

March 11, 2020

Students:

Over the last few weeks we have watched as the COVID-19 outbreak has come to a number of communities across the country and now, as expected, to the Middle Tennessee area. As we have anticipated this having a presence in our area, a leadership team of professionals from across campus has been meeting continuously for weeks to monitor, manage and prepare for this moment. **To date, no confirmed cases related to COVID-19 have been reported on campus nor have significant risks been identified.** Following are several updates that I want to share with you.

Classes suspended for Friday, March 13

As we look toward spring break next week, **we have decided to suspend classes for Friday, March 13, to give our community an opportunity to be better prepared for the possibility of operating in an online format should a circumstance arise where that is necessary.**

This also allows our students to start their spring break a day early THIS Friday, March 13.

Dorms will close on Saturday morning as originally scheduled. It also gives faculty and staff a day for professional training and preparedness on the latest tools to work remotely should that be a future circumstance.

Spring break travel reminder

As a reminder, as you are preparing to travel to various destinations during spring break, please note that all school-sponsored international travel is fully restricted until further notice to any country or area that meets **any** of the following criteria:

1. Has a rating by the CDC at a Level 2 or higher, or
2. Has a rating by the U.S. Department of State at a Level 3 or higher, or
3. Is restricting or banning travel.

Find more [here](#) about travel guidelines and other important related information. ***Per University policy and until further notice, any student or employee who independently visits a location that meets any of these criteria or who travels via a cruise to any location is restricted from campus for a 14-day isolation period.*** If this situation applies to you, students should inform Dr. **Randy Bouldin**, vice provost for academics, at randy.bouldin@lipscomb.edu. Please note the addition in this list of any cruise travel.

What to do if you are sick

Information shared by Lipscomb University Health Services yesterday about steps to take if you are sick or feel like you are getting sick may be found [here](#). In addition, please feel free to reach out to LUHS at healthservices@lipscomb.edu or 615.966.6304 with questions or concerns. For urgent needs after hours, students may contact their residence hall directors or the Lipscomb Safety and Security at 615.966.7600 and they will obtain medical assistance for you.

Information resources

As a reminder, we have developed a special resource page for the Lipscomb community on the university website — lipscomb.edu/covid19 — that I encourage you to check often as a source of information on preventive care, travel restrictions, what to do if you are sick and other key information. For the latest news and updates for the Lipscomb community [click here](#). We will post frequent updates that may be helpful to you.

High Risk Groups Request for Accommodations

Students who have a documented medical need or who may fall in high risk categories per the CDC due to age or pre-existing health issues, such as heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, autoimmune disease, and would like to request classroom accommodations, should contact **Leslie Beach** in the Office of ACCESSability at leslie.beach@lipscomb.edu. You can review the CDC guidance for high risk groups and special populations [here](#). Ms. Beach will work with students on accommodations to help them meet their educational needs.

The Lipscomb Response to COVID-19

Over the last few days, you have heard of some institutions in Nashville and across the country who are altering schedules and changing educational delivery formats. Every institution has its own community with its own unique circumstances and considerations and it is incumbent for each institution to make decisions that are in the best interest of and in the context for that organization. As you evaluate the actions and decisions that we are making in the management of this situation, I assure you that we are moving forward in an assertive way to manage the health risk and to manage the educational process.

I wanted to share with you the latest news and information about how the Lipscomb community is preparing and responding. For several weeks, many of your colleagues have gathered to monitor, contemplate and plan for the emergence of COVID-19 in our area or region. This interdisciplinary group includes members of the executive leadership team and colleagues from health science, student life, risk management, communications, medical center, service operations, academics, finance and the Academy. Here are just a few of the areas this team has focused on in the last few days:

- Meeting frequently and now daily are members of the executive leadership team plus representatives from health sciences, risk management, communication and student life.
- Thoroughly disinfecting on a daily basis the high-touch, high-traffic areas using state-of-the-art disinfecting equipment.
- Replenishing supplies of both medical items and cleaning essentials to ensure we have the necessary items needed and that they are readily available.
- Increasing in-clinic medical staff training and adding resources to better serve our students, such as a triage nurse phone line.
- Communicating to employees and students regarding the situation and updates about University policies and procedures.
- Creating the COVID-19 website — lipscomb.edu/covid19 — to provide necessary information to employees, students and parents.

- Creating detailed phases of a response plan that increases our activities as the virus situation escalates around us — plans that no one hopes we ever have to use.

These dedicated employees have represented you well in this unique and somewhat exhausting situation and I am extremely grateful for their energy, expertise and professionalism exhibited in this process.

As we noted above, the circumstances around this situation are fluid and changing quickly. We are taking prudent steps on Friday to prepare the faculty in the event that online learning is a needed option. In that light, we encourage you to take with you all academic materials and essential items so you are prepared in the event the situation changes over spring break. Please visit our web resource for the latest news and updates during the break.

While we never know how a school year will unfold and this moment feels overwhelming at times, we know for certain that God is in control and working through this. We also continue to pray for those in our area who were impacted by last week's tornadoes, for those who are impacted by the coronavirus and for the safety of everyone during spring break.

Blessings,
Randy Lowry, President