

OVERVIEW

Starting in February and continuing to the present, TCC leadership began to take a series of actions in response to the COVID-19 public health crisis. All actions were based on guidance from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and direction from Governor Jay Inslee on college closures, social distancing and other public health measures.

We stood up the Expanded Leadership Team, led by TCC President Dr. Ivan Harrell, which met frequently to make timely decisions and mobilize staff in this rapidly changing environment. Our response has focused on continuing our mission of providing high-quality education and holistic support for our students. Throughout this time, our staff has demonstrated remarkable teamwork, flexibility and dedication to helping our students.

Our goals were, and continue to be, to:

- Protect the health and safety of students, staff and the community.
- Adhere to the guidance of public health experts and Gov. Jay Inslee.
- Provide ongoing communications to students, staff and the public.
- Support students and staff in the transition to online instruction and working remotely.
- Ensure equitable access to instruction, technology and other resources for student success.
- Plan for the future of TCC that ensures the safety of our community.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

PROTECTING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Increased deep cleaning of campus facilities and distribution of cleaning supplies to staff.
- Provided guidelines to staff and supplies on cleaning their work areas.
- Implemented social distancing practices.
- Closed Tacoma and Gig Harbor campuses on March 20 and established protocols for employees working on campus (a limited number who were responsible for critical work that could not be done remotely) and working from home.
- Became early adopters and implemented 100 percent online instruction in winter quarter, in response to the Covid-19 crisis, through our secure teaching platform.
- Launched online-only instruction for spring quarter, the first time in TCC's history. Summer quarter will be online as well.
- Incorporated Zoom meeting security protocols to protect the college community from misuse of this meeting platform. No instances of misuse have been reported. (Note: Zoom is not used for online instruction.) We shared our Zoom security protocols with the other 33 community and technical colleges in the state system.

INSTRUCTION

- All faculty is using Canvas, TCC's secure online teaching platform. They are teaching through videos, chats and virtual classrooms.
- Provided faculty with needed technology and training to be able to effectively provide remote instruction.
- Faculty have been exceptionally gracious and flexible with students as everyone transitions to a new classroom environment.
- Provided guidance on meeting FERPA requirements in an online instructional environment.
- Held online town halls with faculty to gather feedback and ideas to ensure a smooth transition to an online environment.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Set up a dedicated section on the TCC website with information and resources for students, including a checklist for Spring quarter, FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) and a new virtual help center using Zoom for students to connect live with faculty and staff. Information is provided in multiple languages including Spanish, Ukrainian and Chinese. Topics include health information, financial aid, obtaining books for spring quarter, food assistance and links to college and community resources.
- Created a similar web page for staff, which includes safety information, resources for faculty to provide online learning, working from home policies, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and other support services.
- Posted frequent (4-5 days/week) updates from Dr. Ivan Harrell and Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Marissa Schlesinger to students and staff. These updates provided critical information about our operational decisions.
- Shared messaging that reinforced our “no tolerance” policy for any discriminatory behavior aimed at Asian American and Pacific Islander individuals and communities.
- Hosted two online student town hall meetings, which engaged more than 400 students.
- Posted frequent updates (including inspirational stories about students and staff) on TCC’s social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.). Also posted tips on successful online learning.
- Designed and distributed print materials for the campus, covering Covid-19 safety measures, social distancing and closure information.
- Responded to press inquiries (The News Tribune, etc.) with up-to-date information, including our Covid-19 response, student support services, emergency funding and online instruction techniques.
- Provided multiple communications to employees and students regarding the importance of mental health.

STUDENT SUPPORT

- Distributed \$20,000 in emergency funding to more than 100 students to help with technology, child care, transportation and other urgent needs.
- Provided 250 laptop computers to students (theirs to keep) to enable online learning, funded by \$60,000 from the TCC Foundation.
- Expanded wi-fi to a TCC parking lot for students to access from their cars (if they lack wi-fi at home).
- Kept food pantry open, available by appointment.
- Provided a range of online support services, including virtual advising, counseling, tutoring, library resources, bookstore ordering and more.

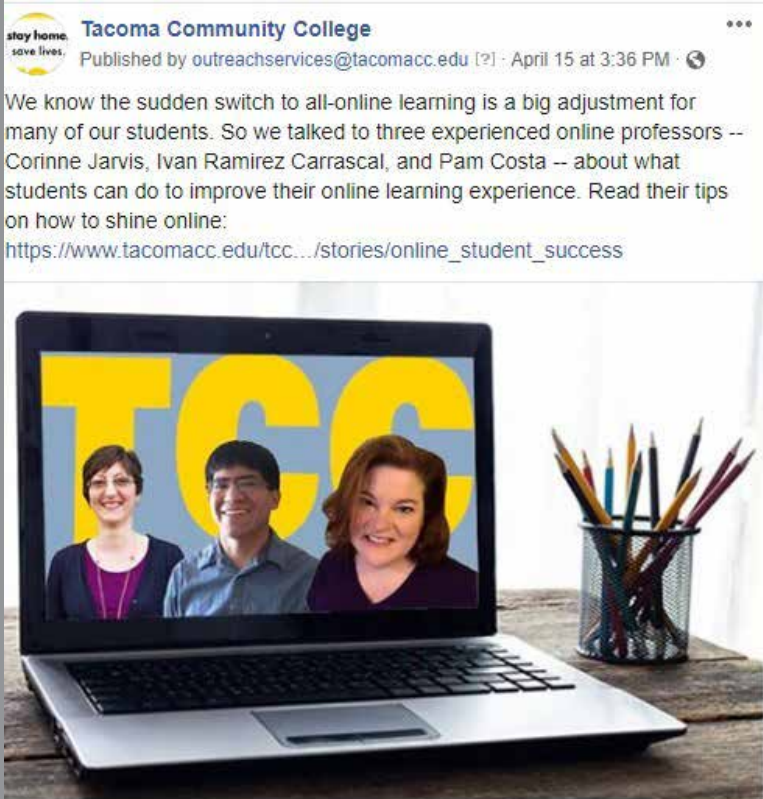


STAFF AND FACULTY SUPPORT

- Provided information on financial assistance, mental health resources, on-campus work protocols and work from home procedures.
- Provided training to faculty on implementing online instruction, and information on policies for communicating with students, administering exams and grading student work.
- Delivered multiple professional learning opportunities for staff and faculty who are working from home, including videos and training sessions by TCC's Organizational Learning and Effectiveness department.
- Purchased 75 additional laptops for faculty to facilitate online instruction (funded by the TCC Foundation).
- Created a \$25,000 Employee Emergency Fund sponsored by the TCC Foundation, providing grants of \$500 to individual employees facing financial hardship.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- Allied Health students have contributed almost 300 hours of assistance in multiple health care facilities.
- The Science, Engineering and Math and health program departments donated personal protective equipment to Multicare Health System.
- Offered virtual events including a series of videos on how communities are coping with COVID-19 through self-care practices such as meditation and yoga.
- Provided website links to local, state and federal public health agencies working on COVID-19; widely shared community resources to our campus community.
- Continue to partner with Nourish Food Bank to host a mobile food pantry on campus, with perishable and non-perishable items. This is available to anyone in need in the community.
- Working to expand parking lot Wi-Fi that can be used by community members as well.
- The Early Learning Center, TCC's childcare program, remained open as a declared essential business by the governor's office. The staff instilled social distancing and other safety measures with the parents and staff members, while taking care of children. During this time of crisis, the ELC staff also provided remote teacher conferences with families, education packets for home use, and weekly food boxes, diapers and baby wipes.



RESULTS

Our entire college community has done a tremendous job of pulling together and being agile in response to this crisis. As a result, the transition to a completely online format for spring quarter has gone smoothly, and most of our students from winter enrolled to spring.

We continue to be proud of our resilient students, staff and faculty, who continue to stay the course in these difficult times.

NEXT STEPS

Our Expanded Leadership Team continues to meet weekly to assess current conditions, provide ongoing support and communications for students and staff, plan for fall quarter and address the financial impact of this crisis on the college.

TCC remains committed to the safety of our community, while providing excellent and affordable education for all. We will continue to be innovative and responsive as the Covid-19 situation continues, as we know we play a vital role in providing an educated workforce to our community.

