

From: UVM Faculty & Staff On Behalf Of Suresh V. Garimella
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:20:40 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: UVMFACULTYSTAFF@LIST.UVM.EDU
Subject: COVID-19 Update



March 11, 2020

Dear UVM community members:

As we face the local, national, and international challenges posed by the coronavirus outbreak (“COVID-19”), our primary focus remains on the well-being of our students, faculty and staff. In addition to monitoring the situation closely, we have continued to consult with health authorities in order to thoughtfully and appropriately refine our response plans.

Exercising an abundance of caution, the university will shift to remote methods of learning starting Wednesday, March 18, for regularly scheduled classes. In-person classes on Monday and Tuesday, March 16 and 17, will be canceled to provide additional opportunity for faculty and staff to complete preparations for moving to remote instruction.

This decisive action reflects our commitment to help slow the spread of the virus, while also promoting the academic progress of our students and protecting the health and safety of our community. Please note that this change does not apply to medical students in the Larner College of Medicine, which is developing a separate action plan centered on their unique needs.

Specific communications will soon be issued by Provost Patty Prelock to the faculty, Dean Cindy Forehand to graduate students and post-doctoral scholars, and Rafael Rodriguez, executive director of Residential Life, to our residential undergraduate students, whom we are encouraging to not return to the residence halls after Spring Break unless they need to live on campus. These messages will include links to more detailed information and resources.

Also, starting Wednesday, March 18, the university will begin implementing other measures to facilitate the social distancing recommended to slow the spread of COVID-19. The university will remain open, but events and gatherings will be limited to 25 attendees or fewer. Wherever possible, remote delivery will be implemented to support any larger meetings.

These measures will remain in effect until further notice. Given the evolving nature of the situation, and our continual reassessment, we are not in a position to address future events, such as Commencement, at this time.

In summary, I am announcing the following measures:

- In-person classes on Monday, March 16 and Tuesday, March 17 will be cancelled.

- Classes will resume on Wednesday, March 18, but will shift to remote methods of instruction.
- The university will remain open and employees will be expected to report to work.
- Graduate students and post-doctoral scholars will be expected to continue their work, as described in the communication they will receive from Dean Forehand.
- Social distancing measures, such as limiting indoor events to 25 attendees or fewer, will go into effect Wednesday, March 18.

While these changes are significant, I want to emphasize the importance of keeping our university open, and continuing our support of critically important services and activities, such as our student support, administrative functions, and research endeavors.

I recognize these measures are unprecedented and may be unsettling. With that in mind, we will continue to provide regular updates and information. The COVID-19 website (go.uvm.edu/covid19) is a resource for the latest policy decisions and other useful information and, starting today, questions may be sent to COVID19@uvm.edu or to our COVID-19 information helpline that will be staffed from 8:30-4:30 daily (and this weekend) until further notice. The helpline number is 802-656-HELP.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. I am grateful for the dedication, teamwork, and care that defines our community.

Suresh V. Garimella
President