

Dear Weber State Family,

Below are highlights from our town hall last Friday, February 5. The full recording will be added to our [website](#).

### **Affordability**

Weber State was recently recognized as 19th in the [Affordable School's listing](#) of the 50 Most Affordable Colleges with the Best Return for 2021. The rankings are based primarily on our tuition and fees and our graduates' mid-career salaries. The top 50 list is drawn from over 2,000 public and private four-year institutions in the U.S. Weber State is the only school in the Utah System of Higher Education and the only open enrollment institution to make the top 50 list. Congratulations to all of us for this outstanding recognition that demonstrates our sincere commitment to student success.

### **Vaccine Update**

Beginning March 1, the vaccine distribution age will be lowered to 65 and will include vaccine availability for individuals who are higher risk. For more information about the distribution [timeline](#) and those categories considered as higher risk, you can visit the state's [vaccination website](#).

We are still working to complete onboarding for our Closed Point of Dispensing (POD), and hope to have that complete in the next couple of weeks. After we are onboarded, we are still unsure of when the state will be distributing vaccines to our site. We are advocating for higher education employees to be included in the same grouping as K-12 educators, but that guidance has not changed as of yet as vaccine distribution is being prioritized based on age groups.

Thank you again to all of our faculty and staff who are volunteering to assist with the success of our testing and vaccination efforts. Our volunteers have helped to administer over 26k vaccines in the county, and we have administered over 6000 tests since the start of the semester to our faculty, staff, and students.

### **Spring**

For spring, we are down 1.7% in budget-related full-time equivalent students (which are degree-seeking, regular tuition-paying students). However, we are up in our student headcount largely due to the number of students taking concurrent enrollment courses. We did remain consistent as compared to prior years in the number of students who were enrolled in the fall and re-enrolled in the spring. Thank you to each of you taking time to connect with your students.

### **Summer and Fall Survey Feedback**

Thank you for taking time to respond to our recent survey about summer and fall courses. We had 564 faculty and staff and over 1000 student respondents. In our surveys, we saw that students, faculty, and staff had preferences for a variety of formats with over 50% preferring each of the four options: face-to-face, virtual, hybrid, and online. Faculty had a slightly higher preference for hybrid and face-to-face while students had a slightly higher preference for online and virtual. There were also some differences by age.

We are planning to continue moving toward providing a greater percentage of face-to-face classes in the summer and fall and are planning to continue distancing and face coverings. What this looks like will continue to evolve as the semesters approach.

I know that we all want more information on when campus will be back to normal and what that looks like. What we do know is that our numbers and our positivity rates in the state are improving, and our [cases on campus](#) remain very low. We will continue to be thoughtful and data informed in our decision making and will communicate any changes with our campus community.

### **Legislative Updates & Budget Requests**

The legislative session will continue through March 4. We do not yet know what bills related to higher education will be passed or what additional funding we may receive. However, we are excited that 3% has already been set aside for compensation.

### **Construction Updates**

This last week, we celebrated the [grand opening](#) of our Outdoor Program and Welcome Center, and we are continuing to move forward with construction on the [NOORDA building](#), which will be opening in the fall of 2022. We are excited that construction on the [Bus Rapid Transit \(BRT\)](#) line will start earlier than anticipated on Feb 28 as crews will begin demolition of the old marquee in front of the Dee Events Center.

We will be hosting our next town hall on March 5 from 2-3:30pm to provide a legislative update. More information will be posted in the Announcements. I hope to see many of you all at strategic planning [town hall](#) this afternoon at 2pm.

Wishing us all health, happiness, and fortitude.

Best,  
brad