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David M. Demers

UMS IT CONNECTIONS

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A Call to Action

UMS Colleagues,

Since sharing the last edition of our IT Connections Newsletter, the world has literally changed in front of our eyes. New terms and phrases have infiltrated and permeated the language used to describe our current situation, such as "social distancing", "flatten the curve" and "zoombombing". The COVID-19 Pandemic has forced us all to adjust to a new reality with little time for planning or preparation. I am deeply grateful and extremely proud of the efforts of the entire US:IT team for their response to help support the unprecedented shift in higher education we have seen over the course of this Spring term. This edition of the IT Connections Newsletter is dedicated to highlighting these efforts. From developing new communication channels to keep the University community informed of the rapidly evolving situation to quickly deploying new services to ensure continuity of instruction and business operations to maintaining IT services through a remote work mandate, the coronavirus has forced us all to think differently about how we work and support one another. In some respects, the COVID-19 challenge can be seen as a call to action, a rallying cry that will help us better prepare for the future.

It is my hope and expectation that we will have learned how to improve as an organization through this event and that what we have learned will have long-term impact to the University, particularly as we gear up for a fully online Summer term.

We hope you will find the contents of this edition of the IT Connections Newsletter informative. I'd like to call out a few items that are particularly relevant, including:

- Details of the US:IT Response to COVID-19, including establishing new services such as general VPN access and Remote Computer Labs

- An update of the Brightspace LMS implementation project, including the announcement of the upcoming Virtual Symposium (May 14 & 15; open to all) with opening remarks from Chancellor Malloy and a Keynote address from Desire2Learn CEO John Baker

- Safe Computing tips to help everyone currently working and learning from home

As a proud member of the US:IT Team, we wish you and your families a healthy Summer.

Sincerely,

David M. Demers, Ph.D.,
Chief Information Officer

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- IT Training Resources
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