



BETHUNE – COOKMAN UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1904 by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune

E. LaBrent Chrite, Ph.D., President

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

October 26, 2020

Dear Wildcat Community:

I do hope this note finds you and your loved ones safe and well. As you know, the last year and a half has greatly tested Bethune-Cookman University. More than anything, our recent SACS and related budget challenges have been especially revealing for our University. They have revealed – reminded us, really – that ours is a community founded on faith, resilience, strength and a manifest commitment to doing what is right and necessary, as a matter of course. The current pandemic has fortified our commitment to steadfastness in the interests of the health and safety of **all** members of our community.

I could not be prouder of how our team has successfully endeavored to fulfill our mission of teaching and learning and keeping our students safe during the most challenging of circumstances. I want to also acknowledge the commitment and maturity of our students in doing their part to keep our community safe, since their return in August. While our *Wildcat Reopening* plan was obviously imperfect, it enabled us, to the fullest extent possible, to safely and effectively serve our students in the way that many would have thought impossible. From our Trustees, to my leadership team to our amazing faculty and staff, the decisions made have been done so with a focus on the health and safety of our community during these unprecedented times. It is in this spirit that I communicate the following:

Spring Athletics

B-CU will forgo all spring athletic competition, including football and men's and woman's basketball, baseball, softball and track and field. The recent spike in COVID-19 positivity rates in the state, across Volusia County and on our campus provides clear and unambiguous evidence, in our view, that now is

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simply not the time to resume athletic competition. While the decision to opt out of spring competition is the only responsible one for us at this time, it was not made lightly. We know that this decision greatly impacts our student athletes, our coaching staff, our Marching Wildcats and others, and I will be working with VP Lynn Thompson and his colleagues to minimize and ameliorate the impact of this decision.

End of Semester Planning

After discussions with the University's faculty and academic leadership team, we have concluded that it is in the best interest of our community to begin reducing the on-campus density for the remainder of the fall semester. Because of spikes in COVID-19, the faculty will be pivoting to an on-line modality, utilizing Canvas and integrating Zoom and other platforms, for the remaining three weeks of the semester. The face-to-face component of our blended courses will be eliminated effective Wednesday, October 28th.

Our intent is to encourage students to expedite their planned departure from campus beginning this week. Students may remain on campus through the 20th of November (the last day of finals) but those who wish – and are able – to do so, may depart at any time. Under this scenario, the remaining courses, and final exams and projects will be offered remotely. Faculty will be in touch with students, with the support of the Office of the Provost and the deans and directors, to ensure that the academic experience at B-CU remains rigorous and student-centered. In addition, the University will provide a pass/fail option for students. Each student should work with their faculty to determine if this option is the right one for them. Finally, we strongly encourage all students to register for their spring classes prior to their departure from campus. For students who plan to remain on campus, you will be subject to a strict set of guidelines that are highlighted in the next section.

Campus Shelter in place

For students who will remain on campus, the University has implemented an 11PM – 7AM (Monday-Sunday) curfew and a shelter in place order through the remainder of the semester. Students must be in their assigned residence hall each night by curfew. Quiet hours also will be enforced during the hours of 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Sunday – Thursday nights. Housing and Residence Life staff shall conduct random curfew checks nightly. Any student who violates the curfew policy will be removed from campus housing.

Under the order, students must remain in their residence halls, accessing dining services or carrying out approved academic related activities that cannot be done remotely.

Any time a residential student plans to be out of the residence hall overnight, it is imperative that he/she sign out on the overnight sign-out sheet. These sheets are available from the Resident Assistant at the front desk and must be filled out completely in order to provide valid permission. Once a residential student signs out of the residence hall he/she is not permitted to return to the residence hall until the next day, beginning at 8:00 a.m. Students who are employed will, of course, be accommodated if their work hours conflict with the curfew.

We also continue the no visitor/visitation policy set forth in August. Non-University affiliated guests and commuter students are not permitted within the residence halls. In compliance with the Bethune-Cookman University curfew policy, the hours of *In Hall Visitation* have been amended. Students may visit residents only within their assigned residence halls. There is no co-ed visitation and no more than two persons are allowed in a room at one time

Spring Semester

I know that many of you have questions as to what the spring semester will look like on campus. The current reality is that we are still exploring how best to prepare for January and to serve and support our students. As we did at the onset of the pandemic, B-CU will plan for multiple scenarios, with a strong bias

in favor of returning our students to campus. We will need to have a better sense of the situation with COVID-19 before we can be more definitive. Thank you for your consideration of these issues and for all your support during this academic year. We will be in touch with you soon. God bless you and staff safe!

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. LaBrent Chrite". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

E. LaBrent Chrite
President