EMPLOYEE TOWN HALL
Questions & Answers

With Summer instruction continuing on-line, how will that affect lab courses being offered and the staff that support them?

The District is exploring the possibility of piloting a few in-person public safety and allied health lab courses during the summer and will use findings to determine which lab courses may be able to run in-person in the fall. Any in-person lab course would need to comply with all physical distancing and infectious disease control guidelines and regulations.

Can we disseminate and provide technology resources (laptops, I-pads, desktops and Chromebooks) to students faster?

Thanks to the support of donors, private grants and flexibility of funding provided by the State, the District will distribute approximately 1000 laptops and 70 MiFi’s to our students. The timing of distribution is based on the inventory of the vendor and the availability of funds.

Will faculty, administrators and classified professionals continue to be paid the same salary and benefits?

All employees continue to receive their pay and benefits. Next year’s budget is an unknown right now due to economic uncertainty at the state level. However, the District is committed to preserving jobs for all of our employees. There are many strategies that can be considered to avoid any consideration of job or wage loss that includes leaving some positions vacant, considering another early retirement offering, etc. However, we currently believe we are in good shape and will address future considerations during the budget process.

It takes longer to do some tasks working from home, are our Dean/Directors aware of the stress we are feeling?

Working remotely requires flexibility, and we encourage classified professionals to work with their Directors/Deans to design work hours and expectations that are realistic during this unprecedented time. Classified professionals should not be working more than 8-hour days and the 8-hours can be spread out in a way that works with an employee’s family and home responsibilities.
**Why must faculty hiring processes proceed during this difficult time?**

In order to meet the District’s required Faculty Obligation Number (FON), the hiring process for faculty must move forward. There are conversations at the state-level on whether FON requirements will be relaxed, but as of this writing there has been no decision.

**What is the next step after emailing and calling students that faculty cannot get in touch with via email or phone? At what point should faculty pursue a missing person?**

If you are worried about a student and have not had luck contacting them, please reach out to the Office of Student Services for assistance.

Office of Student Services  
619.421.6700 x5808 or x5810  
SWCOfficeofStudentServices@swccd.edu

**Why is there no real institutional support to get our faculty and staff through this beyond just the (inefficient) technical support? Where is the psychological, emotional, financial support?**

All employees are encouraged to visit the Employee Resources page on the District’s COVID-19 Special Update page. There is a wealth of information to support employees’ as they work remotely and their financial and personal well-being.

**Can SWC work with/partnership with companies like cox and others to provide internet service to our students. ASAP**

The District was in contact with executives at both Cox Communications and AT&T within the first week of the transition to remote work and online and distance learning transitions. Both Cox and AT&T have made all their public hotspots free to the community. Both providers also are offering internet service for prices as low as $10 a month.

**Will SWC provide technology to students for summer session and fall (if we do not return)?**

Thanks to the generosity of donors, foundation grants and flexibility from the State, the District has been able to give out student laptops and MiFi’s to
support the unanticipated technology needs that were a result of COVID-19 and the transition to distance learning. Students enrolling in summer and fall classes will do so with the knowledge that courses will be online or through distance learning. We currently do not have funding identified for the purchase of laptops for students in the summer session or fall.

I had to upgrade to a better internet ($35 more) in order to work from home, is there any discount the school can offer through Cox?

Executive Leadership is currently discussing and exploring options for how to support employee needs that are a direct result of transition to working remotely.

Anyway we can work from our offices if they have doors to close?

The District will continue to comply with the County and State guidelines when making decisions on allowing employees to work from campus. As of this writing, the state is still on a mandatory stay at home order.

Will our campus community take any time to re-think how our present practices (andragogical and administrative) support systems of inequity and white supremacy AND take time to re-design processes long-entrenched in those systems?

We recognize that we now have a unique opportunity to re-imagine our practices and systems in which we function. We have already begun to embrace a new sense of what it means to be flexible and examine our traditional definitions of "productivity", "work day", "office", and so many more. We have had to think about how we supervise and trust that work can be done in remote environments and not under a watchful eye of a supervisor. This new reality is forcing all of us to look at why we have functioned in the way that we have, and ask how we can do it better, more effectively, and more equitably. Leadership holds being student-centered and equity-focused at the center of every decision. To this end, we have been examining our system for opportunities to interrupt practices rooted in inequitable systems and white supremacy for some time. COVID-19 has pushed us toward this goal with great urgency. We strongly encourage every member of our SWC Team to examine and interrogate this same question for their areas of the College District, and participate in creating broad-spread equity and inclusion so that ALL members of our community can thrive. To be successful, we all must all do this together.
Can SWC maybe test us for covid19 before returning to work? It could be a safe thing to do, to make sure everyone is healthy and to prevent a propagation at SWC workforce.

Leadership is beginning to plan for the process of bringing employees back to work. We do not know how that will look at this point but will any return will be guided by local and state public health guidelines.

Will the fall semester schedule still include times/days for class or are they all going to be designated as online?

Yes, the fall semester classes will still include times and dates. Only classes with DE addenda and DEFT trained faculty will be coded as fully on-line.

Is there going to be compensation for those of us that have DSS students and have provided, and will continue to provide, double time proctoring for exams?

This is a negotiated item and faculty are encouraged to have a discussion with their union representative.

Can IT place personal emails and phone numbers for students, in addition to their SWC email, into Canvas? Not all students check their SWC emails.

IT and ISS are working together to address this concern.

I would like to know what EW being non-punitive means and if students get their tuition back? Has the EW policy been communicated to students? For instance, do they know they can petition for an EW due to COVID-19 even after receiving a letter grade?

Students can apply for an Excused Withdrawal (EW) with a notation of COVID-19 on their transcripts for the Spring 2020 semester at any time. If the request is made by the end of spring semester, the student may also receive a refund. EW grades are not punitive for Title 5 purposes. All students were emailed on March 31st of this option. More information about EW grades can be found on the Admissions & Financial Aid webpage.
Faculty also are asking me to ask for them whether they can get paper, ink, etc that they need to work from home.

Faculty or any employee who has operational needs should submit their request to their Director or Dean for order within the usual process of ordering supplies.

Would students from HS be able to take summer courses at SWC since they have no contact with their counselors to approve this?

The college is moving forward with seven college bound courses for the summer. High school students would need to contact their counselors or principal to be approved to participate in the courses.

How about those small businesses on campus, such as Jason’s?

Southwestern College’s Small Business Development Center is working with Jason to assist him and other small businesses throughout the region by connecting them to financial resources and support.

When we get the nod from the government, can we get a "soft opening" for a week, so that our facilities teams can prepare for the influx of students?

Leadership will be looking at a soft opening as part of our recovery plan. Some nods will be prohibitive and we will be carefully monitoring state and county regulations. We are scenario planning for the next six to seven months at this time.

Will current participants with Kaiser who do not usually have classes during the summer continue as a participant as we have done in the past summers?

Yes

Can an employee have their requested vacation time credited back now that no one is going on vacation? What if an employee is over their vacation hours and were attempting to draw down hours when they originally requested the time off?
Employees can cancel vacation requests through MySWC and vacation hours will be credited back to your account. Human Resources will be looking into how to proceed if an employee is over their hours.

**Will the bookstore be open Fall 2020 to distribute textbooks and other required course materials or will students have to find other means of obtaining these items?**

This semester the bookstore has been processing orders online and shipping the items to students at no charge and will continue to provide learning materials to students in the fall whether it is open physically or virtually.

**Hi all, is our retro pay still on track to be paid on our May 29th paycheck? Bonus on track as well?**

For CSEA, SCCDAA, Non-Union, and Confidential – which are all remaining groups, will have their retro processed on the May 28th paycheck. Retro is the negotiated salary schedule increase and one time off salary schedule payment (paid in two payments).

**As we are working remote, can IT create a way to notify faculty when students drop their class? It helps with knowing numbers for attendance rather than constantly checking in WebAdvisor and sending out emails to the students.**

Student Services has developed a regular report and will be looking into how to make it available to faculty.

**Hi! I'd like to know if we will continue with GSP's (Guided Self-Placements) during summer? Thank you.**

Yes, GSP’s will continue in the summer and more information will be sent out once finalized.