



# MEMO

**TO:** UMES Family and Friends

**FROM:** President Anderson

**Date:** March 20, 2020

“When everything around you is crazy, it is ingenious to stay calm.”  
Mehmet Murat ildan

“It is ingenious to stay calm” -- let's savor the weight of these words by Mehmet Murat ildan, the Turkish author of a 2002 play about the life of Mohandas Gandhi, a symbol of peace in a time of tumult. Being ‘ingenious’ means we are abundantly clever; we see through things as they appear; we are creative and we solve problems with our brains. All this is true of us, Hawk Family, as we calmly and patiently face the new world we are experiencing as a result of this global pandemic, COVID-19.

Right now, the best things we can do are to be patient, thoughtful, and kind. We need to follow the rules of this new experience - frequent hand washing, social distancing, carryout food, no gatherings of more than ten. All of these things are reactions to something for which no one has a plan. So, what should we do? First, pause and create a routine for yourself. Then, get up at the same time, read and prepare for work and classes, and make the effort to find ways to stay connected with others. On a regular basis, practice mindfulness, meditation, and exercise.

As a university, we are looking at ways to keep our Hawk Family safe and to remain on track for preregistration for the fall, finals and graduation. We have had to postpone sports and concerts, but there is still beauty in the world that this time may allow you to see. Since you are not rushing around, maybe you will pause to appreciate the arrival of spring, the birds singing, trees and flowers budding, and the longer days of sunlight.

We are in uncharted territory as anyone can see. We are working as a team at the System level and the campus level, to make key decisions about taking courses fully online, building learning support services in virtual tutoring sessions, and finding ways to help students prepare for summer internships and jobs after graduation.

We are indeed ingenious and we are more – We are resilient, patient, practical, and visionary. We know we are now part of new landscapes and, even though this is not of our choosing, by washing hands, staying home when feeling sick, and giving comfort to others who may be vulnerable to stress and worry, we can do our part to make the world what we want it to be.

With guidance from the Chancellor, our campus will develop clear plans to support and sustain all members of our campus. We remain unwavering in our commitment to student success and to safeguarding our beautiful campus and its rich history.

Let us take this time to come together in our minds, hearts, and through social media. We need to be strong, mindful, and watchful as we wait for the next steps in our incredible journey through this life together in mind and spirit.

Lastly, I thank you all for your patience and flexibility in adapting to a changing workplace, laboratory, campus, and classroom in a rapidly evolving situation.

With Hawk Pride,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda M. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.