

From: [Mokwa, Robert](#)
Subject: Guidance on COVID-19 questions
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MONTANA
STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the Provost

Dear Colleagues,

We understand you are receiving questions about COVID-19 from students, faculty and staff requesting guidance on travel, campus preparation and other matters related to news associated with the virus.

With this situation, as with every circumstance involving Montana State University, we are keeping the safety of our students, faculty and staff first in our mind.

Before you respond to student questions, I ask you to first check MSU's COVID-19 webpage and confirm with the Provost's Office before giving direction. This is a fluid situation that requires us to be unified in our communications and actions. I need your assistance and support as we work together to fulfill our educational mission while we keep our MSU community safe.

Earlier this week, we announced the formation of an MSU Incident Management Team for COVID-19. This team is meeting frequently and will communicate decisions and relevant information using the [MSU COVID-19 webpage](#) and campus-wide emails.

As of today, some of the most important topics and decisions being considered that you need to be aware of, include:

1. Contingency plans for teaching on-line, if it becomes necessary. I launched an emergency task force to develop an actionable plan for assisting MSU faculty and students with tools, technology and on-the-spot training that will help us continue coursework using online technology, if it becomes necessary to suspend residential, face-to-face courses. While at this time we have no indication that such a response will be required, we need to prepare now to ensure our students are afforded every opportunity to complete their spring semester academic coursework, in the event public health concerns preclude normal university academic operations. I will provide you with additional specific information next week. The MSU COVID-19 web page will include updates from this task force including a list of the task force members. Please reach out to any of them if you have input.
2. All MSU and Montana University System sponsored or affiliated travel to China, Iran, Italy and South Korea is cancelled until further notice.

3. All MSU and Montana University System sponsored or affiliated travel to countries or areas with a Level 2 Travel Advisory or higher (from either the U.S. State Department or the CDC) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. We will be providing additional information as it becomes available and as the situation evolves.

4. Effective today, MSU travelers (students, faculty and staff) returning from countries where the CDC has identified widespread sustained transmission, are urged to stay home for 14 days and self-monitor for symptoms. This precaution applies to all countries designated with a Level 3 or higher travel health notice including, as of today, China, Iran, Italy and South Korea.

5. The hosting of the NCUR conference continues to be monitored on a daily basis. As of this time, plans for hosting the conference on March 24-26 remain in effect.

Working together, we will ensure everyone receives clear and consistent information based on our cooperative decision-making efforts and the best medical advice available through the Centers for Disease Control, the Gallatin City-County Health Department and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. In addition to the MSU COVID-19, webpage, the [Montana Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education has a COVID-19 webpage](#) that provides additional information to many common questions facing the Montana University System campuses. I thank you for your collaboration on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Robert Mokwa
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