Dear UW-River Falls Students,

I am very pleased to begin welcoming our students back to campus today. We are confident that residence hall move-in will continue to go smoothly over the next few days. It is reassuring to see everyone wearing their face coverings, maintaining social distancing and following our other safety guidelines.

In addition to the health and safety efforts we have already communicated to you, attached you will find a summary of the major mitigation initiatives we have put in place to fight the spread of COVID-19: testing, tracing, isolation and quarantine. We started COVID-19 testing on campus today, so if you received a text from us checking in on how you’re feeling, please respond! These tools, developed in consultation with our Public Health experts and UW System Administration, will be critical for keeping our educational activities on campus. Please take a moment to watch my latest Chancellor Chat to hear a few words on this directly from our Pierce County Public Health Director AZ Snyder.

You've learned a lot about what we are doing as a campus, but as I mentioned in last week’s email – your personal commitment to our community of care is incredibly important. Falcons, we know you want to socialize, meet people, gather in person to study, practice and play. We have created many policies and procedures for how to do that on campus safely. However, what you do off campus or on your own time remains your responsibility. We are asking that you do what you can to follow our main guidance at all times these coming weeks: do what you can to keep your social circles small; avoid large gatherings and parties where people are unable to physically distance or wear face coverings; choose to frequent the local businesses that have masking and social distancing rules in place; help hold your friends and classmates accountable; and so on.

We are all making sacrifices to make this semester work – and please remember that this won't be our reality forever. There will again come a time when you can study abroad, watch a football or soccer game, enjoy a live concert or eat with hundreds of your peers in the dining hall. This semester, we ask that you prioritize health and safety. Help us to continue to deliver your on-campus activities in person, to the extent possible, all semester long. To our students who have chosen to take online classes this year, please continue to engage and stay involved! Visit the Virtual Involvement Center. Your UWRF experience doesn’t end when your online class does. We have so much more to offer you, even if delivered in remote formats.

Finally, I heard that many of you have already taken your COVID-19 educational course in Canvas – thank you! If you haven’t viewed this 15-minute course yet, please be sure you do so before the official start of our fall semester on Tuesday, Sept. 1.

Continue to email covid-19@uwrf.edu with any questions. Thank you.

#DOYOURPARTFALCONS

Sincerely,

Connie

Connie Foster, Ph.D.