



DOMINICAN SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY & THEOLOGY
AT THE GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION

Office of the President

June 12, 2020

Re: Fall 2020

Dear DSPT Community,

The faculty and staff at DSPT, in collaboration with the leadership of the Western Dominican Province, have been involved in intensive planning as we approach the Fall 2020 semester, considering many factors as we weigh the possibilities for re-opening our campus. With this letter, I would like to inform you of our plans.

We place a very high value on the safety of our DSPT family and are taking every precaution. With the Fall semester approaching, we are looking to the directives and advice of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC has issued specific directives to institutions of higher education which include three levels of risk:

- a. **Lowest Risk:** Completely remote (online) instruction
- b. **More Risk:** Allowing *some* classes on campus while following strict restrictions, safe distancing, wearing masks, sanitizing classrooms after every class, sanitizing bathrooms after every use, sanitizing counter tops, door handles, light switches etc.
- c. **Highest Risk:** *All* instruction offered in-person, in classrooms with an open campus.

It is clear to us that the **More Risk** category would result in a highly unnatural learning environment for DSPT and that it would be nearly impossible for us to provide this hybrid type of education while at the same time ensuring that you are kept safe from infection. The **Highest Risk** category is impossible, which leaves us to choose the **Lowest Risk** category.

In order to ensure the ongoing safety of our DSPT community, we will be moving forward with online instruction, with the exception of the MDiv program which will be offered in a hybrid mode of both in-person and online courses for Fall 2020. We will continue to operate this way until there are benchmarks hit in the pandemic that make it safer for on campus learning. We are looking at ways to engage our students and supporters with co-curricular activities and events online.

We understand that the delivery of our graduate education results in a very different experience when offered through remote instruction. The *mode* is different, but the *content* of the superior education remains the same. We are committed to implementing the best pedagogical practices for online learning as we go forward.

Please keep the DSPT community in your prayers as we navigate these challenging times.

In Christ,

F. Peter Rogers, O.P.



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Fr Peter Rogers, OP, President