Dear Students, Parents, Families, Faculty and Staff,

It has been with great disappointment and sadness that we have had to implement the measures taken over the last few days. These actions are being taken, and are being mandated, in order to fulfill our moral obligation to protect our students, faculty and staff, and in addition to protect the communities in which ESF resides. Challenging times come with challenging measures and great personal sacrifice. We recognize that our students are being asked to make a great sacrifice, which is to temporarily move to learning modalities that are not what ESF is about and for which we are known. Our students are not alone as many are and will be making great sacrifices across this country, as we all try to limit the spread and impact of COVID-19. I thank you for making sacrifices and doing so with grace.

I encourage us all to keep our perspective through this situation. All of the ESF community is healthy right now. If any of us develop COVID-19, we are very likely to be minimally impacted, in particular our students. Furthermore, this pandemic will pass and life will return to normal. Students will be able to return to campus and resume the environmentally-focused, experiential, hands-on learning that ESF and its faculty are world renowned for. We just don’t know, at this time, when we will be able to resume normal operations. Our ability to return to normal operations will be determined by our collective actions today and in the coming weeks.

We recognize that our focus has been on students and faculty thus far but we have not forgotten about our outstanding staff who support our students and faculty. Therefore, on Monday, March 16, at 1:30 p.m. we will be hosting a virtual townhall on ESF TV (www.youtube.com/esftv) specific to the needs of our staff and to provide the opportunity for staff to ask questions of myself and ESF’s Chief of Staff about concerns around the COVID-19 pandemic and the College's response.

I encourage you all to enjoy spring break and engage in safe activities that will help you revitalize for completion of the rest of the semester. For my puppy, Bramble and I (pictured above at Hang Glider Launch at Labrador Hollow), that will likely be hiking and mountain biking. Over the coming weeks, I will be in my
office in Bray Hall, with the door open (and with Bramble), feel free to come by, say hi, ask questions or maybe just to enjoy some dog therapy.

Sincerely,
Dave Amberg
Interim President
March 13, 2020

PS: Students, please share this with members of your family.