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University of Southern Maine

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From: USM President <usm.president@MAINE.EDU>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:46 PM
To: USM-CURRENT-S@LISTS.MAINE.EDU
Subject: USM President's Update on Covid-19 Wednesday, March 11th 3:30PM
Attachments: COVID-19 UMS Statement on Instruction Transition_03-11-2020.SHARE.pdf

Dear USM Community,

Due to the rapidly growing impact of COVID-19 on the global population—including today's declaration of a pandemic by the World Health Organization—we have an updated announcement.

The following is a determination by UMS Chancellor Dannel Malloy and system presidents in a meeting today with the Board of Trustees. Each will be implemented as soon as possible:

1. Effective March 23, 2020, UMS universities will transition all in-class academic instruction to online or other pedagogically appropriate distance modalities that do not require in-class presence for the remainder of the Spring semester. Graduate, clinical, and similarly-situated students should be transitioned to remote work if possible. Individual universities, colleges, and departments should provide all material assistance and accommodation possible through this transition.
2. As part of UMS's public health commitment to reduce exposure and the threat of virus spread, UMS universities will notify on-campus residential students to make plans to depart campus by Sunday, March 22, with personal and educational belongings necessary to complete their semester requirements remotely. Students who have already departed campus will be given opportunities to return to collect necessary belongings at an appropriate time. Residential and meal plan options will be available for those who must remain in or return to their on-campus residence during or from Spring Break due to extenuating personal circumstances, and those students should be advised to prepare for limited on-campus activity and interaction. In order to return to their on-campus residences, students who leave Maine for Spring Break must register their travel plans and will be subject to quarantine or self-isolation measures on their return.
3. UMS universities will remain open and operational, with appropriate measures implemented (such as social distancing) to protect community health according to applicable CDC guidelines and recommendations. Employees will continue to report to work unless instructed otherwise or work-from-home accommodations are developed on a case-by-case basis. Each university should determine appropriate communication of these measures for their campus-based employees.

This decision was made with the understanding that many of our community members will leave southern Maine and return amid this ongoing concern.

In order to strengthen our social isolation strategy, we will be assessing major public spaces on our campuses that are frequently shared with the community at large. As a first step, beginning on March 14, we are limiting access to our libraries and fitness centers to USM students, faculty, and staff.

We will continue to share as much new information as possible, including updates from Provost Jeannine Uzzi and Vice President for Student Affairs David Roussel. Upcoming communications will include detailed logistics and further clarification.

I am sincerely grateful to every member of the USM Community that is rising to this challenge.

--
Dr. Glenn Cummings
President

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