Student Senate Meeting with Mercy College Cabinet – 4.22.20

Members present: Doug Fiore, Nancy Kertz, Anne Dennis, Matt Romkey, Tom Leahy, Lyneene Richardson, Rebecca Dennis, Allison Kipp, Madison Mann, Arianna Embry, Sidney Fauconier, Mackenzie Hailey

Student Questions

*(name) indicates the student asking Cabinet the question on behalf of the student body

Tuition and fees:

1. Is it possible to refund any student fees for the spring or summer semesters? (Sidney)

   Much of the tuition and fees charged to students each semester is allocated in ways that are out of our control and cannot be altered. They are necessary for the institution (faculty and staff pay, building maintenance, licensing fees, etc.). Other fees are allocated to charges that have already been incurred (such as NCLEX review resources). Mercy College is currently in the process of applying for funds from the CARES act, assistance that will be provided through the government, and will distribute those funds in accordance with the guidelines and policies set forth by the federal government. More information about how that will benefit students is forthcoming.

2. Will there be a change in tuition? (Madison)

   Not at this time. (Please see question #1)

3. If it is not possible, how are fees being utilized in the best interest of the students? (Arianna)

   Mercy College faculty, staff, and administration are looking at online resources that will improve the learning experience for each student. These are unprecedented times that happened very rapidly. Many resources that assist with the delivery of online learning will be costly to the institution. Tuition and fees charged to students help offset the cost of these resources.

Sending supplies to students:

4. Is it possible to send students materials to practice nursing lab (and other program) skills at home? (Sidney)

   Faculty and students are being creative in working with the current materials they have on hand. We recognize the important of having lab practice materials available to students as they learn and practice skills. We are looking at our options for getting students the proper materials in a fast, safe, and cost efficient way.
Notice of COVID cases, updates:

5. How are students notified when another student, faculty, or staff member has tested positive for COVID 19? (Madison)

Mercy College is working within the guidelines of HIPPA and FERPA that respect the rights and privacy of students, faculty, and staff. There is a process in place where College officials (Lyneene Richardson, Dean of Student Services, and Anne Dennis, Vice President of Human Resources) contact those in the College community who have reported testing positive for COVID 19. They work to ensure that the individual has all the support needed. The health and safety of all students, faculty, and staff is our priority and policies and procedures will continue to reflect that. Since we are no longer on campus the threat of spreading the virus through on-campus contact has been eliminated. We will make the necessary changes in the future when we return to campus.

College Hill Apartments have a different process for notifying residents of those who have tested positive for COVID 19. They follow the guidelines of Newberry Living. Please contact them for questions if you are a resident of College Hill.

Please reach out to Lyneene Richardson (lrichardson@mercydesmoines.org) or Anne Dennis (adennis@mercydesmoines.org) for any questions as well.

6. When and how can we receive updates on changes due to COVID 19? (Arianna)

We want to provide as much information about updates as possible. We are notifying the campus community as soon as decisions are made. These updates can be found through the COVID page on the website:

https://www.mchs.edu/health

HESI Exams:

7. How will HESI exams be calculated into final grades? (Sidney)

We recognize that this is not the ideal testing environment for HESI exams. We want to ensure fairness and equity for all students. Nursing faculty and administrators are currently discussing options and will be communicating with students when decisions have been made. Please look for updates from Dr. Nancy Kertz, Provost.
Taking boards early:

8. Will students who are set to graduate spring or summer be allowed to take their board exams early? (Madison)

This is not a decision that can be made by Mercy College. The Board of Nursing is responsible for decisions surrounding board exams and licensure. Right now, there has been no change to allow early examinations. There is discussion about emergency licensing in Iowa, but that is a decision that has to come from the Governor’s office. If any updates come from the Iowa Board of Nursing or from the Governor’s office that impact students, they will be shared with students right away.

Preceptorship for upcoming graduates:

9. For those scheduled for preceptorships during Summer 2020, what is the plan for completing these so students can graduate on time with the necessary preceptorship and clinical experience? (Arianna)

The situation with COVID 19 is ongoing and fluid and the plans we are making today may continue to change. Some of these decisions are out of our control as we await decisions from the health care facilities where our students participate in clinical and preceptor experiences. We are hopeful that the date we can return to these experiences will be sooner rather than later. We will update you as soon as an update is available to us.

Mercy College is and will continue to be consistent with the other programs around the state. We are discussing and planning for all possibilities from returning to clinical settings during the summer months to incompletes for clinical courses. When it has been deemed safe for students in Iowa to return to clinical experiences Mercy College students will return as well.

Clinical Experiences:

10. When can we resume clinical experiences? (Sidney)

We do not have a date set yet. The situation surrounding COVID 19 is fluid and ongoing. Dr. Nancy Kertz is in close contact with nursing leadership at Mercy One. As soon as we are able, we will be returning to the health care settings to complete clinical experiences.

11. Will we be able to make up missed clinical experiences? (Arianna)

Yes. We will have many robust opportunities to ensure each student can show competencies in the required areas. We will ensure student readiness for practice and are following accrediting program guidelines.
P/F grading option:

12. Will there be a pass/fail option for spring classes? (Madison)

Yes. Please visit the COVID page for an update on this policy. The policy can be found within the update on April 15, “Temporary Grading Policy Changes for Spring and Summer 2020”. Please direct any other questions about this policy to your Academic Advisor.

Summer:

13. Will all summer classes be conducted online? (Sidney)
14. If classes will continue online through summer, will it impact those set to graduate spring or summer? (Arianna)

We are hopeful that students will graduate on time. Each program is being assessed based on preceptorship and clinical experiences. Please also see information shared in #9.

Graduation:

15. Can there be a refund for graduation fees? (ANSWERED IN NEW ANNOUNCEMENT)
16. What is the date and time for commencement? (Madison)

Class time and testing time changes:

17. Why has class and exam time been adjusted for some courses? (Sidney)

Each course and faculty member are adjusting their courses to accommodate online learning. Please also see question #18.

18. Why are some instructors requiring more work than prior to the switch to online learning? (Arianna)

Faculty are making adjustments to ensure that all required materials and course objectives are being met through online learning. We have a diverse group of faculty members who are also learning to adjust with these changing times and learning modalities. Students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors with any questions or concerns. Any unresolved questions or concerns can then be addressed by the appropriate program chair.

We are all learning to adjust in these unprecedented times. We are committed to student success and want students to reach out for help and support as needed. Please continue to bring your questions and concerns forward.

New Questions

*What do you think is the best way to get these answers to the rest of the student body? (Madison)
Allison will type up these notes and distribute to the members of the meeting today to ensure accuracy. These will possibly be put on the COVID updates page or shared to the student body through a Student Senate Teams page.

Would you be will to hold a meeting like this once every term to discuss new changes so student senate is able to know help student body adjust to those new changes? (Madison)

Yes. We will continue to meet in the future.

Respectfully submitted by Allison Kipp, 4.23.20