

Dear UNE Community,

The UNE coronavirus response team continues to meet daily to discuss the ongoing COVID-19 novel coronavirus outbreak. We are considering the impact of this situation on the health and safety of our students, faculty, and professional staff, as well as the implications it could have on a variety of regular University activities.

We are currently reviewing all of our general emergency preparedness protocols to ensure that we are as prepared as possible to keep our students, faculty, and professional staff safe in the event that this outbreak reaches Maine or our campuses here.

We would like to take this opportunity to provide you with information regarding three key University activities that are impacted by the outbreak: service in clinical settings, University-sponsored travel, and participation in study abroad/travel course programs.

Clinical Settings

- All students, faculty, and professional staff who work in clinical settings should be advised that those *clinical sites, such as hospitals, reserve the right to prevent you from coming to work and to require that you self-isolate for 14 days if they determine you may have been exposed to the virus.* Some of the UNE affiliated clinical sites have already exercised this right.

University-Sponsored Travel

- As many other universities across the United States have done in recent days, UNE has made the decision to *suspend all University-sponsored international travel, effective immediately. All other University-sponsored travel will require that the Approval To Travel forms be resubmitted to the Business Office, if those who are scheduled to travel still wish to do so.* Resubmitted requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. These procedures will remain in place until further notice. We are aware that this change in operations may be disruptive, but the safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, and professional staff must be our highest concern.
- We recognize that there may be individuals who no longer want to participate in a travel experience. We want to ensure that no one feels compelled to travel if not comfortable doing so. If you are concerned about upcoming University-related travel, we encourage students to speak with Dean of Students Jennifer DeBurro, and we encourage faculty and professional staff to speak with Provost Joshua Hamilton. Appropriate cancellations will be arranged, and the University will assist you with any repercussions that arise as the result of your cancellation.

Study Abroad

- At this time, the *University is not recalling any of our students* who are currently studying abroad. However, please note that, as a form of University-sponsored travel, *upcoming travel courses will be cancelled until further notice.*
- We are closely monitoring the number of cases of coronavirus infection across the globe and are staying abreast of all travel advisories in the countries where our students are currently studying. We have advised our students who are currently studying abroad not to travel to Italy, or the other countries designated as a Level 3 risk, where the CDC has advised avoiding nonessential travel.

In addition to travel considerations, the University has also increased sanitation efforts, including more frequent contact surface cleaning. We have placed additional signage around campus reminding people to wash their hands frequently, which is the best way to protect yourself from exposure to illness. As you should do for any infectious illness such as a cold or the flu, if you have symptoms of illness you should refrain from coming to class or work and seek medical assistance if warranted.

We understand that the constant influx of information about this disease and the rapidly changing global picture can be unsettling. Please know that the University is taking all reasonable precautions to continue normal operations while also preparing to keep our community safe. We will continue to update you on a regular basis, and we encourage you to check the web page found here for additional information.

We also encourage you to keep in mind that despite growing concern, it is imperative that we rely on factual information and resist the urge to stigmatize others. Students and colleagues who may have traveled to or who are from affected regions may feel particularly vulnerable at this time, and we ask that you show care and concern to them as valued members of our community.

Sincerely,

Joshua Hamilton
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Nicole Trufant
Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration