Students, Faculty, and Staff,

As you know, the Governor has announced additional precautions to help stem the spread of the coronavirus. I know these restrictions are challenging and hard, but he has allowed our colleges and universities throughout the state the flexibility and latitude to work with faculty and staff to identify additional in-person classes that can be moved online, and where in-person classes must still occur to deploy even more stringent mitigation strategies.

But I write today to ask that we each continue the hard work of social distancing by following the most updated guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) – which suggests that people should not gather with others from outside their current household in the coming weeks, including for the Thanksgiving holiday. Doing so will keep you safe, keep your families, friends, coworkers, and classmates safe, and will allow all of us to successfully complete this semester.

If you do choose to spend time with people outside of your household, MDH encourages you to get tested before and after – even if you aren’t exhibiting symptoms – since your risk of exposure to the coronavirus during this time of rampant community spread is very high. You can get tested at a Minnesota Department of Health Community Testing Site or by ordering an At-Home Saliva Test.

None of this is easy on any of us. The increased anxiety and stress on each and every one of us is very real. However, as I look back on the amazing work that has been done by students, faculty, staff, and campus and system leaders— to get us to this point, I am inspired. We can do this, if we work together and take care of one another by making the choice to socially distance. We truly are a resilient bunch.

Stay safe, and stay healthy.

Devinder