Dear Faculty Colleagues,

The faculty is now in the third week of delivering instruction remotely to our students while also being displaced from our place of work. In these difficult times, you have stepped up, demonstrated a sense of togetherness and taken on a myriad of challenges as you try to ensure the best possible course experience for our students. Our sincere thanks for your efforts.

Many of you are mastering technologies such as Zoom and Panopto and taking advantage of the resources offered by the Innovation in Learning Center. They report as many as 100 participants on a recent virtual event. There have been faculty members who are discovering the usefulness of a Learning Management System and demonstrating their willingness to embrace change and learn new techniques in order to teach their classes. The ILC reports that faculty have uncovered features (and bugs) in some software they were not aware of, but are coming to light due to the intensive and curiosity-driven applications faculty are discovering for online teaching tools.

Beyond technology, many of you are demonstrating the personal characteristics that make South Alabama a special place. Some of you are scheduling online check-ins with students simply to make sure they are all right, physically and mentally. Other faculty are becoming peer mentors, assisting one another, sharing tips and strategies and building community. Your creativity is showing through in the ways you are reimagining class features like group presentations - not easy to do in an online world, but you are finding workable solutions.

The spring semester will soon draw to a close, but challenges for the institution, society and the country remain. We will get through by staying strong together. #KeepTeachingUSA.

Tony Waldrop, Ph.D.
President

G. David Johnson, Ph.D.
Provost and Senior Vice President