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Wildlife, Fisheries, & Conservation Biology_Ecology and Environmental Sciences Program_COVID-19 News

Brian J. Olsen
University of Maine

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Matthew Revitt <matthew.revitt@maine.edu>

Fwd: C19 news from an EES perspective

2 messages

Abby Novak <abigayl.novak@maine.edu>
To: Matthew Revitt <matthew.revitt@maine.edu>

Sun, May 17, 2020 at 11:05 AM

An email they sent to EES Students

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Brian Olsen** <brian.olsen@maine.edu>
Date: Fri, Mar 13, 2020 at 9:02 AM
Subject: C19 news from an EES perspective
To: Lindsay Seward <lseward@maine.edu>, Katharine J Ruskin <katharine.ruskin@maine.edu>, Sonja Birthisel <sonja.birthisel@maine.edu>

EES students,

For those of you who haven't met me yet, I'm the interim director of EES (that weird guy talking to Lisa when you need stuff), and I wanted to send out a quick email about all of the information you've been getting from campus regarding Covid-19, and hopefully put things in some context that's more immediately relatable for our situation.

First, I hope we can all appreciate that no one on campus has ever dealt with something exactly like this before, and everyone is trying to do their best to keep the campus community and Maine safe, while we also try to deliver the best educational experience we can. Second, the pace of change on this situation is *fast*, and everything in this email is the best that I understand as of Thursday evening. If you get any information from UMaine that contradicts this email in the future, please follow that.

Third, what I really want you to take away from this email is that we are here for you, and if you have questions, please ask them. We may not know the answers yet (a lot of questions don't even *have* answers yet!), but if we don't know the answers, we can try to find them or make sure that those in charge know that the questions exist and people are asking them.

Here are some of the questions that Lindsay (who is covering for Kate during her parental leave this semester) and I have been getting that we thought you might want to know about too:

- 1. What if I'd rather stay in my dorm room for break and not go home?** You can ask to stay in the dorm, if you have reasons not to go home. But you have to apply. Check out the info on the [housing services webpage](#). If you rent space off campus (or live nearby), you can certainly stay in Orono, if you would like to do that.
- 2. What is happening with my classes, especially my labs, after spring break?** Each class is probably going to be handled slightly differently, and all of your instructors are working hard to figure that out now. They were just told they had to redesign their courses yesterday, so please be patient, and they will be in touch. If they suggest a course format that will not work for you because of your particular situation, please do not hesitate to reach out to them. We are going to work as *hard* as we can to do the *best* we can for your education given the circumstances.
- 3. I am working on campus (as a job or volunteering or doing independent research); is that canceled too?** Not necessarily. As of now, if you have a job or independent research or you volunteer for some faculty member, you may be able to continue doing so, if you are staying in Orono. If you leave for spring break (especially if you leave the state), we are asking students to stay there once they have left. If you are staying around Orono and want to keep working, however, talk to your supervisor and ask if you can still come in to campus. They may have alternative arrangements for you, or you may be able to keep working on campus, unless of course the policy is changed at some point. Campus is not closed, it has just shifted to online and preventing larger groups (like classes) from getting together.

4. Is graduation or the end of the year banquet canceled? Not yet. At least when I wrote this email. Decisions on this will likely be made in the next couple of weeks, once we better understand how things are changing. There is an impromptu graduation get together for seniors on the lawn in front of Fogler at 1:30 pm today before spring break begins, if you want to mark the end of the semester in person with your classmates. But the governor yesterday asked us to avoid groups of more than 250 people, and UMaine is following this rule for at least the next 30 days, so you should take that into account as you make your decision.

5. What is going on with May Term and EES 217? Like graduation, no decisions have been made about this yet. Kate and I are monitoring the situation very closely, and we'll make a decision closer to the end of the semester. If we do get to the point of course signup, I can tell you that your tuition and fees will be refunded if the course is canceled, and we would then figure out another way for you to fulfill this requirement.

I hope this provides some clarity, and I hope you will reach out to me, Lindsay, Lisa or your favorite professor or staff member if you have questions. Also, the campus information line — 207.581.2681 — is staffed around the clock for general guidance questions, and they will transfer you to people who might know the answer. Questions also can be emailed to umaine.alerts@maine.edu.

Stay safe, be well, and keep working hard for the rest of the semester.

-Brian

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Matthew Revitt <matthew.revitt@maine.edu>
To: Abby Novak <abigayl.novak@maine.edu>

Sun, May 17, 2020 at 3:19 PM

Matthew.

[Quoted text hidden]

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Matthew Revitt
Special Collections and Maine Shared Collections Librarian
207-581-2665