

**From:** Office of the Provost  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 4:31 PM  
**Subject:** Message from the Provost

Dear colleagues,

I know that many of you have questions and concerns about how COVID-19 is affecting our institution. Let me start by reiterating that our highest priority is the well-being of our faculty, staff, students and community.

Earlier this afternoon, you will have received an official communication from President Alger regarding our plans for moving forward. Please continue to watch your email and the JMU website for further updates. Things are changing quickly, and I will be keeping you informed as decisions are made.

I've been working closely with the deans to anticipate our next steps. While we've tried to think of everything, we know additional issues will come up. We're committed to doing our best for you and our students, so we welcome your advice and perspective. This is a time to share our combined experience and focus on leveraging the technological and pedagogical resources our faculty are known for. This is a dynamic situation, and we need everyone's input so that we can learn from one another. I encourage you to be open to the concerns of your students as they will undoubtedly have questions and may be unsure of what is expected of them.

As we move ahead, don't hesitate to express your ideas. None of us want more emails, but in these circumstances, I'm going to err on the side of more communication. Loop in your academic unit head and dean when you have questions, challenges and solutions. Work with your colleagues to find creative and satisfying ways to continue your teaching and your own research. There is no one-size-fits-all approach: I encourage you to find the methodology that works for you and your students. Explore novel options in your discipline and allow yourself the opportunity to work outside the box.

Finally, take care of yourselves! Do what you need to do to feel rested, integrated and positive.

I so appreciate your patience, your dedication and your expertise as we move ahead.

Warmly,  
Heather  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs