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Important Update on COVID-19 Planning and Travel Announcements

1 message

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<announcements@georgetown.edu>

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Reply-To: announcements@georgetown.edu

To: pb919@georgetown.edu

Dear Georgetown University Community,

Since our last university-wide [communication](#) on February 25, the number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases outside of China has continued to rise. While we are not aware of any cases in the Washington, DC, region or on our campuses, the safety of the Georgetown community is our paramount concern, and we are sharing proactive steps the university is taking below. This guidance is subject to change as the situation is rapidly evolving. You can find updates and university resources on our [website](#).

For Students, Faculty and Staff:

As we continue to monitor the situation, **the university is temporarily suspending all university-sponsored or related international travel to any country that is designated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as “Level 3 - Avoid Nonessential Travel” due to coronavirus.** This now includes Italy, in addition to China, South Korea and Iran; you can find a full list on the [CDC website](#). This suspension applies to students, faculty and staff.

Any member of the university community who travels to a country designated as Level 3 by the CDC due to coronavirus – whether the country’s designation occurs before departure or during the trip – **must contact Georgetown’s chief public health officer, Dr. Vince WinklerPrins, at vjw6@georgetown.edu before returning to campus** for medical clearance review. Please be aware you may be subject to self-quarantine restrictions prior to your return.

As a global institution, Georgetown regularly hosts students and scholars from around the world. If you are expecting international guests or visitors, please contact your dean’s office, and follow these [Guidelines for University Visitors, Visiting Groups and Hosts](#).

For Students:

All university-related student international travel that is not credit-bearing or academically necessary is suspended until April 1. This prohibition includes: all non-academic programs (e.g. athletic trips); non-credit-bearing programs (e.g. academic competitions, student organization trips, alternative spring break programs); and other trips or programs that are not academically necessary as part of a student's degree program. Students who were scheduled for this travel will receive an email from their group leader with additional instructions.

Any credit-bearing, university-sponsored student international travel, including study abroad programs, for the remainder of the semester will now be subject to additional review by the university’s [travel review committee](#) to assess program-specific factors and guidance from relevant

sources and government agencies including the [CDC](#). Questions about academic continuity in the event of a program closure should be directed to the relevant dean's office.

For Students, Faculty and Staff Considering Personal Travel:

Due to the fluid situation, **we strongly recommend all members of our community reconsider ANY international travel plans over spring break, Easter break and the coming weeks**, especially to or through areas included in [CDC travel alerts](#). The university remains officially open during spring break, and residence halls are open and available to students. Individuals planning personal international travel do so at their own risk, especially to countries already on the [CDC alert and watch lists](#) and areas or regions with new and/or confirmed COVID-19 cases. Countries may be elevated to the CDC's Level 2 or 3 travel advisories with little warning. Students, faculty and staff should be aware of the associated risk of disruptions to their reentry to the United States or other countries. **Based on the quickly evolving international travel guidance, your return to the United States or to campus may be interrupted by federal or state restrictions.**

If traveling abroad, we strongly suggest that U.S. citizens register travel through the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#), a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. Registration allows you to be easily located by embassy personnel in the event of an emergency.

Students returning from spring break who exhibit signs of illness, such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing, should contact Student Health at 202-687-2200 and immediately note in detail your travel history.

University Planning and Actions:

Since January, Georgetown University has convened regular leadership meetings on this issue, activated an Emergency Response Team and has coordinated closely with DC Health, colleagues at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and higher education partners. We've sent regular updates to the community, all of which are posted on an informational [website](#) along with other resources for our community. We are also:

- Continuing to enhance our [instructional continuity](#) capabilities and overall emergency operations, preparations and planning.
- Continuing a "handwashing/cover your cough" public awareness campaign that has been promoted on campus (you can find awareness campaign materials on the [informational website](#)).
- Enhancing the cleaning of public areas across campus and ensuring that hand sanitizer/wipe stations are available and full in all buildings.

Practice Good Health Hygiene:

Regardless of your travel plans, we should all continue to follow preventive practices recommended by experts. The CDC recommends the following actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases such as COVID-19:

- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean your hands often by washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60%

alcohol. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.

We recognize the impact that these travel restrictions have on our community. The steps outlined above are taken in the best interest of the well-being of our community, and only after significant consultation; we do not take these actions lightly. As the situation is constantly evolving, the university will continue to monitor, adjust and communicate when necessary. You can find university updates, [answers to frequently asked questions](#) and other resources related to coronavirus on the [Georgetown University website](#).

Sincerely,

Robert M. Groves, Provost

Edward B. Heaton, Executive Vice President for Health Sciences & Executive Dean of the School of Medicine

William M. Treanor, Executive Vice President & Dean of the Law Center

Geoffrey S. Chatas, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer