

08/20

After due consideration of the input received from faculty and staff about moving to Phase 3 next week or the following week when classes begin, the President's Council and I have decided to move with prudence given the current state of the pandemic and slowly declining infection rates in our area. We are confident that we can move into "modified phase 3" operations which we are dubbing "Phase 2.5."

This is our rationale:

We have the CDC-recommended protocols and a well-developed plan in place needed to minimize the potential of infections here and respond as needed.

Seminarians on campus have all been tested and are negative. They have been in quarantine and will not be permitted off campus (without permission and for very specific needs). They have all signed the agreement to follow safety protocols. They are of sufficient maturity and demeanor to care for the health and wellbeing of others as well as of themselves.

The seminarians at St. Francis de Sales Seminary will be closely monitored by their formators and once classes begin, they will only be permitted to drive here and back (other than to get gas if needed). They also have COVID testing readily available to them and are signing the agreement adapted for SFdSS.

There are two SDS seminarians who will be coming to campus for courses and formation purposes who are also signing the safety procedures agreement adapted for their context and will be monitored by their community formators.

The Cor Unum students come to campus when our faculty and staff are generally not here and they do not interact with the residents. They too are signing the agreement to follow protocols and monitor their health.

Of the Lumen Cordis students, only 4 who are not seminarians are registered for this semester. They too will be signing the agreement.

Continuing education-type students will only be permitted to register for online courses if appropriate.

The monastery resident SCJs have very strict protocols in place as well and are being monitored. The agreement has been modified for their context.

Actions to minimize exposure:

Rector's Day: will be cancelled. Title IX training will be provided virtually as soon as it can be arranged.

Orientation: 12 SFdSS new seminarians are scheduled to be here for a separate session with the Rector on Wednesday morning next week. Our 5 new seminarians will only interact with them on a limited basis that day.

Opening School Liturgy (2 SEP): will be pared down (the SFdSS faculty and students will celebrate a Mass of the Holy Spirit there; the Cor Unum students will have a separate Opening Mass on their first Apostolic Saturday): there will be only one or two outside guests for the Mass; there will be no reception

or dinner afterwards. There is sufficient space in the chapel to maintain adequate social distancing for 80 persons (25% capacity) though we expect there will be fewer present. Faculty/staff may opt out.

Large group in person gatherings or meetings: will be held via Zoom (e.g., Faculty Council, Staff Meetings, Rector's Cabinet) until factors are such that we can meet in person.

Meetings of other entities: will be held via Zoom until factors are such that we can meet in person.

Employees: will be designated to come on campus on a staggered and rotating basis as has been the practice but permission will be given to individuals to come to campus as needed. Faculty will be asked to try to limit their time on campus to the extent possible. (Being prepared in consultation).

Classes: will generally be on campus but professors are encouraged to use a combination of remote and in person instruction as appropriate. Accommodations will be made for professors and students as well.

Lunch hours: are being extended so that faculty/staff can eat between 11:30-12:00 or 1:00-1:30 if able. Students are being staggered so that a group eats from 12:00-12:30 and a second group from 12:30-1:00 depending on their class schedules. Meals will be plated.

Guests and those not working in the building: may only come on campus with permission of the Rector and for specific purposes. Their temperature will be taken and they will have to respond to the safety questionnaire as well as wear face masks and sanitize their hands.

It seems to me that the only ones left are faculty and staff who have to make sure they are following safe hygiene practices at home, avoiding public and large gatherings, and monitoring themselves for symptoms before coming to work.

The COVID-19 Response Plan will be updated to reflect this move to Phase 2.5; a link to the document will be sent to everyone as soon as it is ready.

The President's Council and I will continue to monitor the situation regularly and when the time comes make the appropriate and prudent decision required. Everyone's health and welfare are of our utmost concern.

Thank you once again for your input, your collaboration, and your dedication. The response rate was quite high (42/74 who received the questionnaire link)!

In the heart of Christ,
Fr. Raúl

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