

HCC to continue remote instruction through spring

HOLYOKE - Holyoke Community College will continue to offer the majority of its classes remotely through the 2021 spring semester, HCC president Christina Royal announced yesterday in a message to students, faculty and staff.

“So much has happened over the course of the last several months,” Royal said. “Sometimes it’s hard to imagine how our world will change from one day to the next. It is difficult to predict what life will look like for HCC months from now; however, we are preparing and planning as best we can for every possible scenario.”

In her message, sent in an email yesterday, Royal said that “out of an abundance of caution,” HCC will continue to operate primarily remotely for

the spring 2021 semester, with the vast majority of courses offered in a remote or hybrid environment.

“We anticipate that no more than 10 percent of courses offered this spring will be held on campus,” she said. “In every case, plans for offering face-to-face courses will be reviewed by the college’s Return to Campus Task Force to ensure that health and safety protocols are in place.”

Royal noted that it was important to make this decision now because registration begins Monday, Nov. 2, for HCC’s two-week January term and the spring 2021 semester. Registration and course materials must be prepared in advance of that date, so students have time to make informed decisions about

their classes.

HCC’s January term, called Wintersession, begins Monday, Jan. 4. The spring 2021 semester begins Monday, Jan. 25. HCC will also be offering flexible spring start dates on Feb. 16 and March 29.

“This is a challenging time,” Royal said, “but our community is meeting it with resilience, creativity, and determination. I appreciate your flexibility and understanding as we navigate this time together. Supporting and inspiring our students remains our top priority today and always.”

Like most colleges, HCC started remote instruction in mid-March after the COVID-19 pandemic forced campus closures. This fall, all HCC classes are

being offered in one of three formats: online, blended remote, and blended face-to-face.

Online courses follow a traditional, asynchronous online model with course-work deadlines established by instructors.

Blended remote courses have both asynchronous online components combined with real-time scheduled class meetings via videoconference platforms such as Zoom.

Blended face-to-face combines blended remote with some in-person instruction on campus. For the most part this format is limited to health science programs that require clinical labs, such as nursing, radiologic technology, veterinary technician and medical assistant.