NSHE Chancellor Thom Reilly Issues Updated Guidance on COVID-19 – March 17, 2020

March 17, 2020

To: NSHE Presidents

From: Thom Reilly, Chancellor

Date: March 17, 2020

Re: COVID-19 Memorandum

In response to Governor Sisolak's direction this evening, all non-essential employees and operations at any NSHE institution shall close effective at noon tomorrow, March 18, 2020, for at least 30 days. This closure includes any operations that may currently be open on campuses, such as athletic facilities, vendors, and any other location where any group may socialize. Presidents of each NSHE institution shall provide to me for approval a list by the close of business tomorrow of all areas and operations they consider essential to the continued well-being of NSHE students and employees, and the State of Nevada.

Students living in dormitories are requested to leave and immediately return to their homes and families, if possible. However, a considerable number of students living in the dorms are from foreign countries, out of state, homeless, or do not have either the resources and/or a home to return to. Continuing to provide services to those dorm students, such as food, health care, and educational support, is essential to their health and well-being. Limited access to libraries and computer labs may be permitted with the approval of the institution's President, under supervision, and in strict adherence to social distancing protocols. Accordingly, employees and operations that are necessary to continue to provide those services are essential.

All NSHE institutions have already transitioned to remote instruction. Effective tomorrow, March 18, 2020, all non-essential employees at NSHE institutions and System Administration will have transitioned to a home-based work schedule. Remote instruction shall continue. NSHE employees working from home shall continue to work, utilizing communication resources such as email, telephone, video conferencing, and text messaging. NSHE employees shall continue to receive their regular pay and benefits.

Some institutions have programs that are training students essential to Nevada's workforce, such as nurses, health care providers, and other CTEs. These programs may continue at the discretion of the President, provided that all precautions advised by Governor Sisolak are strictly followed. Similarly, scientific research with critical equipment and ongoing experiments may also be designated as essential, provided social distancing and proper hygiene protocols are followed.

Continued operations of our university police northern and southern commands, certain computer and information technology operations, and campus health services are essential and will continue. Each institution shall maintain a senior administrator on site.

Other than those employees designated as essential by me, NSHE employees are directed by Governor Sisolak and the Board of Regents to stay home and practice social distancing.

During these challenging times, I would like to thank each of you for your diligent hard work and leadership and that of your NSHE community. Working together, we must teach our students civic responsibility and do our part to keep the NSHE community and Nevada strong.

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