

July 14

Greetings from UWC-USA,

I hope this message finds you healthy and happy wherever you are.

With our second-year students set to arrive in just a few weeks, we are putting the finishing touches on our summer preparations. We are refining our protocols and guidelines, monitoring New Mexico state guidance, and making sure we have the materials we need for a successful school year. In many ways the size of our community, our location, and our amazing climate are turning into true assets as we finalize our plans. We are looking at holding as many activities as possible outdoors for the first few months. The fresh air and sunshine of New Mexico have been prized by visitors for centuries - we'll take full advantage of them this year as well.

Here are some preparation details to share with you:

Construction on the third floor of the Castle is continuing with four larger classrooms set to be open in time for classes this fall.

We are creating some outdoor classroom spaces by the fieldhouse, near Kluge Auditorium, and in the Castle courtyard.

We are expecting to have 100-120 students on campus when classes officially begin and anticipate that the remaining will participate online until they can get to campus.

We are already testing staff for COVID-19 on campus and making sure that our testing protocols are running smoothly before students arrive.

We have surveyed the parents of new students and a majority are committed to starting online with their students at home for the first several months if necessary.

We are planning for an online learning platform that includes experiential education and residential life as well as our academic program for the students who cannot be back at the beginning of the year.

Students and parents will receive an agreement form to complete this week that outlines the community expectations necessary for us to safely open in person -- and remain open.

We have made a commitment to each and every one of our admitted students, first-years and second-years, and we will continue to do everything we can to get them to campus and keep them safe while here. Even so, we understand that some students are concerned about visas or the time it may take for them to get to UWC-USA. Of course the visa issue is global and not specific to UWC-USA, but John Carpenter, our director of admissions, is here to support all of our new students as well as second-year students who may have concerns. Together with National Committees and the UWC International Office, we are committed to supporting students on an individual basis. We are also committed, in UWC spirit, to make this a year of making a positive difference during a time of social and political upheaval -- this will be a 110% UWC year at UWC-USA, not in spite of the pandemic, but because of it!

With optimism and encouragement,

Victoria