

**From:** [Hunter, Chip](#)  
**To:** [CCB All Locations Faculty Staff and PhDs](#)  
**Subject:** Keeping our spirits up and ourselves safe in challenging times  
**Date:** Saturday, March 21, 2020 3:01:13 PM

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Carson College Friends,

In ordinary times I might be sending you a “Welcome back from Spring Break! Let’s finish the year strong!” message today. Or I might not be sending any message at all. When it’s business as usual, it occurs to me, I take for granted your commitment and your expertise.

Of course, this isn’t an ordinary time. Most of you took no break. It’s clear that this coronavirus crisis is challenging us in unprecedented ways and these challenges seem likely to grow. It’s hard on you and your loved ones, our college and WSU, our state, and beyond.

Governor Inslee has strongly encouraged us to do all we can to keep from gathering. The more we observe the scientists’ guidelines that will slow down this pandemic, the less likely we are to overwhelm our health care system and our nurses and doctors.

As of today, our governor has not issued an order to stay home, like those in some states. But we are learning that even this level of lockdown is really stressful. If it continues, or intensifies, we’ll need to help one another. Working from home may be nice as an option. It may not be so nice as a requirement. Julie set me up with a quiet working space, but we definitely trip over each other. Over in Seattle my sister-in-law Angie is trying to start a brand new job from home while my delightful ten-year-old niece is out of school – I’m sure our niece is more delightful to us from a distance than she is to her hard-working mom during the day. And both my sister-in law and her daughter, being of Chinese descent, now find themselves on the receiving end of cruel comments and assumptions. Meanwhile we are all worrying about older relatives who won’t follow those darn guidelines!

Many of you have ***much more*** challenging circumstances than mine: with your families, with your friends; living together, living on your own. And you’re under stress not just from the coronavirus but from the drastic shock to our economy. Add that to your empathy for our students and their challenges -- most of you wouldn’t be working for the Carson College if you didn’t care about them. It’s a lot to take on.

Let’s allow an extra dose of grace into our interactions with another. Extend to one another the benefit of the doubt. Extend a (virtual) helping hand. Take time to listen. If there was ever a time to band together it’s now, and yet now is a time we can’t gather together in person. We can be creative. We can look to think of each other, and help each other, in ways we never had to before.

Of course we will do what we can to help our college succeed, and especially to help our students keep moving toward their goals. What you’ve done in just the last ten days has been remarkable. On behalf of our students and their families, thank you. But please also keep in mind your own health and the health of your loved ones. I’m seeing that we can get outside and do it safely (accompanied with appropriate jokes about the strangeness of social-distancing). You can read something that’s not coronavirus-related, or just watch a movie. (Maybe not *Contagion*). Last night Julie and I

watched *Yesterday*. Or maybe set up a virtual coffee or lunch that has nothing to do with work – even if it’s with people from work because you miss them! On Friday night, we did a virtual family happy hour across four U.S. states and Australia (Saturday morning mimosa). It was awkward – and so worth doing.

Take care of yourselves, take care of your families. Let’s all take care of one another, Carson Cougs.

Chip

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