we can speak a bit about our plan for people coming on and off campus or leaving campus. Dean Bigger

Roberta Bigger: I'll start and then and then ask the Provost to add to it, but, as we have several hundred commuting students who will be coming to and from the campus every day and we're going to ask as has already been mentioned many times, for them to follow our protocols with wearing a mask to classes, labs, you know, walking around the campus, etc. And we are, you know, we would hope that they would follow that practice off campus. Spartanburg City has mandated the use of the wearing of mask in the city and you know, if you're watching any this scientific news about the situation, they're saying that mask is the most important way for us to reduce the spread of this virus. So, we are also going to remind students to wash their hands. So, if you're coming and going from campus or your vehicle, you want to wash your hands. You might want to have wipes in your vehicle and in your apartment and to take this seriously. You know, because I'm sure many people have seen incidents throughout our country where young people have not taken it seriously and there's been some fatal consequences to that. So we are, we know we have some of the brightest students in the country. And we're going to have high expectations for them to follow our guidelines so that we can all remain healthy

Mike Sosulski: That's a great answer. Dean Bigger and I would just add to that that the Wofford Together plan details the necessity for everyone in our community to self-monitor on a daily basis. So that's part of taking this seriously and I can assure you that our faculty and staff take this very, very seriously and they will be encouraging students to do the same.

Jo Ann Brasington: Another question that we've had is about athletic events with no large gatherings. Does this mean students cannot attend sporting events? Will parents be able to attend if they have a child playing, dancing, cheering?

Richard Johnson: Currently we are going to socially distance games, our plan is based on again guidance from the DHEC our facilities will be at 25% maximum capacity and we will have people distanced. That's our plan for right now and again we will adjust accordingly. But the answer that is yes fans can attend, but in limited number
Jo Ann Brasington: And there's a follow up question with that. is there a timeline for when the Southern Conference will make a decision?

Richard Johnson: There's not, we had a conference call today we've got another one next week, we've been meeting at least weekly and several and early on we were meeting three times a week. That part of this again that the system is so fluid. The guidance we just got from the NCAA was based on projections that they made in May. That had us in a very different place. So those guidelines are being updated and we're adjusting accordingly. But there's been a lot of movement here in the past several days and we expect even more guidance for coming in the next couple of weeks.

Jo Ann Brasington: Another question. Will students and families coming from hotspot areas be required to quarantine 14 days prior to moving in? Dean Bigger.

Roberta Bigger: I'll take that. We are going to be sending an email at the beginning of August, and we're going to ask all students not just those coming from hotspots to, you know, self-quarantine if they can. We know that some students are working and may not be able to be in a position to do that. But yes, we're going to be sending out further guidelines. So again, just a reminder to check your Wofford email every couple of days to see if there's any official notification to the students about their returning to campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: This is another question for you Dean Bigger. How will students receive meals or medications if they are isolated or quarantined?

Roberta Bigger: That's part of our response plan that is being created by the staff in the Wellness Center. Dean Wallace, Mrs. Lafebvre, Tammy Gilliam, they're all and the nurses have all done a great job with a detailed plan and as they always do, whether it's this virus or any other illness have been very responsive to students.

Jo Ann Brasington: Another one for you. Will we be notified what housing students have been assigned and dimensions? I guess maybe that's a when will we be notified?

Roberta Bigger: For new students, the deadline has just passed for them to fill out the application for a roommate and so it'll be another two weeks now, before they get notified who their roommate is but at that time, you'll be notified about your room and your roommate. And then you can click over to the web page about your residence hall, so you can read about the dimensions of your room and you know, if you can't find the answer to your question, just call us or email us, we're here, Monday through Friday in the summer.

Jo Ann Brasington: I'm looking through the questions to try to find something that may be totally different. Do we have a deadline date for when we're going to make the decision on on-campus learning?

Nayef Samhat: Let me speak to that Joanne. We continue to monitor all the data locally and the state, regionally and nationally. We actually start a little later than many of our peers in South Carolina and in the southeast and we'll have a good sense of how these institutions are
responding. We're conscious of making a decision or that doesn't inconvenience families, students and families, but we want to make sure we have all the relevant information. We are in communication with local health authorities, as well as Spartanburg Regional to make the best decision. And we're doing the same thing as well on the athletic side in terms of returning our student , student athletes back to campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: There's a follow up. Thank you for the town hall. I'm not sure I understand the answer to whether parents will be able to visit students during the semester. Can we please clarify that?

Roberta Bigger: The plan right now and it as President Samhat said it may change. It’s constantly evolving, but the plan right now is to help students move into their room on the day they've been assigned to move back to the campus. And then after that, we asked parents not to return to the residence halls. Unlike we've done in the past, we're going to reduce the number of visitors to our residence halls. This includes parents, friends from other colleges and universities, friends from other residence halls. We want the students to be able to maintain the cleanliness of their room so that they will have a safe and secure room to study and be in without, you know, people coming and going all the time.

Jo Ann Brasington: Dr. Sosulski, President Samhat, could you speak a little bit about the possibility of a gap semester or a gap year and how this would affect students?

Mike Sosulski: Yeah, thanks. So, I'm not sure I can answer all of this, but there were two questions like this, one was earlier, I saw it much earlier in the chat and I think it had financial aid complications and scholarship questions at its root. So Nayef, do you think you're able to respond to that.

Nayef Samhat: Generally, if you're taking a gap year you're withdrawing from the college for a semester or a year and you reapply and generally those resources are available. But I would direct anyone who has questions, specific questions about their scholarship or financial aid situation to contact the Office of Financial Aid.

Jo Ann Brasington: And I'm putting that in the chat right now, the email for that in case anyone needs that. This is, this is sort of a fun question for Dean Bigger. Is it possible that first year students who will miss out on Camp Greystone will have an opportunity to go later when it's safe?

Roberta Bigger: I know we're also disappointed that our staff who goes up there and President and Mrs. Samhat have come up there and help cook steaks for the students. So we are working with AVI to hopefully recreate a similar experience during this new student orientation, but I find the question, interesting, because the senior class officers who I met with a few nights ago asked the same question they want to recreate their Camp Greystone experience and they say Dean Bigger, if we raise the funds, can we go back to Camp Greystone as seniors. And so, I think it's clear now that everybody loves, or a majority of our students love the Camp Greystone experience. And so, yes, we would certainly entertain the possibility of the class, being able to go there, perhaps in the spring semester before, it opens for their summer camp program. And as
I've said, I think everyone said this is constantly evolving in a fluid situation, but we are open to anything, especially fun ideas that will keep our students getting to know one another and if you're new coming in, please know that the Wofford community is a great place to live and learn and study and the beautiful campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: Ok we just got a few more minutes. This one is for Dr Sosulski. If receiving a red light from the health app and unable to come to class, how will that affect the number of absences? Will there be a way for students who cannot attend class to attend virtually?

Mike Sosulski: Great question. So, what our faculty have been told since March when we first had to adapt some remote teaching practices was flexibility is going to be really important here. So we're going to have absence policies in place, but they're obviously going to have to be a little bit more flexible about those things. And the key will be communication. So, if a student receives a red light signal and is prevented from going to class, then their next move really ought to be to get in touch with their faculty members, let them know what has happened so that everyone's in good communication with each other and understands what's happening. And yes, if they are prevented from for health reasons, from participating in person in class, then that's our plan is to make course content instruction available remotely in a similar fashion to what we didn't in the spring.

Jo Ann Brasington: You know, questions are coming in fast. I mean, they're coming in as fast as I can scroll. A clarification on the leaving. Does this mean that students can't go home for a weekend during the semester? Dean Bigger.

Roberta Bigger And I just typed a reply to a similar question about a special family event and you know we’ve never tried to control a student’s coming and going before, but if a student has to leave the campus or as our commuting students do on a daily basis, we are just asking them to practice very safe behavior, wearing masks, washing your hands, just, you know, be safe. So, you don't come into contact with it and that you don't bring it back to the campus.

Jo Ann Brasington: I really appreciate this parent. He said, as a new parent, thank you for this town hall. That's our last, we don't have time for any more questions, but I'm about to type something in. If you cannot find your answers at that wofford.edu/Wofford Together website, then I'm putting an email in its Woffordnews@wofford.edu please send your questions there. And someone will help clarify and help get you an answer. I know that a lot is going on. And I know that it's a trying time and we have a lot of uncertainty, but we're preparing for both best- and worst-case scenarios as President Samhat said. We're working a lot to get you the answers that you need and to try to get back on campus together. So, I appreciate your patience. This concludes our town hall. Thank you so much for to everyone for participating and for those people behind the scenes, who made it possible again and you can find a transcript and recording at wofford.edu/coronavirus. Thank you, stay well Terriers!