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LEADERSHIP LETTER

From Vice Chancellor, John Hoffmann

I'm going to say it, spring has arrived! The snow is gone and high temperatures for the upcoming week are projected to be 40-50° Fahrenheit - approaching 10° Celsius for scientists and friends from around the

globe. In case you wonder, the average high temperature for March 16 in Crookston is just 32° F / 0° C. Of course, I have enough experience in the midwest to know better than to put away my snow shovel, sweaters, and winter coat. We're likely to get at least one late-season snowstorm before spring fully takes hold. I also have enough knowledge about climate change to know this unseasonably warm winter has consequences including the fact the weather--and those late-season storms--will continue to become more and more volatile in the months and years to come. These high temperatures are also a concern for people working in all aspects of agriculture throughout our region. (For this reason, I encourage all of you to participate in the [2021 SelfSustain Conference](#) addressing the interconnections of environmental and social issues).

We are now coming through the COVID-19 winter and spring is on its way. It is more than a light at the end of a tunnel--it is beginning to bloom before us. Our collective knowledge and experience regarding COVID are more limited than for the weather, but I think important parallels exist. The winter is not over yet, and it is too early to put away our facial coverings and physical distancing guidelines. And as there are long-term effects of global warming, so too will there be long-term effects of COVID. For some of us, masks may never fully go away, and we all will need to think more about how our choices can affect the health and well-being of our neighbors. There will be no full return to how things once were, but there will be opportunities to advance and create even better tomorrows.

On Friday, President Gabel announced regarding Fall 2021, "with optimism and caution, we plan to return to our pre-pandemic environment in our teaching, research, service, and other facets of in-person and on-campus life" ([click here to read the press release](#)). This decision reflects current trends suggesting all faculty, staff, and students will have the opportunity to be vaccinated for COVID-19 prior to the fall semester. This announcement reinforces the message Chancellor Holz-Clause and I have shared over the past month or so that we intend to use in-person instruction as the default modality for on-campus courses in Fall 2021. We will still have a few courses that remain in blended or remote modalities--in some cases because faculty have discovered or developed new ways to increase the quality of learning in these settings--but most classes for on-campus students will be delivered in-person. Likewise, there may be some employees who continue to work remotely, but we expect most will be back on campus in the fall. And we should see increased opportunities for student engagement with the Crookston experience through co-curricular activities. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this Thursday's Campus Assembly where we will share more about our plans for fall as well as our plans for a largely in-person commencement in May! (Provide a link to information about Campus Assembly)

As we consider seasons, it is also important to remember events from the past year. It was one year ago this weekend that Breonna Taylor was killed, and the trial of former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin for the death of George Floyd began last Monday. These are painful reminders for all of us, and especially for Black members of our community, that we have much more work to do to bring about a spring for social justice. University of Minnesota affiliated resources for students, faculty, staff, and community partners regarding the Chauvin trial have been compiled and listed by the [Office of Public Engagement](#).

It has been nearly 30 years since the debut of Groundhog Day featuring Bill Murray and Andie MacDowell. In that movie, Bill Murray's character, Phil, re-lives the same day over and over and over, ultimately enabling him to learn from his past and live that day well. This ultimately unlocks a better future not only for him, but also for Andie MacDowell's character, Rita, as the two fall in love (my apologies if I gave away the end of the movie, but you had 28 years to see it). For us, we relive the cycle of seasons over 12 months rather than 24 hours, but the point is the same. We gain knowledge and experience from each new season, and our life's greatest breakthroughs are typically when we learn to do a better job attending to the health, well-being, and growth of others. As this spring begins to unfold, my hope is that we learn new lessons about the importance of life and how precious our time is so that we may use the moments of our lives well.



Campus Assembly

Join Campus Assembly/Campus Update Thursday, March 18 at noon via ZOOM. Log in here.



Conversations About Women Over Coffee

What is intersectionality and why should we care? Celebrate Women's History month with us by having conversations about women over coffee on March 16 from 12:30-1:30. Join virtually with your University Login information: <https://umn.zoom.us/j/9705250715> or visit the [Events Calendar](#) for more information.



International Programs

International Dinner Series - virtual

Mark your calendars for March 22 and 29 and join the virtual 2021 International Dinner Series reimagined. This will be a free but engaging experience featuring meals from Ukraine, France, and China. [Register today](#) to receive weekly recipes to pick up supplies at the grocery store and make these wonderful meals

in your home. Each Monday, the [2021 Dinner Series](#) will begin at 6 p.m. via Zoom.



No Hassle For The Tassel '21 - Virtual Event For Grads

Graduates, mark your calendar, [March 24 for the No Hassle For The Tassel](#). The U of M's official "one-stop" source for graduation services and products. Graduating students will receive an email soon with more information on how to attend and what to expect.

Commencement ceremony (or ceremonies) on Saturday, May 8 Details are being finalized and graduates should watch for an email in the next few days regarding these plans.

UMN Crookston Faculty Teaching Showcase

The [Center for Educational Innovation](#) invites you to join the University of Minnesota Crookston faculty teaching showcases. These sessions are a showcase of how different people have navigated and overcome various teaching challenges and are not intended to be a showcase of technology uses. As you begin to plan and think about what fall 2021 teaching might look like for you, these sessions may give some ideas to help move your plans forward. Faculty and adjunct instructors [register today](#) to attend one of these sessions:

March 23 from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

April 13 from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

[CLICK FOR ALL EVENTS](#)

[CAMPUS UPDATES](#)

COVID-19 Update

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz announced Friday that beginning next week there will be a significant loosening of [COVID-19](#) restrictions. Bars and restaurants will be able to operate at 75% capacity and gyms at 50% capacity, and there will be no limit for salons and barbershops. Unless otherwise noted, adjustments are [effective March 15](#) they include measures to:

BRIGHTER DAYS ARE HERE

Bars and restaurants
 75% Capacity*
 250 People max
 *75% applies to indoors. Outdoor has no percentage limit. Groups must stay 6 feet apart. Bar seating increases to parties of 4.

Social gatherings
 Outside
 50 People max
 Inside
 15 People max

Salons and barbers
 No occupancy limits.
 Social distancing and masks required.

Gyms, fitness centers, and pools
 50% Capacity
 Social distancing and masks required.

Work from home
 Starting April 15:
 Work from home will be strongly recommended for those who can. All employers should continue to accommodate employees who wish to work from home, and must provide reasonable accommodations as required by law.

Guidance Updates
 Start at 12 p.m. on March 15 unless otherwise noted.

Venues, celebrations, and receptions
 50% Capacity
 250 People max
 Starting April 15: Larger venues add additional capacity.
 Inside
 Non-seated: Add 10% of capacity over 500 people. Max 1,500 people.
 Seated: Add 15% of capacity over 500 people. Max 3,000 people.
 Outside
 Non-seated: Add 15% of capacity over 500 people. Max 10,000 people.
 Seated: Add 25% of capacity over 500 people. Max 10,000 people.

Wedding ceremonies and religious services
 No occupancy limits.
 Social distancing and masks required.

STAY SAFE MN

Commencement, May 7 and/or May 8

Commencement ceremony (or ceremonies) will be held Saturday, May 8. Details are yet to be determined, watch for an email in the next few days regarding these plans.

Welcome

Macey Buker, Ph.D., program director and lecturer for the Health Management program in the Business Department. March 15, 2021

Athletics

The UMN Crookston hockey program concluded their inaugural season back on ice last Friday and Saturday. The Golden Eagles finished the season with a 6-7 mark. Minnesota Crookston ended the year with two of their biggest wins of the season. UMN Crookston upended #10 University of Jamestown 6-3 Friday with four goals in the third period to secure a comeback win. The Golden Eagles followed suit Saturday, as they shutout the Jimmies in a 6-0 win. Friday, UMN Crookston was led by two goals and three assists from Tyler Zahradka (Fr., F, Grand Forks, N.D.). Saturday, UMN Crookston looked to two goals and two assists from Crookston-Native Brandon Boetcher (So., F), while Jake Sumner (Fr., G, Alta Loma, Calif.) had his first career shutout. The Golden Eagles are currently 20th in the nation in the latest ACHA Division II poll.

The Golden Eagle baseball team has continued their great start to the season. UMN Crookston is currently 4-0, their best start in the NCAA Division II era (since 1999). Minnesota Crookston has been led by the bat of Brock Reller, who has six home runs in four games. Reller was the NSIC Player of the Week last week, and he repeated the honor this week. As a team, Minnesota Crookston has an impressive .384 batting average with 16 home runs through just four games. On the mound, UMN Crookston is led by junior Jake Dykhoff (RHP, Wadena, Minn.), with a 1.50 ERA and nine strikeouts. The Golden Eagles open NSIC play March 20 and 21 on the road at Winona State University.

The UMN Crookston softball team returns to regular-season action Wednesday, March 17 as they hit the road to face Minnesota State University Moorhead in Moorhead, Minn., at 1 and 3 p.m. The Golden Eagles are currently 2-10. Minnesota Crookston is led by Dana Zarn (So., IF, Winnipeg, Manitoba), hitting .364 with four runs scored and five RBIs. In the circle, Katie Humhej (Sr., RHP, Surrey, British Columbia) is 1-5 with a 3.03 ERA with 35 strikeouts and just 11 walks. Sofia Gombos (Fr., RHP, Salinas, Calif.) is also off to a strong start. She is 1-3 with a 3.88 ERA with 16 strikeouts.

The Golden Eagle men's golf team opens up their season March 22 and 23 at the Washburn Invitational at Topeka Country Club in Topeka, Kan. The UMN Crookston men's golf team is looking to build on their improvement from the 2019-20 season. The Golden Eagles finished the season with a strong performance at the Embry-Riddle Invitational. UMN Crookston had a season-low round of 303 in the first round in Arizona. Minnesota Crookston returns their core from the 2019-20 season led by Connor Humble (Sr., Rosemount, Minn.). Humble held an average of 76.7 last season with a season-low 72 at both the J.R. Watkins Invite and the UMN Crookston/King's Walk Invite.

— FACULTY & STAFF UPDATES —

Morse-Alumni Distinguished Teaching Award

Timothy Dudley, Ph.D. is a recipient of a 2020-21 Horace T. Morse - University of Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education. Each year since 1965, the University of Minnesota has recognized a select group of teachers for their outstanding contributions to undergraduate education. This honor is awarded to exceptional candidates nominated by colleges in their quest to identify excellence in undergraduate education.

Those who receive the Morse-Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Award become members of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers (ADT). The title "Distinguished University Teaching Professor" or "Distinguished University Teacher" is conferred upon recipients, and you will be invited to participate in ADT events and activities. Each winner will also receive a one-time \$15,000 award, which will be transferred to your college in September of 2021. This award reflects the University's strong and enduring commitment to quality undergraduate education at the University of Minnesota.



"I am Crookston" Campaign wins big in Educational Advertising Awards

UMN Crookston was awarded three Gold Awards and a Merit award, along with Best of Show Award out of the whole country. UMN Crookston won for the Outdoor, Total Advertising Campaign, Total Digital Marketing Program and Total Recruitment Package.

The 36th Annual Educational Advertising Awards:

- Recognizing Educational Advertising Excellence for over 36 years in the most prestigious, largest, oldest and most respected educational advertising awards competition in the country.
- This year, over 2,000 entries were received from over one-thousand colleges, universities and secondary schools from all fifty states and several foreign countries.
- Judges for the Educational Advertising Awards consisted of a national panel of higher education marketers, advertising creative directors, marketing, and advertising professionals.

— HIGHLIGHTS —

“Right away, after stepping on campus I felt like I had a second home,” Katie Humhej, UMN Crookston health science senior, British Columbia.

Katie Humhej, right hand pitcher from Surrey, British Columbia joined UMN Crookston’s softball team last fall to wrap up a second degree and complete her NCAA eligibility after three seasons at Long Island University Post prior to the program’s decision to merge sports from LIU Post and LIU Brooklyn.

“The support here is unbelievable,” she said. Humhej said she visited UMN Crookston one weekend last year when she found out that she could complete her last year of athletic eligibility, and earn a second degree in one year. “Everyone being so friendly and outgoing right away stepping on campus I felt like I had a second home,” said Humhej. “I loved the campus, honestly the dorms are what got me,” she said. “Crookston had more than the traditional residential life, it was the whole package. Right away everyone made me feel welcomed, and as an international student Rae French has been a big part of my time at UMN Crookston,” she said. Humhej was excited she could finish a second degree, in a short period of time, play the rest of her NCAA softball eligibility and enjoy the personal touch that Crookston offered. “It was just something that I just couldn’t turn down,” she said.

Humhej too plays for a national team, for the Czech Republic women's national softball team. “I am a dual citizen, between Canada and th Czech republic, my dad was born there, I was noticed by the team when I was 18, they were playing in my city in the world championships. “My dad was speaking Czech with one of the parents in the stands and one of the club managers overhead and was wondering a bit about his heritage.” Humhej says the rest is history, “they came and watched me and offered me a position on the women’s national team.”

Humhej says the team atmosphere at UMN Crookston is one thing she will take back to her national team. “Being part of the game and being involved, as a pitcher I won’t play every game, and here I have learned there are roles that I can do from the sidelines, to be part of the game wherever you are on the field, she says.

So what’s next for Katie? She says she will graduate in May completing her degree in health sciences and will await to hear of her acceptance to graduate school. She will return to her national team, of the Czech Republic, for competition. “We lost in the olympic qualifiers two years ago, and didn’t compete this past year due to COVID. The next chance for the Olympics will be to qualify for the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles. Humhej says that is a way off and that she is just hoping to play as long as possible and in the meantime get back to British Columbia and maybe go to graduate school. “I have been away for five years, I miss my family and they miss me.

