

Important Updates Regarding Coronavirus Protocols

Message from Provost Website (3/10/2020):

The University is providing significantly updated travel guidance to our community due to the continued spread of COVID-19. **The guidance dated March 9, 2020 is in effect until April 30, 2020, at which time travel guidelines will be reevaluated.**

Update from Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

3/11/2020 12:16 PM

Dear University Community,

As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads more rapidly in the U.S., USM is taking action and offering guidance to keep our University community as safe as possible. This message directs you to the latest information on USM's protocols. The [Provost's website](#) remains your primary source for information about the University's response and now includes health and instruction protocols as well as links to employment FAQs and a student spring break safety message.

Please review complete details on the Office of the Provost's website at usm.edu/provost/coronavirus.

Steven R. Moser, Ph.D.

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Update from Provost Website:

As part of USM's preparations for the possible onset of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Mississippi, faculty, staff and students will be required to follow protocols (listed below) which are intended to help prevent the spread or transmission of the virus. The following protocols are based on current guidelines from CDC and other health organizations.

The University **is not** currently suspending classes, services or closing offices. Residence halls, dining facilities, libraries, labs, and study spaces will remain open. Students can continue to access computers in libraries and other labs throughout our campuses.

Faculty and Staff Health Protocols

- Employees who have a fever of 100.4 F or greater along with cough or shortness of breath will be required to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.

- Employees who appear to have a fever of 100.4 F or greater along with cough or shortness of breath upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and be sent home immediately.
- If symptoms become severe in nature, we encourage you to see your regular medical provider.
- Instructors should notify their School Director and College Dean of the illness.
- Non-academic employees should notify their supervisors.

Student Health Protocols

- Students who live off campus and have a fever of 100.4 F or greater along with cough or shortness of breath should contact the Moffitt Health Center. Students may be required to stay off campus until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants).
- Students who live on campus and have a fever of 100.4 F or greater along with cough or shortness of breath should contact the Moffitt Health Center. Students may be required to move to an isolated room on campus until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants).
- Individuals who appear to have a fever of 100.4 F or greater along with cough or shortness of breath upon arrival to campus or become sick during the day should be separated from others and be sent home immediately.

Instructor of Record Protocols

- **Holding Classes:** In-person classes should continue to be held until advised otherwise. Additionally, instructors are asked, whenever feasible, to offer an online option for their course material. Additional guidance is available online at the [Office of the Provost's Keep Teaching site](#) for faculty. Instructors who are unwell are asked, as is standard practice, to make arrangements to have their course covered.
- **Attendance Requirements:** We are asking instructors to consider suspending any attendance requirements until further notice.
- **Office Hours:** We are asking instructors to consider conducting office hours via phone or video conference (e.g., through Skype or Canvas).
- **Exams:** Instructors should accommodate students who are ill.
- **Labs:** Labs should remain open and routine safety measures should continue to be adhered to.
- **Course Activities and Physical Contact:** We recommend instructors consider a no physical contact policy for course activities (e.g., for courses in disciplines such as theatre, dance, music, nursing, recreation, etc.). Additionally, staff, instructors, and students are strongly encouraged to properly clean contact surfaces and equipment before and after use.

COVID-19 Employment FAQs

- University Human Resources has provided [COVID-19 FAQs for employees](#).

Spring Break Student Safety Message

- [Message to Students from Vice President for Student Affairs regarding Spring Break \(sent 3/10/20\)](#)