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19 MAR 2020

Update from President Wyke on UMA's efforts regarding COVID-19, March 19th



Dear UMA Community,

In addition to the steps announced Monday, we are now moving to take student support and other services online and asking the majority of our employees to telecommute from home via our distance education network and capabilities.

1. **Spring Break Extended.** The Chancellor has extended Spring Break through Tuesday, March 24th. Classes and other academic activities will resume on Wednesday, March 25th. This will give students, faculty, and staff more time to prepare for the move to online and other distance technologies. The second 7-week session will begin on March 23rd as planned.

2. **Campus & Center Protocols.** UMA remains open for business, but our campuses and centers are now closed to the general public. Reduced staffing also requires us to limit the spaces open to students on our campuses, and our UMA Centers vary in access due to local conditions. More information about which spaces are open to students will be provided by Monday, March 23rd. Everyone is requested to follow the CDC guidelines by practicing social distancing as well as proper hygiene when visiting a campus or center.

3. **Student Services.** Students are encouraged to conduct university business remotely wherever possible and to limit the amount of time they spend on campus or at a Center. To this end, students are encouraged to practice "POETZ" and connect with us via phone, online, email, text, or zoom. Our UMA staff is committed to serving our students and students are strongly encouraged to reach out to us if they need assistance. More information about how to contact student services will be provided by Monday, March 23rd. In the meantime, students should call or email the UMA office needed directly or call our main line at 1-877-UMA-1234 or 621-3000.

4. **Staff Work Assignments.** Each department has developed a staffing plan to allow for telecommuting and basic information on telecommuting has been posted on uma.edu/remote. However, it will not be possible for all employees to telecommute as we will need to maintain a skeletal crew of critical employees to support those teaching, learning and working at a distance. Staff should check with their respective supervisor regarding their assigned duties.

5. **More information.** Information for students, faculty, and staff on how to access services you need is being continuously updated at uma.edu/remote. I will also be scheduling a virtual open forum for all of UMA next week, the date and time will be announced by Monday, March 23rd.

While I expect some issues may arise during the transition, I ask students, faculty, and staff to have patience with us as we work to put services in place to support our students.

Again, I ask that each member of our community observe proper hygiene protocols on campus and off, which include:

- Staying at home if you are sick.
- Washing your hands frequently.
- Not touching your face (eyes, nose, mouth).
- Sneezing/coughing into a tissue and throwing it away.

I also ask that you practice "social distancing" by limiting your contact with others while in public and avoiding large groups.

You can find additional information about what the University of Maine System is doing to prepare our universities at maine.edu/health-advisory. You can also find information specific to UMA's efforts to support students, faculty, and staff at uma.edu/remote. Staying connected is important, so remember that you can [update your contact information](#) or your [alert preferences here](#).

My personal gratitude to each of you for your patience and understanding as we work to address your questions and concerns. Our students, faculty, and staff are demonstrating amazing resilience in this challenging time and I am immensely honored to serve you. Please know our top priorities are to keep each of you safe, while supporting our students in continuing their education.

Sincerely,



Rebecca M. Wyke, Ed.D.
President

COVID-19

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