OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 31, 2020

After many conversations, careful consideration, polling of faculty and students, and guidance from local health officials, LeMoyne-Owen College has made the difficult but necessary decision to remain virtual for the fall 2020 semester. While we began the semester with virtual classes on August 12th, we had planned to move to a HyFlex model, offering some courses with socially distanced, face-to-face options, after Labor Day in conjunction with the opening of our residence hall.

The Black community (students, faculty, staff) as well as older populations (faculty and staff) have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the population we serve, 18-24, continues to have higher positivity rates. While the positivity rates for Shelby county are on the decline, we feel that remaining virtual through the November 20th semester end date is the best decision at this time for the safety of our students, faculty, staff, and community at large.

We know that some of our students have housing insecurities as well as the need for consistent internet access, so we are opening the residence hall for residential students to move into the dormitory on September 3-4, by appointment only.

Below are some of the steps we are taking to ensure the safety of the LeMoyne-Owen College family:

• We will continue remote learning for all classes throughout the fall semester; Any exceptions for a particular course activity would be submitted and approved by the Interim Vice President, Academic Affairs, Dr. Sherry Painter. We will not offer a hybrid schedule.
• All visitors to the campus will have temperature checks prior to entrance, and the campus will be officially closed to the public.
• Local students who planned to move into the dormitory were offered initial COVID Testing (results required for move-in). Freshman will be admitted to the dorms on September 3rd and Upperclassmen on September 4th (by appointment only).
• We will provide daily screenings and temperature checks, also adhering to all social distancing/mask wearing guidelines in the residence hall and cafeteria.
• Any residential student who has or reports symptoms will return home or be placed in isolation on campus for those students living more than 3 hours from Memphis. In some cases, hospitalization or other medical advice may be warranted or necessary and will be a family decision.
• Any staff or faculty on campus who has or reports symptoms will return home and remain there until such time as it is safe for them to return to work. Return to work guidelines are available in the LOC Campus Reentry Plan
• Student activities will continue to be offered remotely, and all athletic events are suspended for Fall semester per NCAA/SIAC.
• We have installed signage and sanitation stations throughout the campus and visits to the dormitory are limited to only students who are officially assigned housing.

I want to thank all the faculty and staff who have worked so hard to prepare for a safe return to campus. The Residential Life staff will continue to update students about move-in procedures and dormitory safety and the Student Services team will keep everyone up-to-date on virtual student activities and information from the LeMoyne-Owen College Health and Wellness Center.

Now, more than ever, we must all do our part to slow the spread of the virus and keep one another safe. We are all in this together and together, we will see the LeMoyne-Owen College family safely through this pandemic. Instead of thinking about returning to "normal" we must think of new and innovative ways to have the necessary learning and experiential experiences as well as continuing to provide the HBCU family experience students have come to rely on from LeMoyne-Owen College.

Respectfully,

Carol Johnson Dean
Interim President