Thanks to all of you for your efforts during this unprecedented time. We have been awed and inspired by the efforts to ensure that all our undergraduate, graduate and professional students receive a first-class education and progress towards degree. There was a Teaching Fall 2020 meeting in TEAMS which conveyed much of the information below with presentations by Provost Tate and others; this may be viewed here. As we move into the fall semester, please note the following recommendations and requests:

1. Students are very confused and anxious about the format of classes, particularly hybrid classes. Please send an email out to your students explaining how the class will work. For hybrid classes, students need to know who shows up on the first day of class. Information about day, time, room or LMS are helpful. Share your syllabus as soon as possible; suggestions include sharing your syllabus as an attachment in an email, posting on Blackboard, or as a URL in Banner. Reminding students about their responsibility to behave safely and encouraging them to join #IPledgeColumbia in your classes would be a great way to help our UofSC community.

2. Those of you who are teaching a face-to-face or hybrid class should look at the technology available in your assigned classroom. If you have not done so already, go to the 25 Live website and login in the dropdown in the upper right corner and then search by location (your classroom). The DoIT team has been working at feverish pace all summer to update 480 classrooms across the campus. You can request training and also watch a video on how to use the new technology.

3. Visit your classroom so you can see the seating arrangement that are specific to your class. Note that the 4 ft social distancing is from center of person to center of person. This distancing with the mask requirement has been verified as appropriate by our Public Health team and DHEC. In classes with moveable chairs and tables,
please do not move them. We know that many of you like to re-configure your classroom but that is not appropriate this semester. You will impair the ability to social distance in the classroom if you do so. If something is moved, please replace the furniture to where it is supposed to be for the next class.

4. Classroom supply boxes and general-purpose supplies have been distributed. Each classroom supply box contains aerosol spray (for high touch surfaces), bottle spray for desk/chairs to be wiped down with towels, paper towels. Students are expected to clean the desktops, and chairs they used at the end of their class. Please direct students to be conscientious in the use of the supplies. If supplies are running low, please submit a service request at facilities.sc.edu, including the building and room number. Custodians will also be checking the supplies. If there is not a box of classroom supplies near your classroom (it may be in hall outside the classroom); please contact the Work Management Center via email to fmcnotify@fmc.sc.edu; or place a service request for the initial box of supplies at facilities.sc.edu.

5. The initial classroom boxes contain a one-time distribution of face masks in case a student forgets to bring a face covering. Face coverings will not be replenished by Facilities. If additional face coverings or other COVID PPE supplies are needed, place an order through the procurement website.

6. The Division of Information Technology and the Thomas Cooper Library have collaborated to provide support for students who have limited technology access with a computer and hotspot loan program. The Thomas Cooper Library has a limited supply of Dell 3400s computers with webcams to check out for the academic year. These are available now; please see here for the hours of Thomas Cooper Library. Fairly shortly, there will also be hotspots available for loan as well. These will be particularly useful for those students who return to homes without internet availability at Thanksgiving. For both computers and hotspots, instructors should direct students to the Thomas Cooper Library with their Carolina Card to check out the technology that is needed. Since there is not an unlimited supply of computers and hotspots, we are relying on faculty, advisors, and professional staff to direct students appropriately. Emails explaining the loan program have also been sent selectively to students who have been identified as having financial challenges.

7. Russell House and Thomas Cooper Library are open but will have limited capacity due to social distancing and cleaning concerns. With the prediction that many students will be on campus taking online/hybrid classes, additional Study and Learning (S&L) spaces are being set up and students will receive directions to these spaces. Currently, additional spaces include seating in the Science and Technology Building, the 8th floor of Close/Hipp, the concourse in the Coliseum (open August 23rd) and the Koger Center lobby. These will be monitored to see if we need more S&L spaces.

8. You should plan on keeping a seating chart and attendance for your class; contact tracers will be requesting this information if someone in the class becomes positive. Please understand that the contact tracers cannot divulge the name of the student who is positive; the student will have to let you know directly or give permission to the student ombuds to let you know.

9. It is recommended that you review the Faculty Senate recommendations on how to manage the classroom in this unprecedented time and may want to view the recording of a great workshop that was a collaboration between the Office of Student Conduct, the Faculty Senate and the Center for Teaching Excellence. Also, the Keep Teaching website has a wealth of information ranging from teaching strategies to accessibility to academic support to final exam guidance and is continuously updated.

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Office of the Dean

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