



SADDLEBACK COLLEGE

Covid-19 Update sent via email on Thursday, March 18, 2020 at 12:45 pm

Students:

In my last update to you, I informed you that almost all sections of classes were going online on Monday, March 23, when you return from break, and the few that were not (less than 5% of all sections) would be suspended. Faculty for those sections will arrange make-up time when the Covid-19 crisis abates. You will find a list of those suspended classes on our website in the next day or two. (We are scrambling to make this happen; I beg your patience.)

The outbreak in our community has accelerated this week, and the County has closed most businesses that bring people together, including schools, other than for those at the College who facilitate distance learning or are otherwise essential. This means that our campus will be restricted to staff only. Even then, most of our staff will work remotely. There will be very few people on campus. More importantly, you will no longer be able to seek support on campus. The entrance to the campus has been blockaded and employees have to show ID to get in.

We have been preparing for this eventuality for weeks. All student services and supports normally available on campus will be made available to you online, including vital supports like Counseling and Tutoring. Not only will instruction be all online but so will services and supports. It may be clumsy for the first week or so, but we have platforms and systems in place to do almost everything we do in person remotely.

I ask for your patience as we work the bugs out. Saddleback College has converted itself from a mostly on-ground college to an all-online college (for as long as this takes) in just the past few weeks. We will be offering over 2000 sections online starting Monday, more than four times the number of sections we normally offer online. Faculty who have never taught online are figuring out how to do so on-the-fly. I share this with you in the hopes that you will take the time to express gratitude to your Professors who have gone the extra mile, sometimes giving up their Spring Break, to ensure your learning continuity. This is Saddleback. You chose well.

I know that this is a scary thing we are going through. But we are going through it together. If you aren't normally an all-online student, I will tell you that it takes self-discipline and can be a bit lonely, particularly if you are hunkering down at home, as you should be. This probably isn't going to be much fun after a few weeks. But please know that we want to support you in any way we can, and are at the ready to help you starting Monday. We are 100% dedicated to keeping your learning going so that you stay on track and complete your pathway—on time.

I leave you with one final thought: It is just as weird for me to be leading a suddenly all-online college as it is for most of your Professors to be teaching all-online and as it is for you to be learning all-online. But this is still Saddleback, and we do what we do really well. Saddleback isn't a place; it's a group of 1400 people united by common values, a bold vision of the power of education to transform lives, and a profound mission, dedicating us to helping you achieve your goals, whatever they are. We may be helping you remotely, but we are still here, at Saddleback.

Welcome to Saddleback Online (for the time being). I'm glad you're here, wherever you are.

Elliot

Dr. Elliot Stern

President, Saddleback College