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**To:** [fulltimefaculty](#); [adjunctfaculty](#)  
**Subject:** Provost's Notes: August 31 - Week 2

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Happy Monday of the Second Week!

Well, folks, the first week of Fall 2020 is in the books, and we are off to the races. I have just a few updates to share with you:

## REPORTING CASES

You are doing an *exceptional* job reporting COVID-related cases through OTC Cares. Our OTC Cares case managers are very busy with your reports, and this is what we need to happen! This helps us keep our employees and students as safe and healthy as we can. A *big thank you to all of you*. I can't emphasize enough how much we appreciate your diligence in reporting and reaching out with questions.

We are expanding our case management team to accommodate the number of cases being reported, which may sound like bad news; however, it isn't! While we have confirmed cases of COVID-19, most reports are of students who are symptomatic or who've had an exposure to a COVID-positive individual. If you want to keep track of positive cases at OTC, don't forget our dashboard: <https://www.otc.edu/dashboard/>

## REMINDERS/HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. **ADJUSTED GUIDANCE FOR REPORTING:** The Springfield Greene County Health Department, following CDC guidance, has changed reporting protocol. If you have a student who has been exposed to a COVID-positive individual but who is not symptomatic, they **do not** need to be reported through OTC Cares.
2. **COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS:** In your communication with a student who is symptomatic or has tested positive, please emphasize how important it is that they **answer our phone calls and emails**. As our case managers are reaching out with support to students, this ends up being one of the most time-consuming parts of the task. It's helpful if they pick up the phone the first time we call!
3. **KEEP REPORTING!** A reminder to report **ALL students, online OR seated, who show symptoms, must quarantine, or have tested positive through OTC Cares**. When you visit the OTC Cares page, you will notice that a special link for COVID-19 has been added under the "Student Care" category.

## ARE YOU TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF?

The first week back was a big adjustment for all of us. It was the first time we've had a substantial number of students on campus in 5 months, plus everything is so...different. Your job as you knew it is different and more complicated, so you are adapting to a lot of changes. There is a lot of stress and anxiety. I will repeat here what I have said before: Go easy on yourself. You aren't going to do everything perfectly this semester, and that is

okay. To try your best is all anyone is asking of you – and some days, your best will be better than others.

Prioritize taking care of yourself by making time *every day* to do something you love. Read, journal, exercise, eat a big salad, binge on trashy shows on *Bravo* – whatever helps you feel good, de-stress, and supports your mental and physical health. No one will do this for you! As educators, we are so accustomed to operating independently that it feels as if we are burdening someone else to ask for help. We must stick together through this and support each other. Today, it's you asking me for help; but tomorrow, it may very well be me asking you. We have always supported one another at OTC, and that care and support will help us manage now during what is possibly (hopefully) the most challenging time of our lives. Our Center for Academic Innovation is working on providing some special programming to help support mental wellness throughout this semester. More to come as plans are finalized.

*And finally...what you've all been waiting for since March...*

## TOPICS THAT HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH COVID

**CANVAS ATTENDANCE IS WORKING:** After a bit of a rocky start last week, the new Canvas Attendance module is working. If you missed getting attendance entered on any days last week due to these issues, please go back in and clean up any days that were missed. *It is very important to keep daily, accurate attendance!* If you run into any problems, please contact Dr. Gavin O'Connor, whose email address you probably have memorized: [occonnorg@otc.edu](mailto:occonnorg@otc.edu).

**STUDENT SUCCESS REDESIGN UPDATE:** OTC Table Rock, Richwood Valley, Republic, Waynesville, and Lebanon locations, as well as eight Technical Education programs (AVI, CST, ECD, EMP, ELC, FST, HRA, and WLD), now have dedicated Student Success teams in place and working with students! Student Success teams will function as a one-stop-shop for advising, financial planning, career/educational assistance with post-OTC plans, and assistance with challenging personal/life circumstances. Student Success work will be data-informed and personalized for students to ensure the highest levels of support and service.

Every full-time, non-visiting student (except for Allied Health students) will be assigned to a College Navigator at the locations mentioned above. A support team, including College Navigators, Student Success Specialists, and Community Resource Specialists/Mental Health Counselors, has been trained to provide case management services to students and connect them with the resources they need to be successful in and out of the classroom. These resources include enrollment and registration support, financial aid and FAFSA assistance, career readiness/transfer support, personal and life circumstances resources, community resource referrals, and referrals to other OTC academic/non-academic support services. The goal of the Student Success team is to provide students with these supports proactively through early alert data and on demand through holistic advising and case management.

In addition to these resources for our students, the hope and goal is that Student Success teams will also be a major resource for faculty and staff. For example, you have a student in class who is struggling with a financial aid issue, their College Navigator can help them find a solution. If a student expresses a need for food or stable housing, Community

Resource Specialists/Mental Health Counselors will be able to connect the student with the needed resources. Contact information for Student Success teams at each location and technical education programs will be shared with you soon to ensure those connections can be made.

You know your students the best, and as we transition into this new model of proactive and holistic student supports, that knowledge and your collaboration will be key. If you would like to learn more about the new resources available to students and faculty, please don't hesitate to contact Andrew Goodall ([goodalla@otc.edu](mailto:goodalla@otc.edu)) and let him know how Student Success teams can better serve students so they are able to do their very best in your classrooms.

What challenges are you having? How can I support you? Please don't hesitate to reach out.

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