



Hello 'Roo Families,

Texas is ready for just about anything, but the winter storm earlier in February brought unexpected challenges. For the hundreds of students who live on campus, these challenges may have developed some critical thinking skills they have never used before—and probably hope to not need again!

We want you to know that staff members from Physical Plant, Campus Police, Student Life, and ARAMARK worked around the clock to assure the students were safe, fed, and as warm as possible while the City of Sherman resolved problems with the water system. Members of the surrounding community stepped up with clean water contributions, and two local fitness facilities opened their showers to any Austin College students in need. Our residential campus is rarely closed with classes canceled, so you know it was serious. And now, we are serious about getting back on track and looking forward to the better parts of spring here on campus.

With the weather-related interruption to regular studies, students who are on campus or learning remotely may be feeling some stress or confusion about getting back on track. Suggest that your student check in with their faculty advisors and make appointments with the offices on campus that offer support:

[The Academic Skills Center](#)

[The Scarbrough Center for Writing](#)

[Counseling Services](#)

Special for Remote 'Rooos

Traci Howard Moore, Director of Student Success and Transitions, will host a virtual check-in for all remote learners on March 4. All remote learners received an email earlier this week inviting them to register and receive the Zoom link. Traci will share some dates and information and would like to visit about the semester. Is your student learning remotely? Remind them of this important meeting.

Activities and Opportunities

With the unscheduled week away from classes due to weather, many student groups are taking advantage of the “fresh start” feeling. Students are welcome at any time to join organizations and participate in planned activities. The Student Life staff continues to offer virtual and hybrid programming to help students connect this semester.

Hopping Into a Healthy Spring

Adams Health Services reports that not only have the wearing of masks, frequent handwashing, and safe distancing helped control the spread of COVID 19 but we have also seen fewer upper respiratory illnesses and have had no flu cases reported so far. We continue with diligent health and safety protocols on campus, and you can visit the [**COVID Update page**](#) for new information and the [**COVID Dashboard**](#). The College has partnered with Advanced Laboratories in Sherman to conduct surveillance COVID testing conveniently on campus. Test results will be reported to the student and Austin College Health Services. As always, everyone is expected to wear a mask inside and outside of buildings, safely distance from others, and wash hands frequently.

COVID vaccines are not yet available for the healthy adolescent/young adult. Students who have conditions that would increase their risk for illness with COVID-19 should seek guidance from their physician for vaccination. We are in contact with Texas Department of State Health Services and the local Health Department for updates on vaccines.

If your student has started another vaccine series such as hepatitis A or B, they should be completing that now. Influenza vaccine is important and available both on campus and at local pharmacies.

From College to Career

Career-Readiness Check is April 16. The Career-Readiness Check is an opportunity for your student to have a virtual interview with two professionals to assess how prepared they are for a career search. Each interview will be scored, and the results are turned into a Career Action Plan. This empowers your student to take valuable steps toward post-graduation career goals. Registration information will be sent to students through the classification email digests in March.

Financial Aid and FAFSA

It's time to apply for financial aid for 2021-2022, and Austin College's Financial Aid Office uses FAFSA data to develop your student's financial aid package each year. All students should complete the application yearly *and as soon as possible* at www.fafsa.gov. The last day to complete FAFSA is May 1, 2021, but do it now if you have not already. You can save time by using the **IRS Data Retrieval Tool** to easily collect your 2019 tax information. If you have questions, contact the Financial Aid Office at 903.813.2900 or finaid@austincollege.edu.

Re-Up for Campus Living

Room Selection for next school year is underway! Important dates and information on the selection process can be found here: <https://www.austincollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Room-Selection-Booklet-2021-2022.pdf>.

We often say that at Austin College we are smart, resilient, and good to each other. Last week we took the opportunity to prove it. Thank you for your continued support for your student and our community.

Go 'Roos!

