2 August 2020

Dear ECE students,

We hope your summer has been safe and productive, and that you are well. The Fall 2020 semester opens in two weeks amid much uncertainty, but we want to share some things that we hope you will find encouraging.

Your health and well-being are paramount in our heart and mind, and we believe physical and emotional health are essential to a high-quality education. Hundreds of ECE man-hours have been focused this summer toward making the ECE environment as safe as possible for your physical presence with us. We continue to consult with faculty, staff, TAs, students, and administrators to address any concerns, and to seek the most effective and practical ways to promote healthy conditions. Some things you can expect this fall include:

- All persons are required to wear a mask in Broun Hall, unless alone in a private office.

- Multiple teaching modes are being adopted to ensure social distancing. For example, some courses have been divided into smaller sections so that traditional teaching methods can continue. Other courses are being taught in “Hyflex” mode, where half the students are in class one day, while the other half observes a live feed from home. Some courses are being offered entirely online. Tremendous investment in technology to support these different teaching modes continues.

- Laboratory exercises and lab environments are being changed to ensure social distancing, while striving to deliver the best possible lab learning experience. We have procedures to regularly disinfect shared lab equipment (even breadboards).

- Public surfaces, including doorknobs, have been sanitized daily all summer, and that practice will continue this fall.

- Expect to see hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the building. These will be regularly maintained.

- Expect faculty and staff to check in on you periodically, to see if you're OK.

These and other measures are intended to keep all members of the ECE community as safe as possible.

We also believe time together is best for every family, and that is equally true for the AU family, of which you are the most precious part. We look forward to your reunion with us, for many reasons. Laboratory experiences are best when done in-person. Interactions with faculty and your peers are a priceless benefit of the on-campus experience. Navigating the challenges of college education, especially in the face of uncertainties, is best done in a structured environment where people can encourage one another through regular interaction.

We long to see you this fall, and believe your presence here can be experienced safely, and lead to the high quality Auburn education that you expect. On behalf of all faculty, staff, and the entire family, we wish you safe travels as you return to us.

Sincerely,

Dr. John Hung (Graduate Coordinator)
Dr. Stu Wentworth (Undergraduate Coordinator)
Dr. Mark Nelms (Department Chair)