
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR



March 11, 2020

Dear Washington University community,

This is increasingly becoming a rather extraordinary time for us here at Washington University and in the St. Louis region. We've been giving a lot of thought to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in recent days, reflecting on the many ways it's impacting our daily lives and, importantly, how we can best prepare for the days and weeks ahead to keep our community healthy and safe. We're grateful that so far we haven't seen any cases of the virus at Washington University, and that there have been only a small number of confirmed or suspected cases in the region, with no signs at this time of community spread. We're hopeful that this will continue to be the case, but also aware that this situation is changing quickly and we need to be prepared.

In extraordinary times, we must pull together to help one another, to show care and compassion for those who are vulnerable, and to each do our part in service of the greater good. With this sentiment in mind, I'm writing today to enlist your support in our ongoing efforts, and to share some important updates that will have a significant impact on the remainder of the spring semester. These are big steps, but measures that we feel are necessary in order to try to slow down the spread of the virus and reduce the risk to our community and our region.

I want to be up front and say that we do not yet have all the answers to the questions that you likely will have at this point. Our team is continually monitoring the situation and working through plans for managing our operations moving forward. We'll share new information as it becomes available. I remind you to check the university's [COVID-19 information page](#) for updates, and to keep an eye on your email for additional communications. **We also have set up a phone hotline to help answer your**

questions. You can reach that line by calling 314-935-8300 or 888-234-2863 to be connected with someone who can assist you.

Please pay careful attention to the following information.

SPRING BREAK

Spring break for the Danforth Campus will be extended for an additional week and there will be no academic instruction until Monday, March 23. This extension will give us additional time to manage the transition of academic and campus operations, and to continue gathering information to make decisions about how best to keep our community healthy and safe.

Spring break for the Medical Campus will be similarly extended. Details will be provided in the days ahead.

ONLINE INSTRUCTION

Danforth and Medical Campus classes will shift to online instruction. Beginning March 23, there will be no in-person courses taught in the classroom or any other setting until at least April 30, 2020. All classes, including those traditionally held in studios and laboratory settings, will be conducted online. Details will be determined by the schools, and students will receive instructions from their academic deans and faculty before the end of the extended spring break specific to their individual programs and the classes in which they are enrolled. We know that some of our students have limited access to high-quality, high-speed internet services at home. If you have concerns about your internet access, please call 314-935-8300 or 888-234-2863 and listen to the menu options to learn how to access technical support.

Graduate and professional students involved in individual rotations or doing individual research may continue their programs, but must limit travel and group activities consistent with our [other policies](#).

HOUSING

Undergraduate students should complete the remainder of their spring semester coursework off campus at their permanent home residence, in order to reduce the risk of community spread among students. We are requiring undergraduate students who remained in university housing over spring break to leave university residence halls and university apartments for the rest of the spring semester **no later than Sunday, March 15.** We are aware that some students will be unable to return home due to extenuating personal circumstances. All students in university housing will

receive a communication today from Residential Life or Quadrangle Housing with additional information. If you have an on-campus job and are concerned about the loss of income due to the transition to remote learning, please contact Student Financial Services at 314-935-5900 to discuss additional financial support.

Students should not return to campus housing to collect their belongings at this time. The residence halls will be inaccessible during this time. Residential Life will contact you with further instructions for moving items out of your rooms.

Graduate and professional students who are staying in St. Louis should remain off campus and participate in online instruction, unless being on campus is necessary due to the nature of their research or academic program. More information will come from academic deans of each school.

UNIVERSITY EVENTS

The university is evaluating the need for additional restrictions for university events held on and off campus. We continue to monitor the situation, and this may change on short notice. The [policies announced on March 9](#) remain in effect.

UNIVERSITY OPERATIONS

The university will remain open. Faculty, staff, and trainees should continue to report to work as usual, keeping in mind general precautions to remain healthy (don't come to work if you're sick) and our [policy on telecommuting](#).

We know these are major decisions. We know they will cause disruption and inconvenience for many of you. And we regret that the circumstances are requiring us to take such an unusual course of action. I assure you we have not made these decisions lightly. We're doing what we believe is absolutely necessary to protect our community. We can't predict how any of this will turn out, and we won't know until later if the path we're taking now will have been the right course of action. But based on what we know now and where we think this could be headed, we feel that we must err on the side of caution and do all we can to reduce our risk.

So yes, these are extraordinary times. But we're an extraordinary community. And I have no doubt we will weather the days and weeks ahead with competence, grace and compassion for one another. We're a place that puts people first, and I'm confident that one day we'll look back

on this moment and see this as an example of how we put that promise into practice.

Sincerely,

Chancellor Andrew D. Martin

Andrew D.

Martin

CHANCELLOR

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