



To: La Roche University Community  
From: Office of the President  
Subject: COVID-19 Update – Reopening for the Fall Semester  
Date: **May 15, 2020**

Dear La Roche University Community:

This has been an extraordinarily challenging spring semester for the La Roche University community. Students, faculty and staff were asked to go well beyond their comfort zone and to challenge themselves in ways they could not have imagined when the semester began. And, while all of you are to be commended for your courage, tenacity, and toughness, I think all would agree that the La Roche experience is strongest when we are on campus, together, in one close-knit community.

After much consideration and planning, I wish to share with you that our intention is to reopen campus and resume on-campus instruction, all activities, and athletics this coming fall semester, on August 24, 2020. We did not arrive at this decision lightly. No doubt there is still much to learn about the Novel Coronavirus, but we believe that we will be able to re-open this fall. Every effort will be made to provide a safe and healthy environment for our students, faculty and staff.

I have created a steering committee consisting of a cross-section of campus leaders and charged them with developing the plan to reopen La Roche. This group has already looked at multiple scenarios involving COVID-19 and has developed academic contingency plans for each of these scenarios. Additional plans are in development, and we feel like we are in a good position to deal with nearly all contingencies.

While it is impossible to eliminate risk, we will do everything we reasonably can to mitigate the ill effects of COVID-19 by practicing social distancing within classrooms, within our hallways, and in the residence halls. This may mean that we will be inconvenienced by reduced capacities in the dining hall, six-foot spacing between individuals in class and in lines, health monitoring, and the regular use of face masks and disinfectants. There also will be more class options offered remotely, though the majority of

classes will still be held on-campus. Please know that all of these practices are in the best interest of our community.

The future is unpredictable and scientific research about COVID-19 is ongoing. With that said, while it is our intention to open this coming fall, we all must comply with the guidelines and requirements established by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Allegheny County Health Department regarding the pandemic. So while our plan is to open, we will only do so after Governor Wolf converts Allegheny County to the “green phase” under the Governor’s *Plan for Pennsylvania*. La Roche faculty and staff who are currently working remotely should continue to do so until otherwise directed.

In closing, I wish to acknowledge our students, faculty and staff for the incredible spirit exemplified this spring semester. All of you went out of your way to help and support one another during this crisis, and I could not be more proud of how this community truly lives its motto, *Ad Lucem per Amorem* or “to light through love.”

Blessings,



Sister Candace Introcaso, CDP, Ph.D.

President