



March 30, 2020

Greetings Clark Atlanta University Community,

Let me take this opportunity to provide you with an update on what Clark Atlanta University is doing to support and provide relief and assistance to our students, faculty, and staff. Your health, safety, and security continue to be my highest priorities as we confront this unprecedented public health crisis.

None of us could have ever imagined that only a few months after entering a new year and a new decade, we would be in this state. We understand the significant financial and academic distractions everyone has experienced due to the COVID-19 crisis both globally and within our Clark Atlanta University community. The economic impact has challenged the University in how we do business. Yet, we need to remain focused to take on the spirit of our historic founders as we “find a way or make one.”

All of you are our PRIORITY!! We know this has created a financial hardship for many of our students, faculty, and staff, and my executive leadership team and members of the COVID-19 Task Force are working 24-7 to be supportive by implementing several solutions to ease some of your burdens. To date, the University has done the following:

- We covered expenses for students who did not have the resources to get home so abruptly.
- We acquired tablet devices to assist students in need who did not have the proper resources to take classes in a remote environment from home. Additionally, we have supported faculty and staff with online instruction training and provided technological equipment to faculty and staff who identified a need.
- We launched a successful fundraising initiative, the CAU Student Emergency Fund, to assist students with travel, technology needs, and other support in helping them through this challenging period. I am thankful to our Board of Trustee members, alumni, and other supporters for embracing our “find a way or make one” mantra in giving from their hearts to assist our most significant asset--our CAU student-scholars.

Clark Atlanta University is dedicated to working with our various institutional partners in consideration of any potential pro-rated refunds for room and board charges and other fees. Additionally, the University will be doing the following in terms of room and board and student refunds:

1. Room and board for the Spring 2020 semester will be reduced by approximately 40% and refunded to eligible students by April 30, 2020.
2. Parking refunds (as well as all mandatory student fees such as student activities, information technology, library services, labs, and athletic fees) will be done on a pro-rated basis.
3. The housing refund will apply to students living in University-owned housing (Beckwith Hall, Beckwith Village, Merner Hall, Pfeiffer Hall, Holmes Hall, and Brawley Hall) as well as CAU Suites and Heritage Commons facilities during the Spring 2020 semester.
4. All Graduation Fees paid by graduating seniors (including those who finished their graduation requirements August 2019 and December 2019) will be refunded by April 30, 2020 (As commencement is being postponed; to be rescheduled).
5. Faculty and staff deductions for on-campus parking will be suspended in future paychecks effective immediately until further notice, and we will continue to explore the best and most responsible ways to support our colleagues through this emergency.

The University will determine refund eligibility on a student-by-student basis as follows:

- If the student's pro-rated balance for room, board, and other fee charges for the Spring Semester are less than the student's total semester outstanding balance, the student is ineligible for a refund. Any excess credit will be refunded to the student.
- As institutional aid is a reduction of charges, it is not refundable. If a student received institutional aid, the pro-rated amount will be withheld from the refund. Any excess credit will be refunded to the student.

We are looking at each student's specific situation, and additional instructions will follow to ensure that your direct deposit account is set up in the Banner student information system to process the refund.

On the academic front, courses for the Spring 2020 semester will continue via remote instruction. There will not be any reductions in tuition.

Additionally, the University has already heard from many students about a desire for a Pass/Fail grading model for the Spring 2020 semester. The Office of the Provost will be sending out a survey later this week to gauge the interest of both undergraduate and graduate students in how they would like to be graded for the Spring 2020 semester. While we fully recognize the disruption the COVID-19 crisis has caused on faculty instruction and student learning, we are mindful that there will likely be various thoughts and opinions received from the survey.

The Office of the Provost and the President will take all feedback received into consideration when making the final decision on grading for the Spring 2020 semester.

We recognize that this is a tense and overwhelming time for our community. We are fortunate to be in a compassionate and accommodating environment rooted in the essence of "culture for service." Please bookmark and refer to our [Coronavirus page](#) for the most up-to-date information about campus services and ongoing developments.

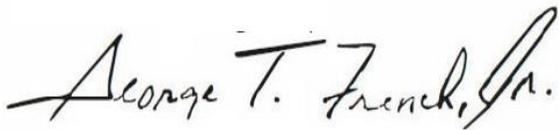
Although this global pandemic has challenged each of us in various ways, I am very grateful for the underlying sense of understanding, benevolence, and care that many within the Panther community have demonstrated to help one another during this catastrophic time.

Thank you for your indulgence, fortitude, thoughtful recommendations, and, most importantly, for your generous support as we work diligently to ensure the safety and well-being of the Clark Atlanta University community while continuing to provide an excellent learning experience that our students expect and deserve.

We are living in trying times, and there will inevitably be other challenges to come. However, despite the odds, I know that we will lift our voices and rise to the occasion and overcome this test together. We are resilient and Panther strong! Let's continue to practice social-distancing for the good of our greater community, and I'd like to encourage everyone to consider how we can help our neighbors, even as we remain concerned and attentive in protecting our own health and safety.

Thank you again for your patience and understanding as we navigate these challenging times.

Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George T. French, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'G'.

George T. French, Jr., Ph.D.  
President