



March 24, 2020 – Campus Update

Dear Community, alumni, Friends and Supporters of Pearson College UWC,

I hope all of you are doing well amidst these anxious and rapidly-changing days. Please continue to heed the advice of your respective public health agencies and authorities as we collectively work to protect the wellbeing of our communities, our society and our loved ones. In this letter, I would like to provide you with an update from Pearson, albeit remotely.

I'm happy to report that nearly all of our students have returned safely to their homes or have been placed with extraordinarily generous host families, alumni and other volunteers who have stepped forward to offer them a "safe harbour" home. We can't thank them enough.

Some students are still in transit to their homes and our indefatigable Office and Student Transportation Coordinator Romaine continues to do incredible work to overcome non-stop and shifting challenges to get students back to their families. Full credit as well to the volunteers and staff shuttling students to the airport and ferry terminals at all hours of the day and night over the past couple of weeks and to Benoit and Luisa of Alumni Relations who have been engaging generous Pearson alumni in distant places assisting and caring for stranded students.

A small number of students who are simply unable to return home due to travel restrictions or situations in their homelands remain temporarily resident on campus. We are working closely with these resilient young people to support them in their wellbeing and their education. As we work to find these students more comfortable temporary homes than dorm rooms on a decreasingly-populated campus, we will keep you posted. This is a challenging time and I want to express my appreciation to people like Julia, Fatma and Donna – among many others – who are moving mountains to make this happen.

Our faculty and staff are practicing safe social distancing by working remotely. Some essential service personnel continue to work on campus and, as I mentioned previously, we have severely restricted the number of people coming to and from campus and strengthened our message that casual visitors – even those who are social distancing — are not to enter campus at this time.

Julia and Emily, our Deans of Students and Studies, respectively, together with our Information Technology staff, are working with faculty who are continuing to support students in their education and learning through online platforms and to, as much as possible with virtual learning, to maintain the strong and essential connect students have with Pearson. With many students still in transit or recovering from a long and hurried journey – not to mention all-too-rushed goodbyes to friends — our plan is to "soft launch" synchronous (live, real time) online classes no earlier than Thursday. In the meantime, for those students already settled, faculty are reaching out now to check on their wellbeing,

any issues they are experiencing with their technology or environment to support their education and to support them in self-directed learning initiatives they can carry out before formal classes.

Yesterday we shared with you an update from the IB Organization which has cancelled scheduled May 2020 exams. As mentioned, the IB has promised to post more details and try to answer remaining questions from students and IB schools like Pearson, alike, by the end of this week.

Some spring and early summer programs that rent Pearson facilities, and which bring in much-needed revenue to support scholarships, have unfortunately cancelled. We fully understand and support their decisions but acknowledge the additional unexpected financial challenges that these pose to the College.

Looking ahead further, though no one can predict the length and the ultimate impact of COVID-19, we are prudently and respectfully continuing to process applications and offers (remotely) for the 2020-21 academic year. As you would expect, we are keeping a close eye on this process.

In this, and earlier updates, I have shared the names of some of the many individuals who have stepped forward as we have completely redesigned how we function as an educational institution in literally a few days. But I could not begin to name everyone – faculty, staff, houseparents, host families, volunteers, donors and supporters – who cares about global education and this institution and have gone the extra mile for us. During these trying days, it is the resiliency of those who care for Pearson that stands out for me. Thank you and stay safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ty Pile', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ty Pile
President and Head of College