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April 20, 2020

A week ago, I shared a message letting you know that Austin College would continue to evaluate the circumstances of the ongoing pandemic in real-time before making the next critical decision about extending remote-only teaching beyond April 10. During the past few days, our nation has watched the crisis unfold in more cities and states, resulting in official mandates to limit travel for many parts of our country.

On March 31, Governor Greg Abbott issued a directive for Texans to further restrict activity, and several cities in Texas and elsewhere already have adopted Shelter-in-Place orders.

Based on these developments, I am announcing today that Austin College is **extending remote-only instruction for all classes** through the end of the spring semester. The well-being of each one of you, along with our

employees and our community, continues to guide our management of this crisis.

Along with this, I also must announce **that Commencement will be postponed from its scheduled weekend of May 16-17 to a later date**. We sincerely look forward to celebrating this milestone in person with our outstanding class of 2020, and we will let you know as soon as we have an alternate date.

What will this announcement mean for you, our students? Our campus remains open through the end of the semester to serve students who are currently living on campus and also to support the faculty who are delivering remote teaching. If you have personal belongings on campus, we will provide the procedures and related information about how and when you can retrieve your items. If you have specific questions, do not hesitate to contact campushousing@austincollege.edu.

Efforts are already underway on **appropriate** credits and refunds for room and board. Information regarding student accounts will be available by mid-May. Please know that each situation is unique and we thank you for your understanding as we work through the process.

We are in the second week of remote teaching and learning. I am so very proud of how everyone is adapting to complete the semester. We know this is a very difficult time for you. Remember to work with your professors and your mentors on the grading system changes and the S/D/U policy. Virtual support resources are available through Information Technology, the Academic Skills Center, Writing Center, and Abell Library - all accessible through the [Updates for Students page](#). I wholeheartedly encourage you to **stay connected** to your mentors, peers, and course instructors. Your success depends on these virtual connections, particularly in these challenging circumstances.

We hope this announcement will help you for the next few weeks. There is still much work ahead to successfully complete this extraordinary semester, but we look forward to doing so together through mutual perseverance and optimism for our shared future.

We are thinking of our entire Austin College community and hope you are staying safe and well. Please see this week's [Video Message](#) for a word of encouragement.



Together, we will get through this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven P. O'Day".

Steven P. O'Day, J.D.

President

The Cecil H. and Ida M. Green
Chair of Creative Educational Leadership