

March 11, 2020

Dear Spartans:

Yesterday I wrote to you about plans the university was taking to prepare for potential novel coronavirus cases in Michigan. Last night, the state of Michigan confirmed two cases in Wayne and Oakland counties. Early this morning we learned of an individual linked to our campus which the Ingham County Health Department is currently investigating and monitoring. Due to this, we are now taking additional steps to keep our community safe.

Classes at MSU

Effective today at noon, MSU is suspending face-to-face instruction in lectures, seminars and classroom settings and moving coursework to virtual instruction. This suspension of in-person classes will last until Monday, April 20 and we will reevaluate this decision on an ongoing basis, sharing additional updates or modifications as more information becomes available.

We are continuing to work with faculty and staff on laboratory and performance classes, and the university will provide additional guidance in the coming week. This will be an evolving process and I ask for everyone's patience.

During this time period, students doing purely remote work can return to their permanent place of residence and we strongly encourage this because there are advantages for social distancing. But for those not able to go home, we will continue to fully support students in our residence halls and dining facilities. Regardless of where our students are, we encourage them to practice appropriate social distancing and enhanced preventative public health measures such as those we've previously discussed in our communications and on www.msu.edu/coronavirus.

At this time, the university is focused on making the transition to virtual learning opportunities. We will have more communications in the coming days regarding university employees, remote and telecommuting options.

It is our desire to be both proactive in keeping everyone healthy and safe, and also continue the important work of the university. One of the best ways to prevent the spread of any viral disease is to limit contact and transmission of the virus.

Events

The campus will remain open during this period. However, the university is evaluating large events already scheduled, many that are associated with outside groups and organizations. We will provide more information soon and urge everyone to consider the health implications of large gatherings and evaluate the essential nature of the events. We will not be scheduling new events with more than 100 individuals in a confined space during for this time period unless there are special circumstances.

Travel

I want to remind you of the travel decisions announced in yesterday's letter. All university-related international travel has been suspended. This includes new travel as well as any currently booked trips between now and April 20. If you are currently in an international location that is not impacted by a Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advisory, you are not required to return home.

In addition, we are suspending non-essential domestic university travel also until April 20. There will be waivers available, and each situation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by colleges and major administrative units.

We know there are many logistical questions related to these decisions, and we are working to address them. Our priority remains the health and safety of our campus and community members. Your cooperation helps to ensure an appropriate response across our institution to this rapidly changing situation.

The novel coronavirus situation is evolving daily. Providing fully remote learning for so many disparate classes will be an enormous task, and I am very grateful for the faculty, staff and students who are working around the clock to get this done. We won't get everything right the first time, and I appreciate your understanding and continued cooperation in the coming days as the university works through needed changes and modifications to these plans.

Finally, I also want to thank the individuals who are working so hard in so many different areas to keep our community safe.

Please continue visiting www.msu.edu/coronavirus for information. The website is updated frequently. We also have added a toll-free hotline to help address questions from our students, faculty, staff and parents: 888-353-1294.

This is a time for our community to come together, and I remain confident in our ability to navigate this difficult and uncertain period.

Sincerely,

Samuel L. Stanley, Jr., M.D.

President / Michigan State University