

July 27, 2020

Professor Erik Jacobson
President, University Senate

Dear Professor Jacobson:

I have received the July 15, 2020 Recommendation for Continuation of Remote Work for Librarians, Professional Staff, and Support Staff from the nine members of the University Senate Executive Board. That recommendation seeks to establish an overly narrow definition (access to specific equipment or to a particular facility in order to do their job) of when it could be required for the identified groups of employees to work on campus.

I thank you for your thoughts, but I cannot accept this recommendation.

The University will be guided in decisions about the work assignments of personnel by: the state requirements in place at a given time; the needs of the University's programs, students, employees, and business and other responsibilities; and by the ability of the University to implement appropriate technologies and a wide range of protocols to create a safe campus environment in specific facilities and for specific activities. None of these factors are simple or narrow. They are complex and interactive, and how employees do their work has a significant impact on the ability of the University to address the needs of different student populations, the instructional programs in all the many and highly different disciplines of study, the critical and very different administrative operations of the University, and the University's research initiatives.

All the plans about remote or on-campus work are being very carefully considered by those who carry the responsibility for the various operations of the University, taking into account all the factors mentioned above. It is important to note that these decisions are not simple binary decisions as to whether work can or cannot be done remotely. There are multiple gradations in such assessments related to the importance and priority of the work and differences in the levels of quality and quantity when the work is done on-campus or remotely.

The University's Restart Plan, which has been accepted by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education as complete and acceptable, will guide us through our work in the coming semester, and we will remain vigilant to changes in circumstances and the needs of the University community as we move forward.

Sincerely,



Susan A. Cole
President

SAC: pf