OFFICE OF VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND PROVOST

DATE:	March 9, 2020
TO:	College Community
FROM:	Dr. Joanne Russell, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
SUBJECT:	*COVID-19 Academic Preparations*

KCC and CUNY are taking active measures to protect the health and safety of faculty, staff, and students during the COVID-19 outbreak. KCC has created a website that will be updated daily to include developments about the outbreak and our plans. As part of this process, the Office of Academic Affairs is reviewing academic practices and policies to ensure continuity of instruction in the event of a campus closure. While we hope to avoid such a closure, I am providing the following information to support our collective and individual preparation of contingency plans.

Methods of Communication

It is absolutely essential that all members of the KCC community use KCC email for sending and receiving communications. Adjuncts and full-time faculty are required, as part of their job, to check their KCC email regularly. Although this is an ongoing expectation, it is especially important as we are providing regular updates regarding our campus response to COVID-19.

Academic Affairs is working with the Office of Information Technology Services (OITS) to ensure continuity of phone communications and access to necessary files in the event of a campus closure.

Supporting Students

As many of you have pointed out, students are also facing other stresses related to their health, families, childcare, and employment. Please be prepared to accommodate students to the greatest reasonable extent, which may include permitting make-up exams, extending due dates of assignments and projects, and suspending your current attendance policies.

Advisors will be available via email to assist students in working through challenges experienced due to closure, as well as continued general advisement pertaining to classes, academic success and college policies and procedures. Advisors will conduct conferencing session (phone, video) to students in lieu of advisement appointments.

Support for Faculty in the Conversion of Face-to-Face and Hybrid Courses to Online Delivery

The New York State Education Department provides guidelines for temporary permission to take courses or programs online in the case of emergency or closure .   Please be aware that faculty may **not** change the designated course delivery mode appearing in CUNY First from in-person course to hybrid or online, nor a hybrid course to an online only course without prior approval from their Chair and from the Office of the Provost.

As an immediate outreach to faculty, KCeL is offering faculty workshops in its new location, M386, on Blackboard communications and content delivery. The following workshops have already been announced, and additional workshops are forthcoming:

Blackboard Communication Basics & Content Delivery, on the following dates and times:
> Monday, March 9th from 12:40-1:40

Tuesday, March 10th from 5:00-6:00
Wednesday, March 11th 10:20-11:20

RSVP using the following link: https://forms.gle/ge1ofrvokKvXXtXUA

Using materials already created by CUNY IT, KCC IT and KCEL, a faculty resource page has been developed (attached), consisting of materials that will help instructors strengthen their presence online. This resource page includes information to guide you through the process of preparing your course materials to be posted on Blackboard, ways to conduct online discussions with your class as well as how to create assignments and tests in Blackboard. If you do not have a computer at home, please contact OITS.

Ensuring Students can Access Blackboard

Because all classes may need to use Blackboard on a temporary basis, it is important that all students and faculty know how to access Blackboard. If you have not required students to access Blackboard for your class, it is recommended that you include an assignment or assessment in the coming week so that any student log in questions are addressed before a campus closure. Some recommended methods are:

- Make sure your course is available. You can watch a video on how to make your course available by clicking here
- Request your students email you in the upcoming week through Blackboard.
- During class, let students know you will be sending them an email and request they respond.
- Add a discussion board in Blackboard for student questions.
- Provide students with a practice experience on submitting assignments in Blackboard.
- Create a short practice test in Blackboard on three or four questions for students to take for no grade.

OITS will provide access for all students to "Are You Ready?" a short five module online readiness course developed by Hostos Community College and modified for KCC by Loretta Brancaccio-Taras and KCeL.

Classes with Clinical Placements

The University is actively working with NYSED to determine how to best meet the regulatory requirements for professional licensure or certification in the case that clinical placements are disrupted. More guidance is forthcoming.

Thank you for working to support students through this challenging time. We are continuing to review our policies and practices in order to ensure that we are supporting you to the fullest degree possible even as circumstances continue to change. I will be sending additional information and updates throughout the week.