

To: La Roche University Community  
From: Office of the President  
Subject: **LRU Revises Start Date for Fall Semester**  
Date: **June 18, 2020**

Dear La Roche University Community,

We have been through so much in the last few months, personally and as a community. Thank you for all you have done to care for one another. Together, we have risen to the challenge of our times, facing anxiety and uncertainty with courage and resilience.

With the spring semester complete and summer classes underway, our attention for the last several weeks has turned to next year. We are planning to open our campus and return to classes, activities, and athletics this coming fall semester, to the extent that we are permitted by local and state regulations. Every effort will be made to provide a safe and healthy environment for our students, faculty and staff.

Last month we shared with you that it was our intention to open campus on the preestablished scheduled date – August 24, 2020. However, based upon the most recent guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, we have revised the start date for the semester to account for a potential resurgence of COVID-19 in the late fall. **The University plans to begin the fall semester one week early on August 17, forgo fall break, and complete most in-person, on-campus learning for the fall 2020 semester by Tuesday, Nov. 24.** Resident students will move-out by Wednesday, Nov. 25. Final exams will be online starting Tuesday, Dec. 2. Entry Level Master of Science in Nursing (ELMSN) courses will begin Aug. 24 and will adhere to a separate calendar. At this time, the University will continue to observe Labor Day on Sept. 7.

We know this represents a change and that it may be difficult for our families to adjust their plans, but throughout this pandemic we have always tried to err on the side of caution and do what we reasonably could to safeguard the health of our students, faculty and staff. We believe that means ending on-campus instruction by Thanksgiving.

In preparation for this adjusted start date, the Planning to Return to Campus Steering Committee and its several task forces and sub-committees are hard at work developing plans to welcome students back. At

present, we have nearly 75 members of our community represented among these groups, and we would like to recognize and thank all of them for their contributions:

**Planning to Return to Campus Steering Committee** – Sister Candace Introcaso, CDP, Ph.D., Chair, Howard Ishiyama, Ph.D., Colleen Ruefle, Rosemary McCarthy, Ph.D., Brady Butler, Eileen Petrone, JR Young and Terri Ballard

**Task Force on Student Life** – Colleen Ruefle, Chair

### **Sub-Committees**

- **Housing and Residence Life** – Nicole Gable, Julie Makuta, Scott Miller, LJ Morgan, Jon Mussitsch, Susan Padolf, Ashley Testa and JR Young
- **Athletics** – Lorenzo Archer, Andy Bott, Jim Curran, David Day, Kim Gissendanner, Kat Golebie, Natasha Lista of UPMC, Scott Miller and Jim Tinkey
- **Student Engagement** – Sister Elena Almendarez, CDP, Lori Arend, Jeff Dailey, David Day, Natasha Garrett, Ph.D., Kat Golebie, Kevin Myles, Eric Page, Ph.D. and Sarah White

**Task Force on Preparing the Campus Environment** – JR Young, Chair, Lorenzo Archer, Jim Curran, Brian Grove, Greg Kemper, Steve Lippiello, Skip Phillips, Jack Werner and Mark Wilcox

**Task Force on Academic Continuity** – Howard Ishiyama, Ph.D., Chair, Lynn Archer, Ph.D., Terri Ballard, Becky Bozym, Ph.D., Joan Cutone, Marie Deem, Lisa Kamphaus, Alecia Kerr, Terri Liberto, Ph.D., Rosemary McCarthy, Ph.D., Shelia Mueller, Tom Schaefer, Ph.D. and Kate Silvis, Ph.D.

### **Sub-Committees**

- **Curriculum and Schedule** – Howard Ishiyama, Ph.D., Rosemary McCarthy, Ph.D., Lynn Archer, Ph.D., Terri Ballard, Becky Bozym, Ph.D., Joan Cutone, Marie Deem and Lisa Kamphaus
- **Global Planning** – Tom Schaefer, Ph.D., Michelle Atem, Michael Bauer, Nicole Gable, Natasha Garrett, Ph.D., Emily Markham and Ashley Testa
- **Academic Support** – Jessica Ganni, Ph.D., Dina Muth, Kevin Myles, Eric Page, Ph.D., Taylor Pavolko, Brandi Stretavski and Sarah White
- **Library** – Alecia Kerr, Deborah Brown, Laird Cole, Brett Giltenboth, Caroline Horgan and Allyssa Yanniello

**Task Force on Employee Relations** – Eileen Petrone, Chair, Rishi Bahl, Ph.D., Mike Brashear, Marie Deem, Betty Gsell, Don Kaminski, Ph.D., Steve Lippiello and Ashley Testa

**COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness and Response Team** – Rosemary McCarthy, Ph.D., Chair, Terri Liberto, Ph.D., Stephanie Illig, Jim Curran, LJ Morgan and Don Kaminski, Ph.D.

We continue to work closely with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Allegheny County Health Department, and we also regularly receive ideas, input and feedback from our campus community.

**By mid-July, the La Roche Plan to Reopen Campus will be shared followed by virtual town halls to give everyone an opportunity to ask questions.** We realize many of you would like to know these decisions about fall sooner, but we believe the most responsible approach for us is to rely on the most up-to-date public health guidance in addition to the work of our steering committee and task forces. There is still much uncertainty about the course of the virus and potential therapies and vaccines to counteract it. Yet our extensive planning and preparations can bring some confidence as we look to the future.

Respectfully,



Sister Candace Introcaso, CDP, Ph.D.  
*President*



Howard J. Ishiyama, Ph.D.  
*Provost and Senior Vice President*