

Dear Spartans,

This year has been unlike anything we've ever seen, and I'm proud of the hard work our faculty, staff and students have put in to make the best of a Spartan education during this pandemic.

Our [faculty and staff](#) have been working diligently to keep our campus safe and continue the world-class education we are trusted to deliver. Our students have remained dedicated to their classes and disciplines all while managing this pandemic with courage and determination. I appreciate that thousands of MSU students are taking action every day to reduce the spread of COVID-19. And I continue to appreciate the dedication and efforts I see in the Spartan community. The leadership shown by our students is extraordinary, and it instills confidence that we can continue to tackle this together.

I know many of you have questions about the spring semester, so I write you today with some highlights of recent MSU leadership and our task force decisions:

- Spring semester for undergraduate classes will start as scheduled Jan. 11, 2021.
- Approximately 2,500 additional single-occupancy residence hall spaces will be available to students who want or need to live on campus.
- MSU will offer more in-person classes, with a focus on courses that students need in order to graduate on time.
- MSU will join most of the other Big Ten universities in canceling spring break in 2021.
- The spring calendar will include three midweek days without classes spread throughout the semester to provide breaks for students.
- Undergraduate instruction will end April 23, 2021, and finals week will be held one week earlier than previously scheduled to allow for a weeklong period for graduation ceremonies.
- As part of a COVID-19 testing program, MSU will require participation in the [COVID-19 Early Detection Program](#) for students living on campus and undergraduate students coming to campus during the spring semester due to, for example, in-person classes, labs or work. Current program participants, faculty, staff and other student populations will also have the opportunity to continue in the program.

The fall has shown us that our systems and protocols set up for on-campus housing have proven effective and successful, and we are confident we can return more students to our residence halls. Many Spartans continue to express a desire to live on campus. Residential and Hospitality Services has developed a request process that will be offered soon, with a priority on Spartans needing additional assistance to be academically successful, those who have an in-person or hybrid class and first-year students. All students currently living on campus will remain in their current rooms.

In the fall, only about 40 in-person classes were offered at MSU. This spring, we expect to offer about 400 in-person educational experiences. We will prioritize offering classes that can only be taught in person in order to keep our students on track for an on-time graduation. To protect the health and wellness of the community, most classes still will be offered only as online courses.

Graduate and professional programs may have different calendars and schedules. Faculty will receive more information from their deans and colleges about class modalities and schedules in the coming days. Students also will receive more information about class schedules and on-campus housing opportunities soon. Further information on required participation in the [COVID-19 Early Detection Program](#), also known as the Spartan Spit Test, will be made available closer to the start of the next semester.

I appreciate your diligent efforts to reduce the spread of the novel coronavirus by wearing your masks and practicing physical distancing. Keep up the great work — we don't want to lose the opportunities for which we have all worked so hard. [Together, we will.](#)

Sincerely,

Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D.

President