Social-Emotional Aspects Workgroup Executive Summary for On-Campus Operation

Introduction
Social and emotional aspects need to be considered for students, as well as faculty and staff, when the University returns to campus. In addition, first-year students will bring a unique set of needs. Social and emotional aspects transcend all areas of the University. It is important to recognize that while some students, faculty, and staff may appear relatively unaffected by the campus closure and ready to resume routines back on campus, others will have been significantly impacted and even traumatized by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic due to deaths of loved ones, domestic violence, financial stress, academic stress, social isolation, family issues, and fear of the unknown including a resurgence of the pandemic, etc. As such, the range of experiences and the level of resilience of each person in the University community will make for a complex social and emotional transition back to campus. The workgroup suggests promoting the term “physical distancing” rather than “social distancing” since it is critical that we promote social connection during this time. The workgroup feels it is important to emphasize that in order to best meet the needs of students, faculty and staff needs also need to be considered and addressed.

Analysis of Data
The workgroup was comprised of University community members with expertise in a range of areas that represent a cross section of university services, including mental health and wellness, academia, labor relations, equity and inclusion, and the social-emotional learning committee. Workgroup members also directly sought out information from health services and wellness education. In addition to expertise and experience gleaned from these sources, responses to a university wide JotForm survey were reviewed, analyzed and discussed; these responses included the views of roughly 873 students, 240 academic faculty, 50 staff, 40 administrative faculty, and 2 managers (in total there were 1205 respondents.) Committee members individually reviewed JotForm data for common themes and collectively discussed the data to determine emergent response trends.

Major Challenges Identified
There are several challenges identified that need to guide planning associated with the social and emotional aspects of returning to on-campus operations. It is important to recognize that fear and anxiety will remain heightened until a vaccine is developed and implemented. The following social-emotional challenges have been identified:

1. Fear and anger associated with getting sick from others on campus who may have COVID-19 (particularly among those with compromised immune systems or who are pregnant and those over the age of 60), as well as fear of infecting others on campus, particularly among individuals living with first-responders and/or medical personnel
2. Anxiety and anger associated with concerns regarding being on campus, as well as abruptly closing again
3. Overwhelmed students and faculty due to future uncertainty, student concerns and unclear answers to questions
4. Fear of xenophobic attacks directed against students, faculty, and staff
5. Interpersonal conflict, behavioral dysregulation, and emotional dysregulation
6. Anxiety about affording tuition if family has suffered economic loss

Solutions
The following are the proposed solutions to mitigate the social and emotional challenges listed above associated with moving back to fully on-campus operations:

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<th>Solutions for On-Campus Operations</th>
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| 1  | • Procure PPE and hand sanitizer in bulk and make available on campus prior to the start of the semester  
• Provide clear protocols regarding physical distancing and use of PPE, along with clear consequences for violations  
• Enhance sanitization of classrooms, offices, SWC, common areas, residence halls, dining halls, etc.  
• Provide clear, consistent communication that addresses policy and protocol changes and enforcement related to contact tracing and potential virus exposure  
• Develop protocols regarding telecommuting requests from faculty and staff, as well as consider a 4-day work week to reduce the number of people on campus and allow for physical distancing  
• Develop protocols regarding on-line instruction requests from students  
• Provide COVID-19 vaccine once it is available |
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| 1. | Ensure timely access to counseling and health services  
Provide health-related information via Wellness Education and health services |
| 2. | Prepare students, faculty, and staff for a potential change to a remote learning environment in the event the campus needs to close again through communication and drills  
Ensure timely access to counseling services  
Leave existing on-line technology in place and accessible to students, faculty, and staff  
Provide a week buffer to restart on-line if the campus needs to close and communicate in advance that this will be the approach  
Encourage students who will be living in residence halls to be mindful of what they are bringing to campus  
Identify support structures that will proactively work with identified students who have no viable off campus living options and/or food insecurity challenges, including potential home-stay options |
| 3. | Provide faculty and staff with advance notice of protocols, policies, and decisions so they can be prepared for student questions  
Prepare faculty to remain in a state of readiness for changes to on-campus plan  
Provide clear communication regarding expectations  
Offer additional training over the summer |
| 4. | Provide University statement on this issue, including a zero-tolerance standpoint, citing the code of conduct and expectations  
Identify support structures that will proactively address this issue on campus (i.e., Equity and Inclusion, cultural centers, student clubs, Student Conduct Office, campus police) |
| 5. | Provide activities for safe interpersonal engagement that foster cohesiveness and sense of community  
Provide student, faculty, and staff with strategies for coping with emotional distress  
Address conflicts and outbursts quickly with a relational trauma-informed focus |
| 6. | Increase promotion of the payment plan  
Extend payment due dates  
Promote services of the offices of Financial Literacy and Financial Aid |

**Compromised or Unmet Services**

- Health services will need to review practices and develop protocols to address student health needs when they present at the SWC with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to mitigate fear and virus transmission

**Immediate Needs**

- Need to procure PPE, temperature scanning and sanitization products to reduce fear and anxiety  
- Need to develop and disseminate protocols to reduce anxiety and confusion  
- Need to reconfigure and equip academic and non-academic areas (i.e., SWC waiting area, dining halls, student center, etc.) to mitigate fear, anxiety, interpersonal conflict, and emotional dysregulation

**Recommendations for On-Campus Operations**

Based on the information collected and reviewed, the following recommendations are made to address the social-emotional aspects of returning to campus for the 2020-2021 academic year (numbers in red correspond to the University’s 2020-2021 Strategic Goals/Objectives):

1. Provide training to the campus community in the areas of trauma-informed care, mindfulness, self-care, technology, emotional health and wellness, services and resources that the University offers, xenophobia, and Title IX 3/1, 3/2

2. Provide protocols for safe physical distancing in all areas, make necessary physical changes to campus, and procure adequate levels of supplies prior to the re-opening of campus 3/4

3. Assess and address staffing needs in support areas (i.e., counseling, health services, disability services, Veteran’s Affairs, learning center, bursar’s office, transfer and articulation, PAS) 2/1, 2/2

4. Provide a visible, “one-stop” staffed location in Student Center, and/or develop an app, for students to access information about on-campus and community-based services to address housing, food, utility, financial, health care, and mental health needs 2/1, 2/2
Introduction
Social and emotional aspects need to be considered for students, as well as faculty and staff, if the University remains in a fully on-line, remote environment. In addition, first-year students will bring a unique set of needs. Social and emotional aspects transcend all areas of the University. It is important to recognize that while some students, and faculty, and staff may appear minimally affected by the campus closure and comfortable with remaining in a remote environment, others have expressed serious concerns about staying in a completely remote environment. Most have been impacted, and some even traumatized, by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic due to deaths of loved ones, domestic violence, financial stress, academic stress, social isolation, family issues, and fear of the unknown, including a resurgence of the pandemic, as well as seriously challenged by the reliance on technology for learning and loss of connection to each other and the campus community. As such, the range of experiences and the level of resilience of each person in the University community will make for a complex social and emotional transition back to campus. The workgroup feels it is important to emphasize that in order to best meet the needs of students, faculty and staff needs also need to be considered and addressed.

Analysis of Data
The workgroup was comprised of University community members with expertise in a range of areas that represent a cross section of university services, including mental health and wellness, academia, labor relations, equity and inclusion, and the social-emotional learning committee. Workgroup members also directly sought out information from health services and wellness education. In addition to expertise and experience gleaned from these sources, responses to a university wide JotForm survey were reviewed, analyzed and discussed; these responses included the views of roughly 873 students, 240 academic faculty, 50 staff, 40 administrative faculty, and 2 managers (in total there were 1205 respondents.) Committee members individually reviewed JotForm data for common themes and collectively discussed the data to determine emergent response trends.

Major Challenges Identified
There are several challenges identified that need to guide planning associated with the social and emotional aspects of continuing in a strictly remote environment. The following delineates these challenges:
1. Anxiety associated with concerns about being able to meet basic needs
2. Anxiety and frustration with technology, as well as inequity of computer devices and internet access
3. Lack of motivation to engage in academics due to technology issues, dissatisfaction with the on-line experience, isolation, loss of a traditional/preferred academic context, disregard for on-line learning
4. Loneliness and disconnection
5. Tension and frustration in balancing home and school demands
6. Frustration navigating and learning different platforms

Solutions
The following are the proposed solutions to mitigate the social and emotional challenges listed above associated with continued remote operation:

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| 1 | • Enhance support services to address financial, housing, and food concerns  
   | • Offer simulated field based/practica/clinical practice courses where possible or permitted  
   | • Provide assistance to students on how to navigate DegreeWorks |
| 2 | • Address identified technology issues before the semester starts (e.g., use of WebEx and TEAMS)  
   | • Offer computer literacy sessions |
| 3 | • Provide training to faculty and staff regarding how to develop more engaging on-line courses and promote the importance of virtual academics to students  
   | • Utilize the Early Alert System, academic advisors and CRM Advise (once launched) to access student support services when needed  
   | • Utilize mentors and coaches from community and/or profession of academic study to assist students who may struggle with remote learning |
| 4 | • Offer more virtual sessions—counseling, programs, and events  
   | • Offer smaller sessions with fewer students |
• Utilize text and social media capabilities to send messages once or twice a week; faculty and staff usage to send alerts to students (with parameters on usage)

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• Develop clear guidelines for professional use of on-line platforms to ensure faculty/staff, as well as student, maintain demeanor and respect privacy
• Develop guidelines to address limits on on-line technology usage (i.e., expectations of the balance between work and personal) commitments and virtual appointments
• Provide tips about time management
• Establish clear and consistent guidelines regarding class times

6
• Set up focus groups with students, staff, and faculty to hear about their concerns about the technology options, as well as how solutions are working
• Explore expanding approved on-line platforms based on focus group feedback—perhaps department chooses a platform that is uniform (i.e., Zoom and Google may be easier to use or more familiar)
• Enforce consistency of instructional platforms approved by the University

Compromised or Unmet Services
• Some students will continue to experience isolation
• Some students will remain in unsafe living arrangements
• Lack of onsite experiences for certification and accreditation
• Inequity of access to technology

Immediate Needs
• Need to provide consistent quality field placements/practica/clinical work hours/lab opportunities to decrease frustration and anger
• Need additional IT trainings and guidelines to decrease anxiety, frustration and lack of motivation
• Need to review the scope of available on-line platforms, issues students/faculty and staff have encountered with WebEx and TEAMS, and consider if additional platforms could be permitted
• Need more consistent enforcement of approved on-line platforms to decrease student frustration
• Need to address inequity regarding who has and does not have access and the associated costs, to increase motivation
• Need to address safety of some students who are in unsafe living situations, as well as some staff/faculty
• Need to address issues of privacy while using on-line technology (e.g., recording or screen shots), as well as balancing and maintaining boundaries and expectations regarding on-line availability and communication to decrease faculty/staff anxiety

Recommendations for Remote Operations
Based on the information collected and reviewed, the following recommendations are made to address the social-emotional aspects of continuing with remote operations for the 2020-2021 academic year (numbers in red correspond to the University’s 2020-2021 Strategic Goals/Objectives):

1. Enhance support services to address financial, housing, and food concerns and equity and access to technology 1/3, 2/1, 3/1

2. Address identified technology issues before the semester starts and offer computer literacy sessions 1/1

3. Set up focus groups with students, faculty, and staff to hear their concerns about the technology options, to inform technology enhancements, including consideration of additional approved on-line platforms

4. Establish protocol to address issues of privacy while using on-line technology (e.g., recording or screen shots), as well as balancing and maintaining boundaries and expectations regarding on-line availability and communication 1/2, 3/1, 3/2

5. Offer additional opportunities for more virtual sessions- counseling, health, programs, events 3/1, 3/2
Social-Emotional Aspects Workgroup Executive Summary for Hybrid Operation

Introduction
Social and emotional aspects need to be considered for students as well as faculty and staff, when the University returns to campus while continuing to offer some aspects in an on-line remote environment. In addition, first-year students will bring a unique set of needs due to their lack of familiarity with the University. Social and emotional aspects transcend all areas of the University. It is important to recognize that while some students, faculty, and staff may appear relatively unaffected by the campus closure and ready to resume routines back on campus, others will have been significantly impacted and some even traumatized by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic due to deaths of loved ones, domestic violence, financial stress, academic stress, social isolation, family issues, and fear of the unknown, including a resurgence of the pandemic, as well as seriously challenged by the reliance on technology for learning. As such, the range of experiences and the level of resilience of each person in the University community will make for a complex social and emotional transition back to campus. The workgroup suggests promoting the term “physical distancing” rather than “social distancing” since it is critical that we promote social connection during this time. The workgroup feels it is important to emphasize that in order to best meet the needs of students, faculty and staff needs must be addressed. Lastly, the workgroup believes that the Hybrid scenario will likely be the most challenging to implement from a social-emotional perspective, as this scenario is the most complicated and will add stress and anxiety.

Analysis of Data
The workgroup was comprised of University community members with expertise in a range of areas that represent a cross section of university services, including mental health and wellness, academia, labor relations, equity and inclusion, and the social-emotional learning committee. Workgroup members also directly sought out information from health services and wellness education. In addition to expertise and experience gleaned from these sources, responses to a university wide JotForm survey were reviewed, analyzed and discussed; these responses included the views of roughly 873 students, 240 academic faculty, 50 staff, 40 administrative faculty, and 2 managers (in total there were 1205 respondents.) Committee members individually reviewed JotForm data for common themes and collectively discussed the data to determine emergent response trends.

Major Challenges Identified
There are several challenges identified that need to guide planning associated with the social and emotional aspects of moving to hybrid operations. The social-emotional challenges identified for both the On-Campus and the Remote models will all be present in a Hybrid scenario. However, there will be additional challenges unique to running facets of both models simultaneously. The following delineates these unique challenges:

1. Grief regarding loss: loss of identity, loss of belonging, loss of the “old normal”
2. Confusion about what is meant by a “hybrid” model since there are several variations
3. Confusion around which student cohorts and campus services will be on-line and which will be on-campus, and how the schedule will be managed
4. Stress associated with managing balance between school/homelife and feeling that these stressors were not validated or recognized

Solutions
The following are the proposed solutions to mitigate the social and emotional challenges listed above associated with Hybrid operations; these solutions are to be considered along with the solutions proposed in the “On-Campus” and “Remote” scenarios:

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| 1 | • Continue residence hall social activities for residential students in a digital format to foster a sense of connection and belonging  
• Provide webinars on self-care, self-compassion, nutrition, etc. that can be viewed on-demand  
• Provide movies or other similar activities in larger spaces where keeping physical distancing protocols would still allow large numbers to participate in an activity.  
• Continue to promote “Blue Devil” spirit via multiple formats |
| 2 | • Define what a hybrid model means at CCSU and communicate to the campus community |
| 3 | • Indicate on student schedules which classes are online and which are on campus |
- Lock in class meeting times and format without the opportunity for change
- Update all service department websites with a link to a single webpage where adjusted operating hours, staff availability, and services offered by all campus offices are posted
- Refer for counseling services through SWC and EAP
- Provide student groups and faculty/staff webinars on self-care, self-compassion, nutrition, time management, etc. that can be viewed on-demand
- Approach discipline issues with compassion and from a relational trauma-informed perspective

Compromised or Unmet Services
- Health services will need to review practices and develop protocols to address student health needs when they present at the SWC with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to mitigate fear
- Some students will remain in unsafe living arrangements
- Inequity of access to technology

Immediate Needs
- Need to procure PPE, temperature scanning and sanitization products to reduce fear and anxiety
- Need to develop and disseminate protocols to reduce anxiety and confusion
- Reconfigure academic and non-academic areas (i.e., SWC waiting area, dining halls, student center, etc.) to mitigate fear, anxiety, interpersonal conflict, and emotional dysregulation
- Need to provide consistent quality field placements/practica/clinical work hours/lab opportunities to decrease frustration and anger
- Need to offer additional IT trainings and guidelines to decrease anxiety, frustration and lack of motivation
- Need to review the scope of available on-line platforms, issues students/faculty and staff have encountered with WebEx and TEAMS, and consider if additional platforms could be permitted
- Need more consistent enforcement of approved on-line platforms to decrease student frustration
- Need to address inequity regarding who has and does not have access and the associated costs, to increase motivation
- Need to address safety of some students who are in unsafe living situations, as well as some staff/faculty
- Need to address Issues of privacy while using on-line technology (e.g., recording or screen shots), as well as balancing and maintaining boundaries and expectations regarding on-line availability and communication to decrease faculty/staff anxiety

Recommendations for Hybrid Operations
Based on the information collected and reviewed, the following recommendations are made to address the social-emotional aspects of Hybrid operations for the 2020-2021 academic year (numbers in red correspond to the University’s 2020-2021 Strategic Goals/Objectives; these recommendations are made in addition to the recommendations offered in the “On-Campus” and “Remote” scenarios:

1. Provide training to the campus community in the areas of trauma-informed care, mindfulness, technology, services and resources that the University offers, xenophobia, and Title IX  3/1, 3/2
2. Provide protocols for safe distancing in all areas, make necessary physical changes to campus, and procure adequate levels of supplies prior to opening of campus  3/4
3. Assess/address staffing needs in support areas (counseling, disability services, Veteran’s Affairs)  2/1, 2/2
4. Provide a visible, “one-stop” staffed location in Student Center or an app for students to access information about on campus and community-based services to address housing, food, utility, financial, health care, and mental health needs 2/1, 2/2
5. Establish a stakeholder committee to coordinate engagement activities on-line and on-campus to foster connection and “Blue Devil” spirit.  1/3, 2/2
6. Work with the Provost, registrar’s office and IT to define the scheduling parameters for the hybrid model and methods of communication to the campus community.  1/3, 1/5, 2/1, 2/2