

Email to Employees from President Parker

COVID-19 Update

March 17, 2020

Colleagues,

At South Central College, the safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff continues to be our priority, and we recognize the important role we play in providing you with the information and resources you need during this critical time. As such, we wanted to share some updates we have just received.

- **Gatherings:** As you know, gathering in large groups is not recommended. Because of this, the Minnesota State system has announced that effective immediately and in accordance with current MDH and CDC guidelines, any gathering must have less than 50 people and then only when social distancing (individuals at least 6 feet from each other) can be enforced. The Minnesota State system is also recommending we adhere to the President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America by avoiding gathering socially in groups of more than 10 people. This will be in effect until we receive further guidance from the Minnesota State system.
- **Commencement:** The Minnesota State system has cancelled Spring 2020 commencement ceremonies at all colleges and universities. We know this will be very disappointing for many and we are exploring alternative ways to celebrate our 2020 graduates. We understand that commencement is an important part of the SCC experience and we want to honor our students while still keeping our communities safe. Further details will be shared in the coming weeks.
- **HLC Reaffirmation Site Visit:** The Virtual Comprehensive Evaluation Visit scheduled for March 23 - 24 will not be happening. Our Comprehensive Evaluation Peer Review Team Chair requested that the visit be postponed, so that we would not be required to split our focus between the visit and our pandemic response. Therefore, HLC offered an alternative to the virtual visit that was scheduled for this coming week. They have asked us to identify a date in June or July for a face-to-face visit. If this is not possible because of the pandemic, they really want the visit to happen before August 30. We will keep you posted.
- **Employee VPN Information:** The Barracuda VPN client should already be installed on all SCC owned HP branded laptops purchased in the past year. If you have an older laptop, or you do not see it installed on your machine, see the attached guide for installing the client. The helpdesk continues to be your primary source for support. Please do not contact the IT staff directly. If you need assistance with VPN services or any other SCC technology support, please e-mail helpdesk@southcentral.edu and someone from IT will follow up with you.
- **Potential Scams:** Scammers and cyber-criminals may try to take advantage of your concerns related to COVID-19. They may offer you fake products, medical advice, create fake charities, or compel you to click a fraudulent link to gain access to your device. Please visit the [Federal Trade Commission Website](#) to learn more about how you can avoid a scam.

We will be sending out the update about **Gatherings and Commencement to students in a separate email**, along with additional information useful to them. As always, we are strongly focused on the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff, and everyone in the communities we are honored to serve. We are in frequent communication with the Minnesota State system and monitoring ongoing information provided local, state and federal agencies and healthcare organizations to coordinate appropriate responses. Our team will continue to work to identify prudent precautions and continue to put our preparedness plans into action.

Appreciatively,

Dr. Annette Parker