Stay safe during COVID-19 pandemic

The following are suggestions for maintaining a healthy working/learning environment:

• If you are sick, please stay home. Encourage students to do the same. There may need to be some accommodations made to ensure that employees and students do not come to campus sick for fear of some negative consequence.

• Regularly disinfect routinely touched surfaces. While SSC is increasing their cleaning and disinfecting efforts, your help is also needed. Pay special attention to door knobs/ handles, light switches, water faucets, publicly accessible phones, etc.

• Provide disposable sanitizing wipes in all computer labs and for all publicly accessible computers. Encourage users to wipe down the keyboard and mouse before use.

• Ensure any alcohol-based sanitizer is at least 60% alcohol. Likewise, ensure that any bleach-based cleaners are at least 10% bleach.

• When possible, avoid shaking hands or giving hugs. Instead, “dab for the duration” – use fist or elbow bumps!

• Visit the CDC website for the most up-to-date information. KC continues to follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and communicates routinely with Gregg County Public Health and the Texas Department of State Health Services. Visit their webpages for the most accurate information and advice.

COVID-19 TRANSITION...
What have you learned?

“It has given us (Industrial Technologies CE) the time to re-look at how we do things and find more efficient processes. Also, this has given me the opportunity to sit down with my instructors to see where we can improve and start implementing those changes while we have the opportunity. While not an ideal situation, being flexible and making changes now will help us later on when we are back up and going 100 percent.”

- Robert Horn, Workforce Development Specialist

“Upon returning to my Henderson dual credit students via remote instruction, I was overwhelmed by the number of them who asked how I was doing and expressed how much they missed me. High school students are struggling right now with the devastation of prom and graduation being interrupted, but my students took the time to check in on me. I couldn't have asked for a better group of students! They show up (remotely), they are engaged academically and they are caring.”

- Stephanie Laszik, English instructor

“Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic helped me become flexible in the way I communicate with students. I feel just as confident helping them via phone and email as I do in person. Even though we are not physically connected, we are still connecting and encouraging our students by helping them transition to courses online versus in-person. It’s rewarding to be able to still help all students in every way that we can.”

- Beverly Taylor, Financial Aid Specialist

“The process of taking the classroom into the virtual realm has decreased the power distance between me and my students. They seem to be much more willing and able to integrate themselves into the learning environment. It could be because they are all able to be in front of a screen which may not be entirely good. However, the classroom has just become a much smaller, more intimate place, and I have seen student interaction that wouldn’t have been present in the past.”

- Danny Darden, Computer & Information Technology instructor

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Jones named interim CFO

Dr. Brenda Kays announced March 30 that Dawn Jones has been named Interim Chief Financial Officer, taking over for Nancy Wylie.

“I appreciate Dawn’s willingness to serve in this capacity and I know that you will enjoy working with her as much as I do,” Kays said.

Jones has worked in financial administrative positions in higher education for more than 25 years and has served as Controller in the KC Business Office since March of 2019.

“I am excited to be able to continue along that path and look forward to collaborating with other units on campus to continue to improve the support of our students, employees and the community,” Jones said. “I am thrilled to be part of such a great team.”

Jones grew up in Minnesota and moved to Houston after graduating from college. She remarried in 2011 and moved to East Texas to be with her husband, David. Dawn and David have a son, a daughter and two grandchildren.

Jones
President’s Perspective by Dr. Brenda Kays

Looking for our certainties...

Happy April!

Spring and fall have always been my two favorite seasons of the year. Guessing as to why that is the case, it is undoubtedly because of the color. Both seasons explode with an intensity of color every year. It happens with a high degree of certainty.

Our current circumstances are unsettling. Some days it feels as if the world around us is changing hourly, and we can’t count on what tomorrow will bring.

Yet, over the past two weeks, our cars have been covered with a layer of pollen. That green coat of yuck happens every spring; it is a certainty. We know that as the trees begin to leaf, the lime green powder will eventually disappear. It provides us with a level of confidence. A certainty that our seasons are changing and we are marching toward the future.

Another certainty also exists at KC thanks to our students. Our students are demonstrating their assurance that our current circumstances will pass. They are marching toward the future by registering for summer and fall classes at KC. They are confident that we will help them achieve their educational goals and dreams. Our students’ resilience provides each of us with the certainty that we do have an essential purpose. Amid the current uncertainty, we owe it to our students to be lockstep with them, focusing on the future.

Whatever comes our way, we will get through it together. That is our certainty.

Enjoy your Easter holiday next Friday, and remember that the best part of any chocolate rabbit happens to be the ears!

Take care of yourself, take care of our students, take care of one another and keep on looking to the future.

Until next month,

Dr. Brenda Kays
KC president

FACULTY & STAFF reports

Jude Dubois was re-elected at the 47th annual TxTRIO State Conference to the State of Texas Trio Executive Board as the North Zone representative for all two-year and four-year colleges and universities and non-profit organizations that sponsor Trio programs north of Waco. He will also represent TxTRIO on the five state regional boards and the Southwest Association Student Assistant Programs (SWASAP).

CONTINUED from PAGE 1

“I now understand that I have a higher level of flexibility when it comes to getting over hurdles such as this. It has been quite an experience still trying to recruit students to KC and have them perform virtual auditions. But with the variety of apps and programs out there, it is highly possible in times such as this. The most rewarding thing is that I have been able to keep touch with current as well as future students.”

- Brent Farmer, Director of Bands

“In the modern world, technology is becoming increasingly important. How else could I provide a lecture for a student in Illinois on a real-time basis.”

- Dr. Paul Buchanan, geology instructor

“For now? It’s about what a very wise student once taught her instructor. “Several years ago, when I first started teaching, a student said on my evaluation that “there are two types of teachers, one who teaches their students what the syllabus dictates and the other, who goes beyond the coursework to teach their students things that life dictates. Thank you for being the latter.” I took a photo of it, and it stuck with me. We are all being called upon to be the latter: to teach the things that life dictates.

I knew, we all knew, before this crisis that we had students who struggled. We’ve all had students who have confided in us about bad home situations, poor medical care, and a wide gamut of barriers to reaching their full potential. What this crisis has changed is our participation in that. We now are watching in real-time as many of our students’ lives change dramatically and not for the better. Some are doing OK, but many have reached out to me to let me know that they are hurting.

That’s where we come in. I can’t change the fact that so many of my students have been laid off, but I can empathize with their situation and let them in on the fact that I too am worried, because my husband has been laid off as well.

I can connect them with resources that are more important than ever. I can make sure that they know I’m available almost every waking hour to talk, and not just about history or assignments. Part of feeling secure, a basic need that is being rocked right now, is having a schedule in place, and for those who are able, I can give them that through the remote teaching sessions and deadlines. I can also give them flexibility and some relief by making those deadlines as loose as possible. I can analyze every facet of my course and focus on what is most important, what I most want my students to walk away with, and what will most aid them right now. I can make sure that I’m not only not one more stressor in my students’ lives, but that they see me as a resource. I have 130 students, and many of them need me right now in a way that they haven’t in the past. It’s humbling and more than a little anxiety-provoking. It’s about responding to what our students need to the best of our abilities and hoping that, when this is over, we will be able to look back and say it was enough.

For now? It’s about what a very wise student once taught her instructor.”

- Dr. Meredith May, history instructor

For my high school dual credit students (who are not always as motivated as my regular students), I’ve instituted a “halftime.” I set my phone alarm, and we have an “energy break.” I explained to them that if they will get up and MOVE (exercise, stretch or dance) while I play music, their brains will be stimulated to accept more knowledge. It makes them feel more energetic, releasing endorphins, increasing positive emotions and decreasing negative emotions. I show them different things they can do at home, using their energy, and I either get on my Maxi-Climber or do different types of exercise myself every day on video. They’re enjoying it, and it does seem to give them a boost!

- Martha Deen, psychology instructor
On-Campus Calendar

All on-campus events are canceled through April 30. For a listing of these events, click here.

Library resources during COVID-19 pandemic

During the pandemic, feel free to utilize the vast online resources of the Watson Library:

**Telephone Service:**
Please remember the staff at Watson Library will take phone reference queries at any time during business hours, especially in support of KC students and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Call (903) 983-8237 for more information.

**Watson Library Electronic Resources:**
- About 150 databases on a large variety of subjects.
- Tutorials — The library offers multiple tutorials from its home webpage (Help>Tutorials)

**Possible Outside Resources:**
- TeachingBooks Virtual Teaching Ideas – Secondary Ideas are lower on the linked page.
- Gale Cengage – resources to support libraries & educators impacted by COVID-19.

Texas Shakespeare Festival summer season regretfully canceled

The Texas Shakespeare Festival, the TSF Foundation and Kilgore College regret to announce that the 2020 summer festival has been canceled for precautionary reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“With a heavy heart and deep regret, I believe it is in the best interest of our artists and our many loyal patrons that the Texas Shakespeare Festival will not produce a 2020 season,” said Raymond Caldwell, TSF Founder and Artistic Director.

“As we continue to navigate our way through this unprecedented series of national events, the last thing any of us wants is to endanger the health of our loyal patrons, actors and staff members.”

This summer would have marked the professional theatre’s 35th season and the final season for Caldwell, artistic director since the festival’s inception.

Order offices supplies from the bookstore

Please remember that the KC Bookstore is open and has a great variety of office supplies to purchase and order. Employees can shop online by visiting the Procurement Services webpage in AccessKC, scrolling to the bottom to view a list of available supplies listed under “Important Dates.” Bookstore Manager Kenton Beal will be happy to take your orders by email, phone (903-988-7517) or in person. Delivery is also available.

Institutional Planning:

**Did you know?**

Spring 1 Grades:
- 81% - A, B or C
- 7% - W

Data provided by the KC Office of Institutional Planning

Happy Birthday

**APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

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KC mourns loss of two former employees

**Henry Williams**
Henry Earl Williams, 69, died on March 4 in Kilgore. He worked for Fleetwood Travel Trailers, Inc. for 25 years before working at KC in Custodial Services for 10 years. Funeral services were held March 7 at Xciting Kilgore Baptist Church. Read obituary

**Melvin Marshall**
Melvin Lee Marshall, 84, died March 6. He was the director of the fine arts department for KC where he organized the first on-stage musicals and the KC Chorale. He also served as a minister of music for First Christian Church in Longview and Vice President of Institutional Advancement at KC. Read obituary