



Dear EMSOP Community:

The new semester is now well underway, and fall (finally) has arrived. I hope that you will join me, along with our faculty and staff, in wishing our new and returning future pharmacists an exciting year filled with new experiences and learning opportunities.

Even though our school is operating virtually we are still U-Knighted. Virtual classes are going strong, and the EMSOP faculty are finding innovative ways to keep our students on track and engaged, without sacrificing the important hands-on learning skills that are a critical component of the program. The University's investment in the new HIPAA compliant version of Zoom is contributing to the success of virtual learning. Not only is this new means of connecting highly useful for instructional purposes, it is supporting general communications, clinical care, and research.

We continue to take part in weekly calls with RBHS and State leadership regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, and our staff is working with key University leadership on the Rutgers restart and return to campus initiatives. In the interim, we've implemented safeguards throughout the building including messaging and signage, mandatory use of masks, hand sanitizing stations in the hallways and inside the elevators, and placing barriers where needed to create and maintain proper social distancing. A testing regime is being conducted on campus for all P4 students prior to the commencement of each of their Advanced Pharmacy Practice rotations.

Our important research efforts continue, and I am pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Renping Zhou as our new Associate Dean for Research. Under Dr. Zhou's leadership, our Return to Research has been a success. In keeping with our safety measures, all returning faculty and other researchers have been tested for COVID prior to their return to the labs, and there have been no reported infections. Just recently, we welcomed our P-3 and P-4 student researchers back.

In addition, my colleagues and I are participating in several important taskforces, including numerous telehealth initiatives that have become more of a reality due to the current pandemic.

Lastly, our staff, students, and faculty are working together to prepare for our upcoming Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) virtual site visit scheduled for October 20th-22nd. And in the coming months, I look forward to sharing information regarding exciting upcoming virtual events.

While there is no doubt that the past few months have prompted us all to change and adapt to new ways of doing things, one thing that has not changed is how deeply proud I am of our students, faculty, and staff and their willingness to explore new ways of teaching, learning, and performing the important work that they do each day.

Wishing you and your families a safe and healthy fall.

Be well,  
Joe

Joseph A. Barone, PharmD, FCCP  
Dean and Professor II