

TO:
Faculty, Staff and Students

FROM:
Jere W. Morehead, President
S. Jack Hu, Provost and Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration
Ryan A. Nesbit, Vice President for Finance and Administration

RE:
Update on Campus Operations

DATE:
March 17, 2020

As you are aware, last night we informed the campus community that the University of Georgia was moving to online instruction for all courses for the remainder of the Spring semester, effective March 30, 2020. This memo provides further details on operational adjustments that affect our faculty, staff, and students.

Our top priority in these uncertain times remains the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of our campus community. Our ongoing efforts to maintain essential campus services and provide for continuity of instruction are in keeping with that primary concern. We are grateful for your cooperation and understanding as together, we work diligently to deliver services in a manner that protects all of the members of our community.

Please read this memo in its entirety, and be sure to consult [UGA's coronavirus website](#) for updates.

ON-CAMPUS OPERATIONS

Our on-campus operations are being reduced to a minimum to allow for the following:

- Care for the few students who must remain in our on-campus residence halls because they have no other option for housing;
- Limited dining options to support those students who are remaining on campus;
- University Police to provide for campus security and safety;
- IT support to maintain our ERP systems, core academic support systems, core business functions, email, and other systems needed to support our operational continuity;
- Access to loaned IT devices and WiFi for students who may not otherwise have the tools to do their online coursework; and
- Essential personnel needed to maintain core campus infrastructure and core institutional functions at minimal levels including, but not limited to, research facilities, lab safety, and animal care.

HOUSING

A comprehensive plan has been developed to allow residence hall students to return to campus and move out in an orderly fashion. This staggered schedule supports social distancing. The plan is being communicated to students this evening, and a strict schedule of appointments will be maintained.

STUDENT DINING

Dining services are being consolidated into a single venue, Bolton Hall, which is offering take-out service for students who remain in the residence halls. A plan for delivery service also is in place, if needed.

STUDENT FEES

University leadership is working diligently with the University System to review and develop a plan for prorated refunds of fees for on-campus housing as well as for those who have purchased meal plans. This review also includes other fees. Students will be notified once these plans have been finalized.

STUDENT ADVISING

It is very important that advising appointments continue as scheduled in order for students to be able to register for Fall classes. Advising for summer sessions, including Maymester, has already been completed. However, students can continue to register (or change their schedules) for summer sessions in Athena. All advising appointments are being handled remotely.

Students—if you already have an appointment scheduled during the next two weeks, keep it, and check your UGA email for instructions from your advisor on how you will be advised remotely. If you do not yet have an appointment, use SAGE to schedule one as soon as possible. If you have any questions or issues, do not hesitate to email your advisor directly—although response times may be delayed, UGA academic advisors are committed to supporting you during this time and will regularly provide information on [Advising at a Distance](#) during this period.

STUDY ABROAD

All Maymester Study Abroad programs have been canceled, and participating students and faculty have been notified. We will continue to monitor the evolving situation and provide an update on programs to be conducted in the United States, as well as the status of Summer programs, when warranted.

CLASS INSTRUCTION

Faculty were provided with instructions for continuing delivery of instruction online earlier today in a detailed memo from the Provost and Vice President for Instruction. Faculty members should use this week and next to transition their courses to an online format so they are ready when classes resume on March 30. Faculty and other instructors are encouraged to visit the [Teaching and Learning continuity website](#), which is frequently being updated.

We anticipate completing the semester as originally scheduled on May 6, 2020. However, in an effort to assist students, the deadline for withdrawal from a course has been extended to April 17, 2020. If a student withdraws before that date, the student will receive a grade of W. Per UGA policy, no refund will be available for a reduction in hours due to individual course withdrawals that occur after the initial drop/add period.

It is essential that our technology to support online learning is working properly; toward that end, delivery of asynchronous instruction is encouraged. We also realize that accessing a device or adequate internet technology could be a challenge for some of our students. The University will work to assist students—when possible and when consistent with overall public health guidelines—in providing access. Faculty must keep in mind the challenges that some students will face in terms of easy and reliable high-speed internet service.

RESEARCH

UGA must take additional steps to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, similar to actions taken by peer institutions. Hence, all routine research not conducted remotely from UGA campuses should wind down and come to a stop as soon as possible, ideally by 5 pm Friday, March 20 (research on COVID-19 may be exempted; contact Vice President David Lee at dclee@uga.edu).

Only essential activities should continue beyond the deadline.

Essential activities include ensuring the viability of living organisms and maintaining unique reagents and essential equipment. Investigators should immediately develop plans to ramp down their research and communicate these plans to everyone on their research teams. In developing these plans, faculty and all other

research personnel are encouraged to view the COVID-19: [Research Operations at the University of Georgia FAQ](#), which is updated as new information becomes available.

Principal Investigators are encouraged to reach out to their local grants administrators or [Sponsored Projects Administration](#) with grant-related questions. SPA will be providing information soon from funding agencies about continuing to pay personnel on grants during COVID-19 related work disruptions. SPA will continue to submit proposals prior to agency deadlines and will conduct other business, but some delays should be anticipated.

PUBLIC SERVICE AND OUTREACH

Due to the disruption of COVID-19, many of the programs and services of the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach have been impacted and/or canceled. For information on the status of specific Public Service and Outreach units or programs, please contact Jennifer Frum, Vice President for Public Service and Outreach (jfrum@uga.edu), or Gwen Moss, Assistant Vice President for Fiscal Affairs (gmoss@uga.edu).

CAMPUS SERVICES

Many of our campus operations are closed or have moved to online operations. For example, the Main Library is closed to the public with staff-only access and by-appointment access to the computer lab for students. For a full list of the status of the various libraries on campus, visit libs.uga.edu. Other examples include the Georgia Museum of Art, which is closed but has information online about exhibits; the Bookstore, which has moved to online sales; and the Golf Course, which is closed. Weddings in various campus venues have been canceled or postponed.

Parking Services is continuing to follow its Spring Break schedule. The focus is on monitoring ADA spaces as well as fire and life safety issues to provide a safe environment. Our parking team is monitoring lots to ensure permit holders have adequate space in their designated lots, while providing flexible parking across campus for those individuals who are required to be on campus. If space is available, existing permit holders can park in lots and decks outside of their assigned lots without penalty.

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

In keeping with directives from the state and federal government to suspend large events and promote social distancing, we have been instructed by the University System of Georgia that **all public events for the remainder of the Spring semester have been canceled**. This list includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Intercollegiate Athletics
- Performances
- Student Activities
- Honors Week Activities
- **Commencement***

*We realize that the cancellation of many of these activities is extremely disappointing—particularly the cancellation of Spring Commencement on Friday, May 8, 2020. Therefore, we are exploring other ways to honor our graduates and will communicate when those plans are known. These decisions are not made lightly, but with the best interests of our campus community and our students' families and loved ones in mind.

Students will still be able to graduate, consistent with academic standards, but the actual ceremonies for both undergraduate and graduate commencement will be canceled for May 8, 2020.

Online versions of other events also are being developed.

HUMAN RESOURCES

As of Monday, March 16, 2020, the University has executed its Business Continuity Plan. The vast majority of faculty and staff members are working via telecommuting resources and other remote work arrangements. Those who provide essential services to sustain service, safety, and compliance are working on flexible schedules that reduce the number of employees physically on campus.

Supervisors also have been encouraged to be as flexible as possible with work from home assignments including, but not limited to:

- For those employees with specific technical skills, provide opportunities to brush up on specific job requirements or take an online certification course for your area of expertise.
- Professional development – find specific online classes related to the department, TedTalks, YouTube topics and have the employee watch and then provide a short essay about how it applies to their job duties and responsibilities.
- Assign a special project(s). These might be things that have been “on the radar” but have not yet had time or resources assigned due to other priorities. For example, developing a new function-specific training program for your department to help cross-train staff.
- Review departmental policies to make sure they are current.
- Develop or review standard operating procedures and identify opportunities for process improvements.
- Continue conducting regular online work.
- Complete annual review if not completed at this time.

We will continue to work with the University System of Georgia to develop plans that are tailored to meet the specific needs of our institution. Further decisions that affect the continuity of our operations will be provided to you via updates as the situation evolves.

In closing, we would remind you that each of us has an important responsibility in managing this public health crisis. We urge you to follow CDC guidelines for personal health and safety, which can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>.