

Date: Thu, Mar 26, 2020 at 4:36 PM
Subject: COVID-19 March 26 Chancellor Update
To: <Pima-All@pima.edu>

Sent on behalf of Chancellor Lee Lambert

Topics: 2020 Commencement and March 30 transition to virtual instruction

Colleagues --

Today, with the support of the Governing Board, we made the difficult, but probably inevitable decision to cancel the 2020 Commencement ceremony scheduled for May 21 at the Tucson Convention Center Arena. Additionally, all other College recognition and completion events scheduled for this Spring have been canceled.

This is among the most painful decisions I, the Board and the Executive Leadership Team have made during this crisis. Graduation season is the happiest time of the school year. More than 900 graduates attended last year's celebration. They were cheered on by faculty, staff and administrators, and, of course, thousands of friends, family members and loved ones.

In good conscience, we cannot hold or countenance events that bring together groups of people in the midst of an ongoing pandemic that demands physical distancing. In thought and action, we have worked to keep students and the community safe, and will continue to do so.

While Spring's in-person ceremonies have been canceled, we are working on mounting virtual alternatives, and are exploring the possibility of holding in-person events in the Summer and Fall. We intend to survey May's graduates about their thoughts and preferences, as they are most impacted. We will keep the College community apprised as details develop.

In better news, we have made significant progress toward resuming Spring classes March 30, working to ensure faculty and staff have the tools they need for a successful transition to virtual. Communication to students is occurring and is often robust. I thank you for that.

We also made decisions about hands-on programs, moving them to summer or the earliest day we can do so safely. This decision helps preserve students' financial aid eligibility while giving them the best possible opportunity to complete successfully.

The day will come when we once again celebrate, not only our student achievement, but also your dedication and perseverance.

Please continue to stay safe.

Lee D. Lambert
Chancellor