

From: NYU Senior Leadership provost@nyu.edu
Subject: Summary of NYU's Response to the Latest COVID-19-related Developments
Date: March 24, 2020 at 1:24 PM
To:



Memorandum

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To: THE NYU COMMUNITY

From: Katherine Fleming, Provost; Jack Briggs, Vice President, Global Resiliency and Security; Dr. Carlo Ciotoli, Assoc. Vice President for Student Health

Re: Summary of NYU's Response to the Latest COVID-19-related Developments

First, we all hope that as we resume classes remotely following the spring break, you are all safe and well. The coronavirus has put enormous, disruptive burdens on us individually, as members of families and communities, and on institutions such as NYU. We hope you are coping as well as you can. Our thoughts are with you. And we want to offer a particular note of gratitude to those colleagues who provide essential services and are continuing to come to campus each day.

We want to update you on the key developments of the last few days. Central to these was the Governor's "NYS on Pause" order, which seeks to maximize social distancing by directing 100% of employees to work from home, other than those performing essential functions or having a critical need to be at a workplace. NYU is committed to embracing this in order to check the spread of COVID-19.

Academic Affairs

Classes

Yesterday we resumed classes remotely following the spring break.

Resources for this transition have been offered at both the University and school level. For example, last week the University hosted two webinars in which hundreds of faculty participated, and schools have undertaken similar activity. We have redeployed staff in our IT division from a number of offices to supplement the instructional technology office in order to have more people available to support faculty. And we have established resources pages about remote learning -- **such as this one** -- for faculty, too.

We know this has been an extraordinary effort in a short time-frame. We thank all those involved, and in particular both the faculty and the administrative support that made this effort possible.

The number of NYU participants using the principal platform we have recommended for remotely held classes – Zoom – has increased by a factor of nearly 40 compared to a month ago.

Faculty having difficulty conducting classes because of connectivity difficulties should contact their school's educational technology office, or vp_edtech@nyu.edu.

University Facilities Shut

We are aware that some faculty had hoped to conduct their online classes from their offices, classrooms, or other University facilities. Due to the **Governor's order**, faculty will need to conduct their classes from home. We know this is an additional hardship for you amidst all the other turmoil you are confronting. Apart from some individuals whom deans designate as having a critical need to enter a University building, the buildings will be closed.

Non-essential In-Person Research at Washington Square Halted

Last Friday, Stacie Bloom, Vice Provost for Research, sent out a communication **suspending non-essential research**; only critical research -- as designated by the department chair and dean -- will be permitted. We did not do this lightly -- the scholarly enterprise is the heart of the University. However, after considerable -- and agonizing -- deliberation, we determined that this step was in line with the Governor's order, in line with what other universities are doing, and necessary.

Pass/Fail and Course Drop Deadline

In order to relieve some of the pressure that students may be facing as a result of COVID-19 related disruptions, NYU's schools and colleges are offering students greater flexibility in terms of the number and types of courses that may be taken on a pass/fail basis. In addition, the deadline for requesting the pass/fail option, and for withdrawing from courses, has been extended to Reading Day. Please check with the dean's office or the academic advising office within your school for details.

Students

Student Housing

The process of undergraduate students moving out of residence halls is largely complete. The University granted the vast majority of the requests for exceptions that it received, with reasons ranging from an inability to return home (ie, there are no flights to a given country) to a requirement that a student would face a mandated period in a state-run quarantine facility, from mental or physical health issues to significant financial concerns.

Meals will be provided to all students remaining in housing, regardless of their meal plan status. Consistent with City directives, breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be grab-and-go.

Our next area of focus will be to consolidate the remaining students in a smaller number of our residence halls. By doing this, we can ensure that each student will have a single room, which should help check the spread of COVID-19. This consolidation also frees up other residence halls to be available to aid New York State's response to COVID-19 if the need arises.

In light of the impact of the State's most recent order restricting non-essential employees and the need to move rapidly in relocating students, we are assessing our approach to students' belongings left behind and will be communicating about it later this week. Other than those rooms where students packed up their belongings carefully, we will probably not be able to ship them home in the near future; this is because we are no longer permitted to ask staff to come to work for non-essential purposes. However, we will safeguard your possessions, either within the room or by boxing them up and storing them securely and/or sending them at a later date.

Students Workers to be Paid through the End of the Semester

All student workers will receive what would have been their full pay for the semester. They should check with their supervisors about how to proceed. We strongly urge that students enroll in direct deposit. Our plan is to mail checks to those who do not have direct deposit, but if we do not have a correct, up-to-date mailing address, the checks may be delayed or lost. Under the current Executive Order, it will not be feasible to pick up checks in person.

Student Health Center

We want to assure you that the Student Health Center is still here for our students. Most medical and mental health services are now offered virtually (through phone or Zoom). Consistent with CDC-recommended

measures to minimize the spread of the coronavirus, and to protect students and providers, all medical walk-in and mental health drop-in services are closed. As always, NYU's [Wellness Exchange](#) is available 24/7 with phone, chat, and email. To learn more about virtual medical and mental health services, visit nyu.edu/health.

At this point, the Student Health Center is aware of approximately two dozen confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the NYU community; the number includes students, faculty, and administrators, none of whom are in the student housing system, and some of whom are not in the US. In all instances, the proper public health protocols are being followed to reduce contagion in the community.

Admissions

Acceptances from the Regular Decision pool are scheduled to go out next week welcoming the Class of 2024. Details will be forthcoming, but following a record year with more than 85,000 applications for freshman admission, NYU has admitted the most selective class and the most academically talented class in its history. September seems a long way off today; however, NYU expects to start the fall 2020 semester on campus, in-person, and with the normal rhythms of campus life restored.

Concluding Thoughts

Being in separate rooms and separate locations is not in our nature. It is not how we are accustomed to teaching and learning and doing research.

But as separate as we may be, we are all in this together. The adversities and isolation we contend with today will help save the lives of our fellow New Yorkers, including among our own community.

Until we can all be together again in labs and classrooms and libraries and offices, thank you for your dedication, your perseverance, and your graciousness.

