

Date: Tue, Mar 31, 2020 at 3:41 PM
Subject: COVID-19 March 31 Chancellor's Update
To: <Pima-All@pima.edu>

Sent on behalf of Chancellor Lee Lambert

Topics: Continuing physical distancing, virtual student services, refund policy, COVID-19 online scams

Dear Colleagues,

On Monday, Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey issued a “stay at home” order that runs through April 30. For the continued safety of our faculty, staff and students, Pima Community College will align its suspension of face-to-face services and facility closures through the end of the month. Of course, we will make other decisions as warranted.

Also, as a reminder, we will continue to teach virtually through the end of the Spring semester. The reason is to give our students as much consistency as possible, and also because it is likely that whenever we return to campus, we will return incrementally and not all at once.

Related, our Adult Education programs have suspended face-to-face instruction and services through June 30, which is the end of their program year.

It is difficult, of course, for anyone to predict what a return to normal will look like. We continue to monitor local, state and national decisions and will make decisions about Pima accordingly.

I know it is frustrating to work in such a fluid situation, but I think you will be pleased to hear that students have responded positively so far about the College’s response to the coronavirus. We are working with Hanover Research to survey students and faculty over the course of the semester to assess how people are adapting to the virtual environment. Students have mixed responses about their own ability to succeed and we are working to shift that response to a positive one, but students are appreciative of the efforts the College has taken to help ensure both their safety and their ability to continue their education. More than 80 percent of student respondents indicate they consider PCC’s response to COVID-19 to be moderately, very or extremely effective.

In support of that transition, we continue to grow our student resources. Virtual tutoring is now available and has been communicated to students. A new series of [videos](#) guide students to resources on Pima.edu. We are working on access to technology for students, including providing parking lot access to Wi-Fi, beginning with our West Campus. We will announce those details soon.

We are working to help students as much as possible in these difficult times, and we are providing some guidance on requests for refunds.

It’s important to note the College’s [refund policy](#) has not changed. Students taking an Incomplete will not incur additional costs (tuition, fees, and/or course fees) when completing the course in a future term. This approach is consistent with the other Arizona community colleges and with PCC’s grading

policies. Our faculty and Student Affairs staff are actively working with students to help them complete their courses.

To alleviate financial charges where possible, March payment plan late fees have been eliminated; any students who previously paid this fee will be or have already been refunded with all adjustments being completed by March 30, 2020. We will also be discussing with the Governing Board additional options to financially assist students in continuing their education.

You may have seen that students at the three state universities are seeking refunds, and I want to provide clarification on this topic. Refunds requested by students from the three state universities are related to prepaid costs for housing, food plans, and parking, which are services no longer being provided. The College does not offer these services. Rather, the College charges only limited fees for registration and technology which are services that will continue and therefore do not need to be refunded.

Beware of COVID-19 scams

Regrettably, there are always people who take advantage of difficult situations. Our IT team put together some [helpful guidance to keep your information secure](#).

Thank you to everyone for your resourcefulness, patience, flexibility and compassion. We are making good progress and have every reason to anticipate good outcomes.

Lee D. Lambert
Chancellor