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**Subject:** Provost's Notes: Week 7  
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Good afternoon, Faculty!

Here we are, nearly at the midway point of the semester – and what a good semester it has been! I am feeling positive about the next few weeks for many reasons: COVID cases are down college-wide (as well as across the region and nationwide), vaccine production and distribution is gaining momentum, we've continued to improve the quality and flexibility of the instruction we offer, we're planning **in-person** commencement and graduation ceremonies, and Spring Break is approaching. We have many reasons to be hopeful and optimistic for the rest of the spring semester.

A few updates to share:

**VACCINE REGISTRATION:** As Dr. Higdon pointed out in yesterday's *Notes*, the state is currently in Phase 1B of its vaccination plan, and higher education is in Phase 2. The good news is that we are fast-approaching Phase 2! If you would like to be vaccinated and have not yet registered, please do so as quickly as you can and in as many places as you can. We have put links to CoxHealth, Mercy, and the state's registration sites on the OTC COVID page: <https://www.otc.edu/covid/#vaccine-information> In addition, locally, Walmart pharmacies are administering the vaccine. We still hope to hold vaccination clinics for OTC employees, but there is no further information about when or if that can happen.

**COMMENCEMENT PLANS:** The college has plans to hold two in-person Commencement ceremonies on Wednesday, May 19 – one at 3 p.m. and one at 6:30 p.m. – both at JQH Arena. You will only be required to attend one of these ceremonies. We are finalizing the groups for each ceremony and will communicate that to you within the next week or so.

**PROGRESS ON THE PLASTER MANUFACTURING CENTER:** If you work on the Springfield campus or tune in to [the live feed video](#), you are seeing the progress on the construction of the Plaster Manufacturing Center. Not only is the building under construction, but there's a lot happening behind the scenes as well. I was updated today about all the hard work that's been happening with regard to interdisciplinary collaboration, curricular redesign, marketing, adapting for flexible instruction, and so much more. A lot of thought, planning, and good work has been done by a number of people – many of them from outside Technical Education. I'm very proud of the level of engagement and investment in this facility from across the OTC system. This isn't just a building created by and for Technical Education; this is a building that is created by and for all of us and the communities we serve.

**HLC VISIT:** We are starting to learn a few more details about our accreditation visit at the end of this month. Expect those details to be coming your way soon.

What questions do you have? How can I support you? Please always feel free to reach out.

Have a great week!

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