



SOUTHERN VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
OFFICE *of the* PRESIDENT
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Update & Thanks from President Wilcox

Dear wonderful students,

We hope you've had a good Monday. We miss you all already! Times like these help us appreciate some of the most important things in life that we often take for granted.

This is a special place. We have a special mission, and we are blessed with special people. We're a gathering place for a great team of students, faculty, coaches, and leaders who have chosen to live and serve together in a community where we can pursue excellence and share the high standards and values of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints -- trying our best to be honest, clean, and kind. And happy. It's a privilege to be part of such a community of friends who welcome and care about one another. It's also rare. It makes a difference now, and it makes a difference for the rest of our lives.

So it's hard to leave, especially to leave unexpectedly, and prematurely. We miss you already, and can't wait to see you again. The best current estimates are that this outbreak will grow for several weeks, then begin to plateau and decline. The pattern will be different in different countries, but, as President Nelson said, we are optimistic about the future. This will end. We fully expect we will be together again in the fall to begin our historic 25th year. Some important things will happen next year, beginning with a special all-school 25th Year University Conference in the opening weeks of the school year, an historic celebration of our heritage and future. We also look forward to recognizing all of you who are the heroes of Spring, 2020. We've been through something historic together, and we'll recognize this in several ways next year, so stay tuned for more on this.

This has been a challenging time. I want you to know that we have counseled with key leaders across the country, accessed the best and most immediate global medical research, used our best judgment, and sought the inspiration of Heaven to do what is best, in the best way possible, for all of you. We love and respect and admire you! You are remarkable young women and men, from all walks of life, but united in seeking to learn and grow, to serve and care for others. We're so very grateful and proud of you!

While chaos and panic and contention have been widely reported on other campuses, you have been calm, confident, and kind. You are the best of your generation. Please never forget that. I know the Lord knows you, and cares about you – each one of you. I know Jesus is our best and truest Friend, and always will be. Nothing we can do will ever change that. We can count on Him now.

Please remember what you've learned, work with your professors to complete your classes online and emerge victorious from this semester. Take a look at the excellent summer classes as well, when that schedule is finalized soon. The faculty and leadership of the University are working together to create special options for you to be sure your grades won't be disadvantaged by having to perform differently in a different system than you were expecting and had planned for. I am so proud of our faculty and how much they care about you. These are special times and we will make special arrangements to help make things work for you, and for all the University.

Your age makes you less likely to have serious illness from this virus, but it is still possible, and if you become infected you could put others close to you at risk, and could be forced to quarantine or hospital. So please do everything you can to avoid exposure, wash your hands, practice social distancing. Because things are moving fast, transportation is becoming less certain as airlines cut back more and more flights. As infection grows, the risk of exposure while traveling grows. Traveling sooner is certainly better than later. I would encourage you to get home as soon as you can.

Please watch President Nelson's message on Instagram or the Church website. With him, we are optimistic about the future. The sun will keep shining, the melody of the seasons will continue, and fall colors will come to the Valley again. And soon we'll be together again, happy and grateful for life and relationships and the opportunity to learn and grow together. Better and stronger for having been through these experiences.

Be happy. Be faithful. Be kind. And remember the words Jesus spoke that we sing together every Friday: "As I have loved you, love one another." Look after one another and your families and friends. We love you and can't wait to see you again! Thanks for the mature and confident way you have handled all this. We're all very proud of you! You have been the heroes of Spring 2020!

Reed Wilcox