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Message from the President

Georgia Southern University

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Message From the President – May 4

Dear Colleagues,

Now that you have had an opportunity to read through the Chancellor's letter and digest the information within it, I want to take a moment to expand on what we know and what we will be faced with in the coming weeks and months.

First and foremost, I want us to remember the importance of our mission and belief in the transformational power of education. The impact we have on our students has been and will continue to be our primary goal. I also want to remind you of the first word in our vision statement: people. I hope you have come to learn and to expect from me that in every decision we make at this institution, we are thinking first of how those decisions will impact our people. This situation will be no different. It is our faculty and staff that transfer knowledge, elevate critical thought, and create an environment—aligned with our values—to support our students. As we traverse these difficult times, it will be our mission, vision, and values that will guide us.

We have been instructed to prepare a plan for a 14% reduction in the state allocation for the upcoming fiscal year. For Georgia Southern, this means that we are being asked to plan for a reduction of \$19,908,602. The University System of Georgia's (USG) charge is to be strategic in our approach, maintain instruction as a top priority, and prioritize the highest producing programs and those that are in high demand. Our budget reduction plan is due to the USG at 9:00 am, May 14, and our leadership teams will be hard at work until that point to carefully and thoroughly consider our measures.

Concurrently, we have also been asked to consider how any potential reduction in tuition and fee revenue will impact our operating budget as well. In the face of this pandemic, our enrollment division has been driving new and innovative strategies to attract and enroll students, and you should all be proud of their efforts. Keep in mind that this is a tumultuous time, and we cannot adequately predict where enrollment will land at this point in time. Current fall enrollment trends are steady, but we will continue to closely monitor fall enrollment numbers and plan accordingly.

We know that our personnel will be impacted in some way. We are considering an array of options that will impact our employees as minimally as possible. My commitment to you is that we will communicate as early and as often as possible and that you will be kept informed of our decision-making and the methods behind those decisions. In addition, informational meetings have been scheduled with the Faculty Senate Executive Council and Staff Advisory Council. Together, we have all been faced with uncertainty, struggle, and fear as we navigate daily challenges brought on by this global crisis. I want you to know that the leadership team here at Georgia Southern is well-equipped to not only to guide our institution through this but lead us successfully to the other side. Likewise, I am so proud of our faculty and staff for continuing to charge ahead and overcome these obstacles, all while remaining committed, positive, and kind to one another throughout the process. I continue to be in awe of the outstanding work you are doing to go above and beyond for our students.

I am grateful for you, and I am honored to link arms with each of you as we weather this storm together. My promise to you is that we will remain focused on our mission, our vision, and our values in every decision that we make. We will continue to keep you posted as new information is provided.

Dr. Kyle Marrero
President