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From the Provost: Classroom Changes, August 31, 2020

University of Northern Iowa

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University of Northern Iowa

From the Provost: Classroom Changes

Dear UNI Students,

As we start the third week of our semester, we continue to hear positive feedback from faculty and staff about your commitment to and adaptability in classroom and co-curricular activities. One concern that has been raised from both students and faculty is the challenges that contact tracing is causing for your learning experience. As you know, if a student in your class tests positive, we are required by the CDC to quarantine students who sit nearby.

In response to the concerns you've shared with us, and to reduce the likelihood of quarantining, we are instituting additional changes in our classroom arrangements. These changes will include further reducing seating capacities in some rooms, rearranging the seating plans for some classrooms, and moving some classes to new, more spacious rooms. The goal is to reduce the number of students who are sitting within the six foot distance required by the CDC for sending students into quarantine.

The process will unfold this week, and we need everyone to pitch in. Here's how you can help:

- In some classrooms, you may notice new seating arrangements. Faculty will have new seating charts. Please work with the faculty member as they rearrange the seating order in the class.
- Some classes will be moved to larger classroom spaces. Students in those classes will be notified by the registrar. Watch your email over the weekend and into next week and check your class schedule in MyUNIverse regularly for location changes.
- Some faculty may move their teaching to a hybrid format to create more space in the classroom and reduce contact between students. The faculty member will notify you of this change during a class session next week.

These changes are in response to concerns you have raised. We are committed to continuous improvement, and appreciate the constructive input you have shared in this process. We hope that these changes will continue to increase the safety of our teaching and learning spaces.

Please know that in some cases the new seating arrangements may seem counter-intuitive; for instance, we may move students into rows rather than having them sitting diagonally from each other. The new arrangement will reduce the number of students

who you will be sitting in proximity to, and thus reduce your chances of going into quarantine.

If you have other ideas or suggestions, please let us know!

Be well,
Jim
