



June 4, 2020

Next Steps: Moving Forward

Westmont family, thank you for calling in tonight. We apologize again for the technical difficulties that made the call of Tuesday (June 2) very challenging and we appreciate you joining us again today. I know that hearts and minds are captivated and troubled by the challenges that our country faces. There's a strong sense of frustration, which I certainly carry along with all of you, with the death of George Floyd and the evidence of just the gross injustice that took his life. I am incredibly saddened by all the ways this is impacting us and hope that together we can move forward in ways that will make life in our country and on our campus more just and compelling.

I often think of Westmonters as ones who think for themselves but live for others. And I really hope that we can blend both the capacity to think carefully about our life and the values and purposes to which we give our life and then, in that way, we can find our greatest contribution through living our life for others.

My faith is the most important thing to me, and it gives me the capacity to live civilly, to love others, and to develop a capacity to love people very different from myself. Scripture teaches us to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. It's really an invitation to each one of us to join together in ways that can express empathy and compassion to one another. It's always my belief that every one of us has a personal responsibility, and part of the gross injustice of George Floyd's death was that those who were standing in immediate proximity lacked the courage or the wherewithal to step in and intervene in order to save his life. I know that few if any of us have faced similar choices, but I hope that in large and small ways, we will develop the capacity to interrupt injustice whenever we confront it.

At Westmont, we have a lot of work to do ahead of us, and I hope that we will learn how to do it together. I do believe that part of our educational mission is learning to live together with difference and to gain that capacity to speak into one another's life as we become more aware of the values and motives that guide our own life. There's so many questions that have come to me that we are trying to answer in a variety of forms. Let me come to a few of them now and just--to give an overview.

Many of you know that on March 5, the executive team wrote a letter to the campus community in which we talked about the campus community, some of the challenges that we're facing, and at least two very high-profile priorities that we were committed to addressing.

The first was the Voskuyl Memorial Chapel window--and the Voskuyl Chapel was built in honor of Nancy Voskuyl: she was 19 years old when she was killed tragically in a car crash coming back to campus after lunch in December of her--I believe her freshman year (1959). And the chapel was built to honor her. There's a wonderful history that Dr. Lisa DeBoer, the chair of our art department, has shared with me; and my own discipline, my PhD is in philosophy of religion and theology, and historical theology is just a favorite area of work and research, and so I am always interested in the design of churches, what is tried to be conveyed there in both the architecture and the interior design that go into these buildings. During the last couple years, several conversations have come to the fore, and we recognize that the chapel window has become a significant distraction to the primary purpose of the chapel, which is to serve as a place for prayer. We've engaged in several conversations. We have continued to move forward in our work on how best to address some of the concerns. Again, Dr. DeBoer and also Dr. Telford Work, our professor of theology, and specifically



our Doctrine professor, have been helpful. We've also worked with outside consultants, including a consultant that designs and is approved to design churches that have been authorized by the Vatican. Together, these and other voices, are helping us put together a plan that will allow us to add a variety of windows to the chapel that will more fully educate us on the life of the church here and the various events from the life of Christ that are meant to inspire us.

A second priority that's highlighted in the March 5 letter is the commitment to curricular innovations. And, I think it's significant that March 5 was Thursday night when we released the letter, Friday was the last day before spring break, and we've never repopulated [the campus]. Nevertheless, the faculty committee under Provost Sargent's leadership has continued to meet, and one of the outcomes that we were able to announce at the May Board of Trustees meeting was the approval of an ethnic studies minor. Now, part of this is just the fact that we have come to a time when that is a high-demand topic. But it's also reflective of the fact that we have been making several hires over the last several years that has brought to the faculty a new level of expertise that actually makes an ethnic studies minor possible. And so I'm delighted that we're going to be able to do that.

And before I mention that just further, questions have come up about our hiring practices: why we hire the way we do; why we haven't done more hiring [of diversity]. And I'm at the start of my 14th year, so I've been here for 14 cycles of faculty hiring. During my tenure--and I don't hire faculty directly, I'm involved in the process, but this is coordinated and led by the Provost, and then the various departments in which the faculty member will be housed. But during my tenure, 58 total faculty have been hired: 35 have been women, 23 have been men, and 17 have been persons of color. In addition, and this includes my time, but certainly predates my time, we currently have on the faculty, of our faculty (roughly 100), 13, their country of origin is somewhere other than the United States. And so you combine that quality of faculty, and the curriculum of Westmont, and it just makes for a very strong offering.

We're going to continue to work on diversity and global engagement, which is both a committee of the faculty, as well as a committee of the Board. We continue to raise a great deal of money that is providing scholarships for a variety of programs that have actually allowed us to diversify the student body. During my time, diversity, the diversity of the student body, has increased by 17 percent. But that has come at a significant uptick in terms of scholarships. And so none of this happens instantly. All of it happens over time, and you never solve a problem in one year. I like to think that we overestimate what we can get done in one year, and underestimate what we can get done in ten. And we still have a lot of work to do, but we also have the commitments and the priorities in place to do that.

I also want to mention some of the resources that are already at play that are helpful. One of my favorites is Dr. Carmel Saad. One of her research areas is implicit bias, and she teaches social psychology. She is just a fan favorite of students, and certainly a great communicator. She also is consulting with five different police forces on how to eradicate prejudice from the police force and how to minimize implicit bias so that they don't jump to conclusions. And I just think, I am just so thankful for Dr. Saad and specifically for the work she feels called to do to really address something that has caused so much of the key elements of our current crisis.

There are just so many other directions we could go, but on this topic, I just want to highlight two others. Very soon, we'll be strengthening the staff in terms of our intercultural programs offerings, and we'll also be adding some key advisors that can help us. One in particular, Carol Houston, is an African American pastor who serves on our board of trustees, and she will begin working with us starting with fall semester, coming to campus to really improve our capacity for conversations that get to the heart of many of the issues that are now being raised.

We also intend to work with an organization headed by David Bailey called Aarabon, and David actually specializes in coming into organizations, also an African American, and he specializes in coming into organizations and really helping them develop a capacity for cultural understanding to



increase our capacity to actually work across racial boundaries and to learn how to engage in ways that actually build trust and provide healing. And so we're also looking for his help, and this will actually be a two-year relationship that we enjoy with David.

And then several of you have asked about the incident of the offensive posting on [TikTok], and as soon as we were made aware of it, we contacted the student. We issued a statement from the college which is still available on Instagram [highlight], and the student issued a personal apology. There's now a student conduct process underway, and as with every student conduct process, it's completely confidential. If you're concerned or interested in what are the guidelines or laws with which we have to comply, FERPA is the federal government guideline with which we have to comply to provide this kind of, and you can type FERPA and that'll take you to the website, and that will give you access to the knowledge that you might desire.

COVID-19 is a very dynamic issue. Some of you have asked, what if you don't want to get tested? This is going to be a tough one because we are going to have to do whatever the county requires us to do in order to repopulate. The science is getting better every day; several of you continue to send me articles or alert me to the latest research. I always welcome that, but we are looking carefully at what will it take for us to be open this fall face-to-face. And, I can tell you, I'm sitting here with my executive team, we're working 70-75 hours every week not only to wrap up the year that just finished, but to get ready for the year that's ahead. It's going to be a year unlike any other. We have 150 different members of our community, faculty, and staff working on 50 sub-committees that deal with everything from testing, tracing, and isolating to how many times a day are we going to have to clean which areas of campus. How are we going to resupply? What are we going to do about masks? And these decisions, the first draft is due this Friday, the final draft is due on June 30. The E-team will meet to finalize that planning on July 1, and on the July 7 conference call, we'll have a lot more information to communicate with you then, in terms of what it will look like. And, we really anticipate a month from now, we'll be in phase 3, which is the phase we have to get to in order to be open. We're in phase 2B right now. But with that, we'll just have a much clearer understanding of what are going to be the constraints under which we'll have to operate in order to be open.

The reimbursement grants— they were calculated on the basis that we've communicated in the letter. We will respond to every inquiry: Sean Smith, our director of financial aid, has been the front person on that. If you continue to have questions, please continue to ask and we'll work to get sufficient answers.

And then before I turn it over to other members of the executive team to give specific updates, I just want to say that this is such a unique cultural moment. And it really started off as a COVID-19 moment, and now it's just escalated with this horrific killing and really bringing to the surface so many problems that are endemic to our society. Forty-two million Americans are now unemployed. Thousands of businesses are going to be bankrupt by the end of this summer. And so we are in choppy water now, and it's only going to get more choppy. And so it's going to require our best effort. And we're committed to the mission of Westmont. We're committed to the responsibilities that we carry for its welfare and for its success, and we look forward to working with you as we move deeper into the summer in preparation for opening this fall. With that, I'd like to ask Edee Schulze, vice president for student life, if she would begin by giving us an update on how we'll manage the student life side of the house.

Great. Thank you, Dr. Beebe. A lot of people have been wondering how we're going to do the residence halls, seeing as those are living spaces where lots of people are living within close proximity to another. We've got some scenario planning groups working on this. No final decisions have been made about exactly how we're going to do it, but we sure have a lot of good ideas, and these include one-way routes in the residence halls, ensuring that we have adequate bathrooms and showers available for the number of people living in the halls. We're considering some scenarios where we don't have triples on campus, or maybe only have triples on lower campus. A lot depends



on what we're able to do according to county guidelines, and we're still waiting for that information. So as the summer unfolds, we'll get closer and closer to final decisions on that.

We're talking about cleaning in the residence halls, and Dr. Beebe already mentioned that. How frequently do we have to clean? I can say that we are going to be using cleaners that have a longer life--that they could kill germs for up to 12 hours, and we're looking at the possibility of providing students with their own cleaning supplies within their rooms. We are working on the assumption that we may need to have 10 or less as the maximum number of people in a group, so some section meetings might need to be done virtually, but we would sure love to be able to gather in groups of 10 or less within residence hall sections. Westmont is known for its strong relational environment and access to residence hall staff. We are going to preserve that and enhance that and work with it in every way that we possibly can.

In terms of the dining facilities, physical distancing will of course be necessary and if you take six feet between each person standing in line, that's a pretty long line. But we're working with scenarios where food would be provided quickly, effectively, perhaps pre-packaged or served to the diners, we're looking at touch-free screens, touchless screens for things like drinks, we want to be sure to package things like condiments and utensils so that those who don't need to touch them--if you touch them, you're the person who opens the package. The DC will be cleaned and disinfected after each meal, and due to the spacing requirements, the amount of seating in the DC will be very limited, so we're looking at other options: perhaps tents outside or other buildings, or simply out on the lawn. We're very fortunate, of course, in Santa Barbara, to have the kind of weather that we have that we can make these kinds of options available. We're looking at the possibility of distributing some of the food to other locations, but we have yet to finalize that and it's possible that we may need to expand the meal times, especially during lunch, so that we can ensure that everybody gets access to food in the middle of the day.

Student health services will be available with adaptations for COVID. Dr. Hernandez has done and will continue to do telehealth appointments with students for all kinds of conditions that we typically see on campus, and when we have COVID-like symptoms in students on campus, Dr. Hernandez will work directly with the student and then we will follow, of course, the CDC and the County Health Department health guidelines to isolate and quarantine as needed. We're making plans for additional help for isolation, anticipating that we will have some students who experience COVID-like symptoms, so we're finalizing those as well.

Chapel: it seems almost impossible at this point that we'll be able to gather all together in the gym, but that doesn't mean that chapel isn't going to happen. It means that we're going to have different ways of delivering chapel: perhaps splitting the student body into thirds and students would go one day a week--there would be other opportunities online, students attending Capax Dei groups during typical chapel time or with another small group of their selection. So we're very committed to the spiritual formation/spiritual life of our students even though we may not be able to gather all together for chapel when we first get back. And that's about it for student life.

Okay. Doug, our chief financial officer, Doug Jones, will give us a perspective on how we're going to keep everything clean and functioning.

Thank you, and good evening, everyone. Great to have you on the call tonight. I thought I would talk a little bit about a few different topics of interest to you, perhaps: about keeping the college safe and clean as we come into the fall semester. And let me start with cleaning, a topic that many folks are interested in. So how are we going to keep the campus the size of Westmont, 500,000 square feet, disinfected and clean moving forward? And it's going to take a lot of work, no doubt about it. It's going to take everyone's assistance at some level or another to help us do that. Right now, we're working on a written cleaning and disinfecting protocol for both our in-house custodial staff and then any outsourced cleaning staff we may bring in to help assist us in doing the work that needs to be done. That written protocol will follow best practices and guidelines from the CDC [Center for Disease Control], our local health officials, and then of course other colleges and



universities, the best practices that they've found and put into place. And then, of course, we're also getting some input from professional cleaning services that we've utilized here on campus already and just helping us think through how best to do that. And the protocols really will be about making sure that everybody who's doing cleaning, understands how to do it, and that they're all following the same guidelines so there's less variability in the work that may be done. And then, also for the user, so to speak, so for students, faculty, and staff coming back to campus, to be able to see in writing the sorts of things that were being done and are being done, because a lot of this work will be done at night, and you won't see much of it. Our faculty and staff won't see much of it either. We want to make sure you're aware that it is being done.

As Edee mentioned, we're moving to more potent cleaning agents--we've already done that. Our staff has been trained on how to use those effectively. That cleaning agent does have a much longer lifespan to it, so if the virus does come in contact with it even hours after the space has been cleaned, it'll kill the virus, so that's very helpful to us as well. We've purchased a number of disinfecting fogging machines that can disinfect an entire room: so you bring it in, set it up, and it fogs up the entire space and it'll disinfect everything, including soft surfaces like carpet and such. That'll be particularly helpful if we have an actual or a suspected case of COVID on campus at some point. We are at this point...have installed a number of hand sanitizer and hand washing stations on campus at the entrance of each of our buildings--at least the ones that are occupied at this point--a number of our buildings are not occupied right now, but of course they will be in the coming months, so as we get closer to that, we will be rolling out additional hand sanitizing stations at each of those building entrances just to make sure that everybody has an opportunity to clean their hands as they come and go.

And then as Edee mentioned just a bit, we are going to be asking faculty and staff, and to some degree, students, to help us keep spaces clean, particularly their own spaces, so offices, perhaps common spaces right outside your office, those sorts of things, your living space if you're a student--just really helping to keep the campus disinfected as a team effort. It really is going to come down to being a corporate and a personal responsibility to keep the campus clean. So, I've talked a bit about the corporate side, and on the personal side, we have rolled out a social distancing protocol just last week, and that's posted on a number of buildings around campus, at the entrances to campus as well, essentially talking about what we're asking people to do as they're coming to campus. And I won't read through the entire thing, it's pretty lengthy, it has 10 points to it, but it's posted to the website and I do encourage you, if you haven't been to campus in a while, to check that out before you come. It gives you some sense of what we'll ask you to do including wearing a mask and keeping physical distance from others, handwashing, those sorts of things and just the importance of helping us keep the campus clean.

And then finally I thought I would just touch on a few things in a little more detail than perhaps the president referenced but a few things related to a safe campus. So of course testing is going to be huge. The CDC does recommend that every college and university, as they start up their courses in the fall, do a baseline test for everyone, just to be sure that everyone is safe and COVID-free. That doesn't mean that they'll be safe and COVID-free the next day, but at least on that day, as you come in and start the semester, everyone will have passed the test, and if anyone does raise a flag, we can isolate them, keep the rest of the campus safe. But we do anticipate doing that. As we know, tests are always evolving, every week seems like we find new information about tests improving both in reliability and speed, and we're hopeful that by the time we get to August, we'll have tests that are both quick and highly reliable, so we'll have good confidence as we start the semester in August.

Daily health assessments: We're going to ask faculty, staff, and students, as they start their day, to take their temperature and to answer a few basic health questions: do you experience any of the symptoms of COVID? Things like that: Do you have a fever? Just a few things that essentially will kind of give you the green light or not to come into work or to come to class that day. And then to



give folks the freedom to say no, they're not feeling well, and need to stay home just for their own health and safety but also for the health and safety of others. So we'll be doing that. We'll also be doing that for visitors as they come to campus, just to make sure that everybody is following the same protocols and the same guidelines.

And then the last thing I'll just comment on here is contact tracing. We're in the process of training two of our staff members on how to do effective contact tracing. In the event a faculty or staff member or student would have COVID-like symptoms, we want to be able to backtrack all the folks that they've been in contact with over the last several days so we can alert those individuals so they can go in isolation or at least be aware of the potential of exposure. Again, just to limit the spread or potential spread of COVID, and that'll be again an important component of that. We'll be training more staff here in the coming months as we get closer to August and starting classes. We may be able to employ an electronic tool that will help speed that along, but at this point it's largely a manual process of conversations and phone calls and just asking some questions and backtracking who the folks have been with.

And so with that, that's just a small taste of what we're working on. There's literally hundreds of questions that we're answering; as the president mentioned, our draft reports are due tomorrow on each of our task forces, of course custodial and several others are one of those task forces, and even that one alone has dozens and dozens of questions and topics that we're highlighting that we need to resolve in the next 30-45 days to be ready for the semester. So a lot of work ahead of us, but we're up for the task and we certainly want the campus to be ready for you when you return.

Okay, and I'd like to turn to our provost, Mark Sargeant, who will talk about our academic program.

Yes. Good evening, everyone. Just a few words about our preparations for academics. We're certainly looking at the instructional spaces that we will be using and trying to make sure that those can be set up so that there's appropriate physical distancing. That may mean in many cases relocating a smaller class to a larger venue so that there's appropriate spacing. It may mean that we move some of our courses outside, to outdoor venues. We're looking at setting up a few tents that might enable us to do that. We're also looking at splitting some sections in some cases such as in labs, where they have a certain number of students working before, we'll probably split the section and have individuals work with half the size in the lab at the same time.

Strong emphasis on not just making sure we prepare the physical space, but that we think carefully about our teaching strategies and our approach to learning this semester. In many ways we see this as an effort to provide more than just a shadow of what we would normally do, but to be very creative in the moment to find ways in which we can seize the moment and do some innovative things to make the educational environment rich. That means things like looking at some outdoor venues for things like theatre productions. The music department is looking at blending its work with some opportunities for film. As well as perhaps some greater emphasis on project-based activities as opposed to just seat-time in the classroom. So our intent is to be innovative in that regard.

I do want to underscore that we are emphasizing the health of our students and our community and we want there to be absolutely no penalties for anyone who is cautious because of their health or anyone that faces a quarantine because of potential exposure. There will be a clear policy and a clear practice that there will be no penalties for the time that is missed and that professors will work individually with students to find an appropriate way for keeping up. Some of that may be checking in the class through Zoom technology, some of it may be project-based. It'll be handled differently by each professor, but the commitment is very strong there that we're going to honor anyone who is nervous about their health to make it possible for them to continue to succeed in the classroom.

And we'll be paying special attention to student progress and connection. We realize that in the last experience with remote learning, several of us got to the point that we were a bit weary of



Zoom technology, but we know that a time of physical distancing and wearing of masks can also be stressful as well, and can put some impediments in the ways we normally use to be connected with one another. So we are going to be particularly vigilant to find new ways to create a sense of community. We're keeping our eyes out for signs of challenges that students may be going through and really providing the kind of support and intervention that will be necessary to help them flourish during this unusual semester--but one which I think can be a great learning experience and time that we can really come together, even if we're separate, in overcoming this challenge. Look forward to seeing you when you show up in the fall.

Okay, thank you, Mark. Here are some of the questions that have come in.

Questions and Answers:

1. Are parents allowed to help their students move into their dorms if they are tested within 72 hours prior to arrival on campus with negative results?" Doug, how are we going to handle that? Because pretty much the county is asking us--or Edee? Who would like to address that? Because the county is really wanting us to be able to control the results, but we also don't want to be unnecessarily harsh. So...

(Edee) Yes, it would be our intention that when parents come to campus, that they would be appropriately social distancing and wearing a mask. We do want them to have the experience of coming to college, with first-year students and transfer students, as a family, that's very important to us, and Doug can speak to the entry to campus by guests.

(Doug) Yes, I think that in terms of the testing prior to coming to campus, we certainly would appreciate any parents who would take the step to be tested before they bring their son or daughter to campus; I don't believe we'll be mandating that. We'll be doing testing of the students, faculty, and staff as they arrive on campus. Of course, it may take several days to get those results. We do intend to be doing things like temperature checks and maybe health questions for everyone who gets here on those move-in days so the parents would be answering those questions as well and having their temperatures checked. It isn't of course a silver bullet, but we do think that it's a helpful step and a helpful process. But of course if you want to be tested we would certainly encourage that, just to be sure that you don't have any COVID, but I don't believe we'll be requiring that at this point. Alright, thank you.

2. Is Westmont considering keeping students in residence from August until Thanksgiving with no days off followed by one week of online classes and finals? We are planning to start the semester on August 31, right now we intend to go right up through the normal semester, but Mark, do you want to comment on variables that we'll be monitoring?

(Mark) Yes. We'll be looking at of course the health of our community, the course of the pandemic, and the advice of county officials and health officials. And we'll be prepared at any time to make adjustments if necessary. One of those adjustments could include moving to remote learning after Thanksgiving to minimize the travel back. But at this point we are holding that question as something that we'll be weighing as we enter into the semester and watch how we proceed.

We are aware of several universities that have made different decisions, and Notre Dame is probably the most prominent one that went out early with the shift in the start of the semester and finishing right before Thanksgiving. One of the things--I lived within three hours of Notre Dame for seven years, it's extremely cold even by November 1, relative to Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara never gets as cold as Notre Dame is in November, let alone December, January, February. So we don't know if the COVID-19 virus is going to have a seasonal component to it like the seasonal flu or if it's just going to ebb and flow at a completely



different cycle, and so that's part of what we're going to have to learn. That said, Santa Barbara is a mild climate, and so it is just going to have a different contagion than it would in colder climates as they rotate into the flu season.

3. To be more cost-effective, would you want students who are able to do so to get tested in their hometown?

(Doug) You know, I appreciate the offer, that's a great question. We do fully intend to test everyone when they arrive here, so if you'd like to get a test prior to coming to campus just to be sure as you come up to that week that's great, but I do anticipate that we would still want to go ahead and test you when you arrive. Again, we want to create that baseline that on a given day--or a given couple of days; it may take a couple days to get everyone tested--that at that point in time, we know we've started the semester with everybody COVID-free. So we will anticipate doing that as you arrive.

4. What if a student is uncomfortable with being tested as a privacy issue and that they refuse to consent to it?

(Gayle) If you're in that camp, contact us so that we can talk through alternative ways, but we have got to be able to ensure the health of the population as we start.

5. College students are considered the healthiest group with the least chance to contract COVID-19. Who is going to be making these decisions? Doctors? Public officials? Those with medical training, etc.?

The key element is the county public health official, and they will have the go/no-go power. And again, we are an entity that exists for public benefit, so we have to comply with all state and county regulations. And we actually live, exist, and work under a 50-page, 130-condition conditional use permit. It's the most specific, most burdensome of any I've ever heard of, and I share about it when I'm with other college presidents and they've never heard of one this burdensome. And that's all to say: it's a privilege to get to be in Montecito. With that privilege comes some responsibilities and obligations, including compliance with the county health officer.

6. What will you do about masks for students who are exempt from having to wear them due to mental and/or physical risk?

(Gayle) You know, that's a question we're going to determine by July 7. Good question.

7. If students have to practice social distancing, what is the benefit of sending our students back to campus?

(Gayle) We have so many students who are so excited to get to just have a semester together. And some of the churches that, not our church yet, but some churches are opening back up even though they can't sing; they have to social distance in the sanctuary. They just like seeing people and seeing their friends and loved ones. And so we think it's going to be a different experience but an electrifying experience because the whole society, the whole country has been bottled up. And you can just see that in some of these breakouts, the Lake of the Ozarks party, some of these other spontaneous parties where there's obviously all kinds of violation of social distancing protocols. But we really believe that as we get deeper into the year, we'll have a clearer path to when a vaccine's coming, we'll have a much better understanding of how to treat it if it's contracted, and we have what we believe is a very sound plan for how we'll be able to repopulate campus in a safe way so that you can have a



great semester. It is going to require for one semester that we all discipline ourselves to abide by these guidelines. And at the end of the time, it's not going to have seemed like a very long time, even though it may feel like it as we start it.

8. "When will seniors expect to receive their diplomas?"

(Edee) Middle of June. They're on their way.

9. "How can seniors get their yearbooks?"

(Edee) The answer is yearbooks have been sent to all seniors who requested them. If you're a senior and did not request one, send your request to citadel@westmont.edu. The Citadel co-editors-in-chief will make arrangements to make sure that you get one. There was a form that went out and so those students that filled it out, they got their yearbooks already.

10. Is there an update on Commencement?"

(Gayle) As of right now, we're still under the governor's conditions. In all likelihood, we'll run out of any opportunity to do it this summer, so we're really focused on Homecoming weekend and doing Baccalaureate in all likelihood the night of October 16 and Commencement the morning of October 17. And so that's really what we're planning. And again, I know some of you and perhaps the person who asked this question--some of you are in occupations that, you know, it's just a very structured hierarchy in terms of seniority and you have to request weeks if not months ahead for vacation. And so your best, safest bet is to think about October 16 and 17 and I think that is in all likelihood going to be our best opportunity. Mark, this one's for you.

11. Can summer research students expect their full stipends if the program is moved forward? If summer research is shortened, will the stipend be shortened?

(Mark) You know, that's a good question, and it's going to vary on individual cases. And the reason for that is that some of the funding that supports research comes from different foundations and they have different rules about that. So we're going to encourage summer research students to check with their professors; we'll be making sure the professors have their information because it'll vary in different cases. Some of the summer research students have been able to work remotely; some have been able to get a start on their work remotely. And so that will very much be to their benefit in terms of being able to get their full stipend. We're getting very, very positive feedback from the county about the possibility of beginning to start summer research here before too long. So you should be hearing something very shortly about that.

12. "If there's a vaccine, will it be required?"

We will not require it; we will highly recommend it. We'll encourage you to get it from your own healthcare provider; if not, we're going to do our best to provide vaccinations on campus. We'll want to work with you if you're uncomfortable with that.

13. If fall semester classes go completely online, fully or partially, would the cost be adjusted due to missing out on the fullness and rich experience of in-person engagement? Would students be able to request pass/no credit grades?

(Gayle) I'll start by commenting on the--if we are doing the curriculum, the tuition price will stay the same. If we have to vacate campus, we will be in a better place to make adjustments



in terms of room and board charges. The request for pass/no credit grades, Mark?

(Mark) We have a policy now that allows students to apply for taking courses pass/no credit and that would be continued. There's usually a limit on that. We would make a decision about whether to raise that limit as we did last semester based upon the timing at which we went remote: if we went early in the semester, then it's much more likely that we would raise it. If we went in the final week or two, we most likely would not. But we do have an application process and we'd consider the contingencies of each single request.

14. Due to the new details always coming, when is the latest date that Wesmont will officially decide whether or not students will be returning to the fall semester?

(Gayle) I think in all likelihood we will do Orientation starting on the 27th; we'll start class on August 31. The trend line is that direction; the momentum is that direction. With the governor allowing the county to segregate out the prison population at Lompoc federal prison, our numbers, our official numbers, plummeted dramatically and that's actually why we were able to get to a classification of 2B. We've got to get to 3, which is next. If they're going to allow us to do summer research, we're right on the cusp of getting permission, provided we can get a plan that's acceptable to the county health officer. But this is going to rise and fall on our ability to build a plan, our ability to fulfill a plan, and then our ability as a community to comply with the plan.

15. Eliminating triples could help reduce the spreading of the COVID-19 virus, but Page, VK, GLC are filled with triples. There is a promising incoming class as well. Do we have enough rooms to fulfill these plans while keeping students safe?

(Gayle) Yeah. We are working on scenarios to accommodate all of our students, and we will operate of course according to the guidelines of the county. Our options--some of the things we're looking at is having triples only on lower campus where students have requested to live with others that they know and then not having any triples on upper campus. All these plans are yet to be finalized, but we will ensure that there are spaces for everyone in some way, shape, or form.

16. #16 "Are juniors and seniors able to request to live off campus?"

(Edee) We always have a provision for that, and we review those on a case-by-case basis. As we get to the point of finalizing our scenario planning, we will know if we will need more students to live off campus. So we'll be communicating with you, but if you are inclined to request an exception to live off campus, keep that in your queue list and we will work with that after July 1.

17. Other schools are exploring other options like going hybrid, etc.

(Gayle) We are planning to start on August 31. We're going to have some hybrid features so that we can pivot into remote learning if we need to. We also want to have hybrid features so, again, as Doug and Mark were sharing, if you're feeling under the weather, we want you to have the option of self-selecting out of your class without losing any ground, and so that's why the faculty will be working with you either to provide every lecture remotely or through technology or an alternative assignment. And those details are going to be worked out. Between now and July 7, which is our next conference call, all of these details will just have a great deal more specificity to them. We'll have a month to plan, as I mentioned and as Doug amplified. Tomorrow we receive the first draft, by June 30, we'll have the final draft, and then we'll as an e-team refine those drafts on July 1 and then we'll make those available to you on



July 7.

18. When will students find out if they got a parking pass?

(Edee) Well, if you are a junior or a senior, you would have gotten immediate confirmation on the screen when you submitted your request for a parking pass. Those who are granted a restricted permit are notified by email once those are granted and such notification will occur in July or later. If you are not granted a permit, then you would not receive the acceptance, obviously, and if you have a question about whether or not you've received a permit, I would recommend that you contact the parking office in mid-July.

19. As an RA for next semester, what can I expect? Will we be coming back to campus at the scheduled time for the Imprint trips?

(Edee) We will have RA training and student leader training, but in terms of taking the trip that we usually enjoy to the Channel Islands or up to Yosemite for Imprint, we won't be able to do those this year. Just simply traveling in vehicles with multiple people is not going to be possible. But we will have training. You can look forward to hearing from residence life or from the staff person who's in charge of your leadership training and those details will be forthcoming, again, once we get the plans finalized.

20. "What is the current policy for first-year students or returning students being able to defer their enrollment or scholarships for a year and might this policy change?"

(Gayle) Again, one of the conditions of our conditional use statement limits or caps the number of students we're allowed to have on campus. We're working with the county to see if we can get an exception, a one-time exception; we're hoping to have that information before our July 7 conference call. But we do not have a practice of allowing you to defer your scholarships for a year. And I can't imagine a circumstance in which we would change that policy, because you really roll forward with the class and we work under so many constraints that we really have to try to build the class. This scholarship would have been offered to you for the purpose of you being here this year, and again, as we deal with fluctuations and as we deal with the restrictions of our conditional use permit, we have to fill each class with a very specific number of people and that is just a unique challenge year-in and year-out.

A couple other questions that came in that we'll answer just on the web (juniors living off campus, son who's a sophomore, will he be allowed to have a car). And then a comment from a parent: "I am so grateful you are reopening in the fall." We join you in that.

Let me conclude with this just brief comment and then we're going to pray. And thank you so much for your attention. You know, we've been receiving a number of comments. Some have been directed at a variety of individuals here on the administration, some at the college generally, some at mid-level administrators and faculty; some recounting experiences on campus that we know about, others about experiences that we're hearing about for the first time. I want to assure you that every time we have ever received a complaint of racial bigotry or insensitivity, we have investigated it and we have a process for investigating it. And we have always taken the action that's appropriate for the confirming evidence we've obtained.

There are things that I myself have read on Facebook and on Instagram that state things that have happened that I believe to have happened, but they didn't make it--they didn't get turned in properly. We don't have records of them. And so I want to be sure that as stories get shared, that we don't create false impressions that the college is somehow negligent in investigating something



of this magnitude. It's taken very seriously. In the 14 years I've been here, I inherited a wonderful student life team. Edee continues to lead that team, they take this very seriously, and we had two incidents that have been mentioned just in the last day that there is no record of it within the ways in which we keep records, which are very scrupulous. So I just say that as a concluding comment; that this is a priority for us. This is not something that we take lightly and it's part of the full extent of our responsibilities as the leadership team of the college.

It's my hope that as we move deeper into the summer, as we continue to wrestle with the issues that have the country roiling, that we'll be able as a college community to work our way through this period of challenge as followers of Christ in a way that honors Him. I hope we can build a culture of integrity, care, and respect that truly makes a difference. I want us to work this way. And as we watch the news and follow cultural events on social media platforms, there are important messages that are being communicated by those who are engaging in peaceful assemblies. We need to be sure that we participate in ways that reflect our core values. Each one of us needs to accept personal responsibility and personal leadership in doing what we can to eradicate prejudice, bias, and bigotry from our own life, from our community, and from our college.

It's my hope that we'll be able to repopulate for face-to-face instruction this year, not only so we can benefit from the full orbit of our academic experience, but so that we can engage together in important conversations that reflect a commitment to honest engagement on the core values that guide this college, and, it's my hope, will guide you for life. I think we all have a role to play, and it's my hope that we'll accept both our role and our responsibility to play it well. Please join me in prayer.

Lord, for this time I give you thanks. For the ministry and mission of Westmont, I'm grateful, as we wrestle with challenges and a variety of responsibilities. We pray that we will find our way through it in a way that honors you and that can build a community of integrity, care, and respect. Thank you for the time that we've had together tonight. I just pray for these families, I pray for these students, and we look forward to welcoming them this August. In Christ I pray, amen. God be with you. Have a great evening.

