



USMSC Report to the Board of Regents

April 21, 2020

The USMSC has met twice since our last report to the Board of Regents. These meetings took place on March 8, 2020, at the University of Maryland, College Park and on April 19, 2020, virtually utilizing Zoom. Both meetings were very productive and fairly well attended. As can be expected by the timing of the meetings and the situation in our state, nation, and the world, both of these meetings were dominated by conversations surrounding COVID-19.

Chancellor Perman joined the USMSC for the beginning of our April meeting, sharing some words of advice, encouragement, and thanks for the work student leaders have done in helping to address and communicate information surrounding COVID-19 and its effects on each of our institutions and regional centers. The Council would like to extend a sincere thank you to the Chancellor for his words, and for taking the time to join and speak to us.

Overall, student leaders across the System are encouraged by the significant inclusion of student shared governance in conversations and decision-making processes around emergency changes due to COVID-19. Many of the concerns that students had, especially at the beginning of the crisis, were regarding communication, as often it seemed that either some universities were responding faster than others or that sometimes it seemed as though developments were being held back for a time after decisions had been made.

Many of the questions around COVID-19 at today's point are questions centered around the future. Students, who are not unique in these thoughts, wonder when things will be able to return to normal and they will be allowed back on campus. They are concerned that their time to degree, their ability to conduct classwork, practical placements, internships, and research, and even their financial feasibility of continuing their degree may be negatively and detrimentally impacted by these changes and their potentially extended impact.

The USMSC and I look forward to the continued opportunity to work constructively and collaboratively with the Presidents, Chancellor Perman, and the Board of Regents as we continue to adapt and overcome these every changing and unprecedented circumstances. If any member of the Board of Regents has a topic or idea that they would like to work on with the Council or would like the Council to consider, please feel free to communicate them with me so they can be considered and addressed in my next report to the Board.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Benjamin Forrest', is written in a cursive style.

Benjamin Forrest
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