

Jan. 26, 2022

Good Afternoon,

I'm pleased to say that the spring 2022 semester is under way. This is an update on a few items with some good news and opportunities.

**Faculty/Staff Compensation.** As you may have heard, the Governor has authorized pay raises for state employees. USM also authorized a \$15/hour minimum wage for regular employees as well with the first pay period of 2022. HR and Administration and Finance are working through the details on the changes in pay. Please know that while you may not see the money in your checks until a bit later because of software processing time, all increases will be retroactive to the first full pay period in January, which began on Jan. 12. Here is a quick summary of when you will see the increases in your paychecks:

**Regular PIN Employees**

- Pay Date 2/2/22 – \$1,500 Bonus (prorated for those who are less than a full-time equivalent employee)
- Pay Date 2/16/22 – 1% COLA
- Pay Date 3/2/22 – Merit, based on eligibility. Both the COLA and Merit retroactive adjustment from 1/12/22 effective date will be included on this pay date.

**Contingent II & Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty**

- Pay Date 2/9/22 - \$1,500 Bonus (prorated for those who are less than a full-time equivalent employee)
- Pay Date 2/23/22 – 1% COLA
- Pay Date 3/9/22 – Merit, based on eligibility. Both the COLA/Merit retroactive adjustment from 1/12/22 effective date will be included on this pay date.

We are also going to provide some bonus dollars to adjunct faculty employed this spring semester. More information will be available at a later date.

**Governor's Budget Proposal.** The Governor's proposed budget for next year, which will be voted on by the General Assembly in the coming months includes 1) full restoration of the 10% operating budget cut we experienced when the pandemic began; and 2) \$10 million for Frostburg State to be used for much-needed infrastructure improvements. We requested the \$10 million several years ago and, if we receive those funds, we will be able to address HVAC, utilities, roofing and building improvements beginning this summer. Many of our campus buildings were built during the 1970s and are now at or nearing 50 years of age with updating and repairs needed. Although these funds will not handle all our deferred maintenance (estimated at over \$100 million), it will help.

**COVID Testing & Boosters.** We are monitoring the changing environment relative to the Omicron variant. This region, like the rest of the state, is seeing decrease in positive cases, although Western Maryland still has a higher rate of positive cases than the state of Maryland. The national data continue to show that the vaccine and boosters can reduce the severity of the virus or likelihood of hospitalization, especially for older adults. While highly transmissible, the variant's effect is not as severe as the Delta variant.

We depleted our inventory of tests earlier this week due in part to our supplier, Abbott, not filling our December order and to the number of people who tested in the month of January beyond the

requirement for re-entry testing. We secured additional tests yesterday, and our testing operations are functioning again.

The revised testing protocol is as follows: Students and employees with authorized exemptions are required to test one time per week. All students and employees, regardless of vaccination status, may test up to two times per week. Athletics testing protocols will be disseminated by the Athletic Director and coaches consistent with policies of the NCAA and the Mountain East Athletic Conference.

Please continue to use the [Check-in Portal](#) each morning and review and acknowledge the [Campus Compact](#). Complying with the Compact has helped keep this campus and our campus community safe.

**FSU Scholarships.** An email was distributed to all students on Jan. 14 announcing the availability of FSU foundation scholarships. This is the link to the application form: [FSU Scholarship Application](#)

To everyone who has just returned to campus, welcome back. For those who have been with us all month, thank you for getting the campus ready for the spring semester. To all, please stay warm and healthy, and help support your fellow Bobcats.