
**WESTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF MENNONITE CHURCH USA
ANNUAL ASSEMBLY REPORT
Summer 2020**

COVID-19 action plan – Like most other institutions of learning around the world, in mid-March Hesston College began to face the impact of coronavirus on the campus community. An action plan was launched on March 12 and by March 18 the remainder of the semester was moved online. More than 80% of dorming students moved off campus with about 50 who had legitimate reasons to say finishing out the year from campus. For a campus community focused on interpersonal relationships and hands-on learning, the coronavirus pandemic morphed the student experience into something completely unexpected, yet the community found ways to continue connecting virtually, including a virtual commencement ceremony on May 23.

Several health and safety measures are being implemented for the new 2020-21 year in an effort to keep the campus community safe, minimize potential disruptions to the year and maintain a strong Hesston Experience. Health and safety measures include:

- Dorming students will all have single rooms, and mod sizes will be limited to a maximum of 10 students.
- Expanding online course offerings for international students as acquiring visas for the academic year was difficult.
- Implementing physical distancing practices in the dining hall and other larger settings, and formulating creative on-campus activities as students will have fewer opportunities and likely some fear about traveling off campus.
- Leveraging our small, nimble environment as a foundation for keeping students safe long term and keep the college well-positioned to navigate the pandemic.

Center for Anabaptist Leadership and Learning – Hesston College's Center for Anabaptist Leadership and Learning (CALL) will launch in Fall 2020. CALL is a new ministry program geared towards pastors and other adult learners who desire more training as church leaders. It will be a hybrid of online and in-person learning that seeks to equip leaders for ministry and discipleship in daily life as ambassadors of Jesus Christ. CALL will operate with a variety of educational experiences. The primary experience will be a hybrid online certificate in missional leadership, well-suited for those interested in church leadership education and for pastors with advanced degrees interested in further missional training. The program also offers Weekend College, a short-term non-credit educational opportunity geared towards congregational or other group learning. Weekend College focuses on specific topics, such as Hesston's famous Biblical Literature course, Five-fold Church Leadership or peacemaking and justice. For more information, go to hesston.edu/call.

Aviation launches satellite location in Goshen – Aspiring pilots in northern Indiana can jumpstart their flight training beginning in August 2020. Hesston College Aviation (HCA) was granted FAA approval for a satellite pilot school at the Goshen

Municipal Airport operated in direct partnership venture with New Horizons Aviation (NHA). NHA is co-owned by HCA alumnus and American Airlines captain, Roger Yoder. The initiative authorizes NHA to teach HCA's FAA-approved Private Pilot certificate course to individuals interested in completing their FAA Private Pilot certificate before beginning Hesston's associate or bachelor's degree program on campus.

Student DECA opportunity offered – The new 2020-21 year will include the launch of a collegiate DECA chapter known as the Hesston College Emerging Leadership Team as an extracurricular option with the well-known leadership organization focused on preparing student leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management, and equipping them to lead throughout any career path. DECA is well known for its competitions that allow students to test their experience, skill and knowledge in simulated real-life situations. Hesston students will also have a variety of other resume-building benefits and be eligible for the Hesston College Emerging Leaders Scholarship that can cover from 45 to 65 percent of tuition.

Congregational student aid – Hesston College offers a match grant for scholarships provided by student churches. During the **2019-20 year**, 35 churches contributed \$67,551.44 in student scholarships to 45 recipients. Hesston College matched a total of \$46,097. The average church aid per student was \$1,501 while the average church-and-college aid per student was \$2,526. **If your congregation is interested in providing a scholarship program to support Mennonite higher education, contact the Church Relations Office at 866-437-7866.** Read these full stories and more at www.hesston.edu.

2019-20 campus theme verse – The parable of the mustard seed. Mark 4:30-32, NIV

**Western District Conference
of Mennonite Church USA Connections**

2019-20 Academic Year Students – 6

Congregational Student Aid – 6 congregations provided \$7,492 in tuition assistance for 6 students as of May 31, 2020.

Unified and Designated Giving – We are grateful for the financial support of conference churches to Mennonite colleges and Mennonite Education Agency through Unified and Designated Giving and for personal contributions given from individuals.

Dr. Joseph A. Manickam, President
Phyllis Weaver, Development Officer
Dallas Stutzman, Director of Alumni and Church Relations
Morgan Martin, Admissions Representative