

Holyoke Community College shifts to remote learning for semester

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By **JACQUELYN VOGHEL**
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE — Holyoke Community College has canceled in-person classes for the remainder of the semester, joining the Five Colleges and numerous institutions around the country in conducting classes remotely due to the novel coronavirus.

Last week, the college announced that it would suspend in-person classes for the week after spring break, but it announced Thursday night that this shift to remote learning will remain in place for the rest of the spring semester, “up to and possibly including finals,” according to an email sent to students by HCC President Christina Royal. Remote learning will begin on March 30.

“We know this is the right thing to do because we are committed to providing a safe

environment for all who come to HCC,” Royal said in the email. “But what made this a really hard decision was knowing the impact it would have on this place where people want to be, where our students engage with one another and where they find the resources and support they need.”

Students in programs that require clinical, practicum or other hands-on learning experiences may “need some extra time to complete those required hours and skills,” she wrote. Royal directed students taking labs, music, art and theater courses to this answer as well.

Over the course of spring break, staff have been establishing work plans and office hours to ensure that students have access to resources such as computer labs, the library, tutoring and Thrive, Royal wrote. The college’s WellConnect Student Assistance Pro-



Holyoke Community College's Campus Center.

gram, which offers 24/7 phone and in-person counseling, will also remain open.

Students without access to a computer or Wi-Fi can borrow a Chromebook and Wi-Fi hotspot from the college li-

brary, and DON 142/144 computer labs and other spaces will remain open for limited hours.

Jacquelyn Voghel can be reached at jevoghel@gazettenet.com.