



# President's Charge to the Task Force

---

Date: May 19, 2020  
To: Members of the Reintegration Task Force  
From: President Daniel J. Phelan  
Re: **Charge to the Task Force**

## Overview:

Some days ago, I read a newsletter wherein the author noted that before undertaking a task, behavioral change, or even the goal for a better life, that the first step is to acknowledge that task is difficult, and by so doing, one can assign the correct amount of effort required for success. Undeniably, the work of reintegration, let alone into a different higher education model, will be most difficult, significantly more so than the challenge of leaving campus, self-quarantining, and fully transforming our college to an virtual based platform.

To date, Jackson College, the whole of our nation, and indeed the global community have been besieged by the Novel Coronavirus. Its effects have ravaged governments, health care systems, businesses, higher education, communities, families, personal incomes, quality of life, and mental health, and has taken lives from among us. The full effect of this pandemic will take years to recover from, let alone fully understand, even as COVID-19 will remain in our lexicon and lives for the foreseeable future - and has the potential for resurgence if we do not exercise great caution.

I am grateful beyond mention for the skill, hard work, and alacrity with which our employees transmuted our entire college to a virtual-based environment in a very short period. To our credit, college employees pivoted within ten short days to this new digital platform while maintaining a high level of quality, dedication, and service, while keeping our students at the center of our work. This approach has proven to be an effective strategy in assisting students in not only concluding the balance of the winter semester, but it has also become the vehicle by which we will deliver instruction for the upcoming spring, summer, and fall terms.

As our Nation and State begin to relax the state of emergency and executive orders, in an attempt to restart the economy and business operations, it is important that Jackson College formally undertake the process of defining what reintegration of employees, students, guests, and college operations would entail, as well as considering when it is

safe and reasonable to do so. If the business reopening activities proceed effectively, combined with the continuing decline of the incidences of COVID-19 cases, early opening of some higher education operations may be able to proceed. It would appear that our Michigan Governor agrees.

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Governor Whitmer signed [Executive Order 2020-77](#) which, in part, extends the current stay home/stay safe provisions until May 28<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, the EO includes a number of new and notable exemptions, including allowing students to participate in education for first responders and health care workers. More particularly, the EO allows students seeking to participate in training, credentialing, or licensing instruction, which includes training and clinical experiences for police officers, fire fighters, paramedics, and health-care workers, provided that as much instruction as possible is provided remotely.

In anticipation of this and future opportunities to begin reintroducing ground-based higher education operations, in early April, I sought and received an exception from the Henry Ford Allegiance Health organization to undertake hands-on simulation education for nursing students nearing the conclusion of their degree requirements – this opportunity for prototyping ground-based simulations will conclude on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and its post-hoc analysis will be instructive to the reintegration process. In a continuing effort to ready the College for a stepped reopening, on May 4<sup>th</sup>, I announced the creation of a Jackson College Reintegration Task Force (RTF) whose purpose is to, while retaining a full, virtual-based instructional and operational presence, develop a detailed plan to phase-in ground-based operations, consistent with the easing of pandemic restrictions.

No one can confidently predict the ongoing nature of the virus, let alone the behavioral compliances necessary to mitigate the impact of the virus at the College. Additionally, there are practical and financial realities that must be addressed soon so as to ensure the essential viability of the College's ability to fulfill its mission. Relatedly, it is understandable that continued living in sustained isolation for another 12 – 24 months is untenable, let alone unhealthy for humans.

I am, therefore, left with the conclusion that we must prepare for a phased reintegration of ground-based operations of the College. That said, I do not expect that our college will have any significant level of reopening prior to 01.01.21, or until we learn of the efficacy of a vaccine candidate, which later becomes readily available. RTF planning must also contemplate the vagaries of human behavior, non-compliant human actions, and the possible consequence of COVID-19 appearing on one of campuses, as well as the attendant rising alert levels, and consequent actions required by the College.

Broadly, this committee shall undertake its work immediately, submitting its final recommendation to me, no later than August 1, 2020, and be guided by the following principles:

## Reintegration Task Force Operating Principles:

**Safety:** The safety of our employees, students, and guests must be our highest priority for the consideration of the Task Force. One might ask: ‘*What constitutes safe?*’ While this is a question with which the RTF must grapple, minimally, all recommendations must contemplate the direction from Federal, State and public health authorities. The reintegration plan must also contemplate the unique needs of those who are most at risk and vulnerable to the virus. Beyond this, I have noted some specific safety expectations that the plan must include, presented in the Charge Statement below;

**Communication:** A central component of the ground-based Reintegration Plan is constant communication. Minimally, the Task Force is required to provide an update to the Leadership Council on a weekly basis. In addition, the Task Force Chair will serve as the principle communications conduit to the College President. The President, in turn, will communicate information about the work the Task Force and the progress of the plan’s development with the entire college community;

**Compliance:** An additional component of the ground-based Reintegration Plan must include strict compliance by all parties, whether employee, student, or guest, at any of our instructional sites. To achieve this goal, the plan should include provisions for orientation and training of all persons wishing to enter a campus. Any failure to comply with the restrictions established, so as to avoid a virus incident on a campus, should result in a warning, suspension, or removal from the campus. While all employees will be required to urge compliance when not observed, the College’s Safety & Security department would be the lead department to ensure compliance;

**Continuity:** The recommendations of the plan must not grossly interfere with the ongoing work of the college, to the degree possible. The Task Force must use care in providing a level of financial, instructional, and operational reasonableness and sustainability to its recommendations. This particular goal aims to ensure that the mission of the College is achievable once the plan is deployed;

**Access:** The slow, phased reopening of the College’s ground-based operations must provide for the access for all employees, students and guests in an orderly, safe, and accommodating fashion. Considerations of technology, phased return, and extenuating circumstances, personal safety, and continuing extensive virtual-based instruction and services, must be included in deliberations of the plan’s development;

**Commitment:** In its deliberations, the Task Force must incorporate the compassion, understanding, empathy, responsibilities, legal considerations and due diligence aspects that also include full consideration to our thirteen institutional beliefs, our values, and our Total Commitment to Student Success (TCS<sup>2</sup>); and

**Flexibility:** The present environment is still quite fluid with new information, new science, and new directives appearing, often without warning. Insofar as, the College needed to move to remote learning and operating platform early his spring, public

health, practical experience, or other requirements could result in another disruption to operations at any time. Though it is my every intention to allow the college to return to full ground-based operations, the Task Force must also prepare for multiple scenarios in which the College is disrupted once more. Such scenarios could include, for example, concluding the fall semester prior to the Thanksgiving Holiday, commencing the Winter Semester in April, as well as other structural and scheduling options.

## **Reintegration Task Force Goals:**

1. By virtue of this Charge of the President, and consistent with directives provided by the Michigan Governor, and similar to Executive Order 2020-91, Jackson College shall, prior to resuming ground-based, (i.e., in-person operations), create and implement a COVID-19/pandemic/reintegration preparedness and response plan. After consideration by the College's Leadership Council and consideration and approval by the College President, the plan shall be made available to all employees, students, and guests once the decision for ground-based reintegration has been made. Minimally, and as is more fully defined below, the College shall provide COVID-19 orientation and training to employees that includes, minimally, the following topics: workplace infection-control practices, the proper use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), steps employees, students, and guests must take to notify the College of any symptoms of COVID-19, or a suspected, or confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, and how to report unsafe working conditions to College Administration;
2. Define 'Virus Safe' in practical and understandable terms, which shall be the overriding goal of the Reintegration Plan, for all employees, students, and guests and vulnerable populations;
3. Undertake this work with the understanding that it is a relatively short-term fix and will be eased once either a viable vaccine becomes readily available, or if at least 70-80% of the population has been infected or inoculated (i.e., herd inoculation);
4. Develop a comprehensive ground-based reintegration plan that is based upon science, fact, and the requirements of federal and state laws, as well as existing and new college policies and procedures;
5. Ensure that the ground-based reintegration plan includes not only the continued deployment of virtual-based instruction and operations, but also a phased returning provision. More specifically, a return schedule must contemplate the return of employees, students and guests must be calibrated to the College's Alert Levels, which must also be communicated widely. The plan must minimally contemplate the types of activities that will be undertaken, by schedule (e.g., simulation labs, lecture-based courses, entertainment programming, etc.), and the associated conditions by which these activities can be undertaken;

6. Provide a functioning and financially sustainable means by which all persons who are recalled to college campuses are routinely tested, safe, and able to pursue work and education;
7. Provide options for persons who are defined as autoimmune deficient, above the age of 65, or have other pre-existing health conditions that merit an extended delay of returning to work; and
8. Present the recommendations of the Jackson College RTF to the College President no later than August 1, 2020, for consideration.

### **Jackson College Reintegration Task Force Membership:**

The Jackson College Reintegration Task Force (RTF) membership consists of the following administration, faculty and staff members, indicated below, many of whom volunteered, though a few were designated by the College President.

It is vital to note that members have an important responsibility and expectation to ensure that, while they are engaged in the Task Force work directly, they are also obligated to gather views and opinions of others in their area, and to share that information with the whole of the Task Force. Members are likewise responsible to keep their represented community informed of the progress of the Task Force.

- Cindy Allen, Chair
- Matt Badkte
- Heather Ruttkofsky
- Randy Bentley
- Kelly Crum
- Jennifer Dobbs
- Jeremy Frew
- Dotty Karkheck
- Zak McNitt
- Rachel Nichols
- Darrell Norris
- Kimberly Seaburg
- Alana Tuckey
- Sandra Phelan
- Morgan Phillips
- Jason Valente
- Jeff Whipple

## The Charge:

I now, therefore, charge the Jackson College Reintegration Task Force (RTF) to develop a comprehensive plan that sets priorities, defines protocols, and guides the College president in decision-making regarding the reintegration of employees, students, and community to college facilities and operations. Specifically, I charge the RTF to develop a plan that focuses on the following:

1. An acknowledgement of the inevitability that an employee, student or guest, despite best efforts, may contract the Coronavirus, and presents the subsequent strategies the College will undertake to address it;
2. All persons who are physically on one of the College's instructional sites must adhere to established safety and security protocols. Non-compliance with these safety and security protocol will result in the offender being asked to leave the facility and campus. Minimal requirements include:
  - a. For the present time, students should be encouraged to use virtual-based student services. However, if an in-person visit is essential, students should schedule an appointment. Jackson College could accept walk-ins based on availability, while maintaining physical-distancing protocols, but scheduled appointments should have priority over drop-in customers;
  - b. All campus sites must conduct a daily entry distinct, and physically-distanced screening protocol for employees, students, contractors, suppliers and any other individuals entering the facility. This must include a questionnaire covering symptoms and suspected or confirmed exposure to people with possible COVID-19, together with temperature screening. All students and guests must present a college-issued photo ID (which should always be visibly present - guests must present a photo ID), and disclose the purpose for their visit and to which buildings they intend to enter;
  - c. Each campus site, once open, must create a dedicated, single entry point for the daily screening. There must be separate screening locations for employees, and for students/guests. Provisions should be made to prevent anyone from skipping entry in those dedicated points;
  - d. Non-essential visits to any of our college facilities are prohibited, including tours;
  - e. The constant wearing a visible Jackson College ID , Student ID, and guest ID at all times is required. The picture ID must also include a visible designation of the employee, student, or guest, having been screened for the day (e.g., stamp, sticker, etc.). Persons not wearing an ID or persons wearing an ID, but not in possession of the day's sticker, shall be directed to the entry point for screening. Non-compliance with this requirement will require their departure from campus;

- f. Wearing a mask when within 15' of another person, and always upon entry to buildings and moving throughout the buildings;
  - g. Employees will be required to sanitize their own workspaces and the spaces wherein you are conducting work, upon leaving;
  - h. Notification to Safety & Security when an employee believes that their health has been compromised; and
  - i. The plan must follow CDC, state related requirements, and emerging direction/regulations of the Leadership Council and/or the College President;
3. Safety Orientation and training must be required for all employees, students and guests in order to be at the College. Such orientation must be in advance of arriving on campus and must include signing a waiver of liability. The protocol training and orientation can be made available in print or virtually. The College's legal counsel has suggested that a person can sign that they have received, read and will comply with our protocols, though this must be documented. As part of the orientation, all must be educated as to how the virus spreads, likely symptoms of those infected, necessary steps to take if they are concerned about exposure, as well as training on how to properly take on and off personal protective equipment (PPE);
4. Reorientation of physical spaces must ensure a minimum of a 6', but a preferred 15' of physical distancing of employees, students, and guests. Such planning may include, but is not limited to the use of screening devices;
5. Consideration of adjusting traditional weekly and daily scheduling of work, meals, breaks, bathroom use, course start times, etc. so as to eliminate high person densities.
6. Instructional priorities for restarting must adhere to this schedule, and only advanced upon direction and approval of the College President:
  - 1) Nursing labs & simulations;
  - 2) Allied health labs & simulations;
  - 3) Vocational/technical/professional labs (e.g., welding, manufacturing, etc.);
  - 4) Science labs (e.g., chemistry, biology, science, etc.);
  - 5) Large lecture room instruction (i.e., large volume spaces such as McDivitt Lecture Quad, Walker Community Rooms, etc. so as to insure maximum physical distancing) beginning first with our most vulnerable students;
  - 6) Small lecture room use (still at maximum distancing) again, serving our most at-risk and vulnerable students; and
  - 7) Advancing lecture courses to all students.

In each case, prototyping experience, in a prioritized level must be successful, and scalable before the subsequent level will be pursued.

7. Student Housing opening staged at 40%, then 50%, then 75% and then 100% occupancy. Priority should be given to our most vulnerable students, student athletes, and international students. Full safety & security protocols must be deployed in each housing unit, fully informed by the prototyping conducted currently in CV#1;
8. Meals availability must consider revised scheduling, as well physical distancing and physical layout of tables, and use of portable, take-away meals;
9. Availability of hand sanitizing, antibacterial soap, Kleenex, and PPE for all employees, students, and guests and responsibility for same;
10. Creation of an Emergency Operations budget code so as to track all related expenditures, as well as for future budget planning related COVID-19;
11. Consideration in the plan's development must also be given to longer-term remote service work, by whom, for how long, as well as accountability for the work. Such considerations could also include blended work incorporating a combination of remote and ground-based work so as to ensure adequate physical-distancing requirements;
12. All policy implications should be codified so as to ensure that all necessary policies and procedures are modified and not in conflict with the intentions of the ground-based reintegration plan. A length of time for each modification should also be considered;
13. New classroom and instructional models must also be considered, not only for traditional lab spaces, but also for lecture spaces. Such models must contemplate the instructional utility, the nature of faculty responsibilities, and financially sustainable aspects of each design;
14. Incorporate design thinking principles in each new idea that is proposed, so as to consider broader implications and to study its efficacy. Such creations should be particularly stress-tested to ensure overall viability;
15. Consideration of reopening athletics and student life activities must also be included in the plan. Sports programming must consider implications for scheduling, student eligibility, proximity of play, decision of the NJCAA and MCCA, fan attendance, etc. though the determinations of the aforementioned organizations shall not be construed as the determinations of Jackson College;



16. Creation of a common “dashboard” should be developed to report a daily census of such items as new positive cases, hospitalizations, number of persons tested, BCH, cash flow, etc., and see graphical displays of the history of daily reports. No personally identifiable health information should be included, but this regular information will allow our College to assess in real time any upticks in transmission and learn from their peers;
17. Consideration of the circumstances that might warrant re-closing the campus, as well as the process for an orderly shutdown. A time estimate for completion of the shutdown should be included;
18. Consultation with public health experts, CDC, and applicable laws that help the College to determine whether it is advisable for students to return to the College, or discharged to their home. Guidance should be obtained for the whole of the plan being developed, as it relates to the aforementioned agencies. No determination of any federal, state, or local agency for reopening shall be construed as the automatic reopening of the College to ground-based operations, as that determination is made only by the College President; and
19. Regular, effective, and thorough cleaning and sanitizing practices that are affordable and sustainable throughout the whole of the pandemic, are an essential part of the plan.

## **Timeline:**

Review and approval of the plan created by the Jackson College Reintegration Task Force is expected to take place on the following timeline:

- 05.15.20 Notification of Task Force Members with the President’s Charge;
- 05.25.20 The RTF begins its work
- 07.29.20 Presentation of the Plan to the Leadership Council and President;
- 08.03.20 Review and consideration by the Leadership Council;
- 08.12.20 Review, modification as needed, and approval by the President; and
- 08.17.20 Plan deployment, according to schedule; and
- 08.24.20 Review by the Board of Trustees.

## **Summary:**

The Task Force Chair will confer regularly with the President to discuss and, as necessary, adjust the direction and schedule of the Task Force. The Board of Trustees, which oversees the mission, fiscal integrity, and educational quality of the College, will be kept advised through board meetings and communications by the College President.

In carrying out its charge, the Task Force should work in the best interests of the College as a whole, with pragmatic awareness of the College’s resource constraints, with an abiding knowledge of the College’s institutional capabilities, regional student

profile, as well as a sensitivity to the changing nature of the higher education ecosystem.

As part of their work, Task Force members must engage in broad ecological thinking, considering both the employee and student experience along all axes, including college access, affordability, peer interaction, campus climate and requirements, student supports, the overall physical environment of the college, as well as administrative, instructional and operational services, in order to ensure, to the degree possible, the most optimal conditions possible for student learning and success (TCS<sup>2</sup>). In every case, the level of instructional programming, student, employee, and community supports, currently available in the virtual-based platform, must be retained going forward.

I extend my sincere gratitude, in advance, to the members of the Jackson College Reintegration Task Force for their leadership in this critical endeavor. I also express my appreciation to the members of the Jackson College community for participating, providing input, data, and support to the members of the Task Force, for a process that will chart the College's course during the next 18 months or so.

Thank you!

DJP