

Dear Meredith Angels,

I am so happy to see you back and so very proud to see the overwhelming majority of you practicing social distancing, wearing masks, and (I assume) washing your hands frequently. (One spot of heightened vulnerability on campus is photos being taken around the fountain—Please wear masks and take single-person shots.)

By now, you have no doubt heard that UNC-CH has numerous cases of COVID-19 and is going totally online with its undergraduate classes, a shift that was announced Monday and starts today. Other schools throughout the state are reporting clusters of COVID-19 cases as well. But the media reports that it is not really on-campus or classroom behavior that is causing problems with college students; it is what they are doing off-campus and in the residence halls—not wearing masks, not social distancing, partying or hanging out in large groups, and in essence, acting as if COVID-19 does not exist or will not affect them.

Clearly, the message from UNC-CH and other institutions is that it *does* exist and may very well affect them...or you....or all of us. **Please do NOT congregate in parties or residence halls or in your apartment complex or neighborhood. Please wear your masks. Please wash your hands frequently. Please be mindful that alcohol can diminish your capacity to make good judgment calls.**

I urge you to take extra precautions and make them habits as we try to maintain our community's safety with on-campus and off-campus living arrangements. So much of this responsibility resides with each of us. I know this is hard, but it is critically important for the health of us all and for the kind of experience we all want at Meredith.

We love you and value your safety and the hard work you are putting into your college education. We want to be certain you enjoy all the benefits of that hard work throughout the rest of your lives. Thanks for recommitting to making good decisions and having a great year!

President Jo Allen, '80