

Wabash.

October 15, 2020

To: Wabash Community
From: President Scott Feller
Re: Spring Semester Schedule

Wabash has had an incredibly successful fall semester thus far, and we have remained in residence due to the vigilance and cooperation of the entire community. We know it has not been easy, but we have enjoyed the benefits of residential education while at a safe physical distance and in masks. We are grateful to have students, staff, and faculty committed to the discipline and sacrifices required to maintain operations on our campus.

As much as we would like it to be otherwise, the spring semester will be similar to the fall. The same challenges await us, but we have comfort in the knowledge and experience that we have gained during the fall semester. We know we have the people and resources to continue to deliver an exceptional educational experience in our unique culture that values relationships among students, faculty, and staff.

Over the past several weeks, the senior leadership team, Healthy Campus Task Force, and Academic Policy Committee have examined how to best approach the spring semester. We have decided that Wabash will delay the start of the spring semester by one week, allowing the return to campus by seniors for comprehensive exams to be two full weeks after the New Year's holiday. We will also eliminate spring break, and instead provide three scheduled off days scattered across the semester. This plan allows Commencement for the classes of 2020 and 2021 to remain on the previously scheduled date (May 16, 2021).

While additional adjustments could be made – and more details on re-entry protocols are forthcoming – we plan to implement the following schedule for the spring semester:

Jan. 13-15	Virtual senior oral comprehensive exams completed prior to return to campus
Jan. 18-22	Senior written exams (scheduled and staggered return dates for seniors)
Jan. 23-24	Underclassmen return to campus (scheduled and staggered)
Jan. 25	Classes begin
Feb. 25	Reading day
April 2	Reading day
May 5	Reading day
May 4	Classes end
May 6-11	Final Exams
May 16	Commencement

The delayed start provides a two-week quarantine from the winter holidays. Summer and fall experience showed that the period immediately following holidays is most prone to spikes in COVID illness. Likewise, eliminating travel away from campus over spring break will reduce campus exposure to the virus. During the fall we learned that students are safest when they remain on campus, but we also know that some breaks are important and have included limited scheduled off days that allow the summer break to begin as previously planned.

It is our expectation that all students will undergo re-entry testing and receive a negative test result prior to their return to campus. We will continue our safety precautions from the fall, including surveillance testing, symptom monitoring, mandatory use of face coverings, and physical distancing.

Additional information about comprehensive exams, return schedules, and athletics will be communicated separately. We continue to [post important information and updates](#) on our website, as well as provide a comprehensive set of [frequently asked questions \(FAQs\)](#). We invite you to submit questions that you would like to see answered by sending them to covid@wabash.edu.

All of us at the College are grateful to the work of the community in making residential education possible. We look forward to a strong finish to the fall semester and an excellent spring.