Communication February 11, 2020

Dear Mason Patriots,

The university continues to monitor the coronavirus outbreak and is following the recommendations of the Virginia Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC continues to stress general precautions to prevent the spread of communicable diseases: wash your hands often, cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, eat healthy foods, get enough sleep, decrease stress, and limit or eliminate the use of tobacco products. Anyone exhibiting symptoms of a communicable disease is advised to remain out of class, away from work, and avoid others for the duration of the illness and for 24 hours after symptoms abate. For more information about communicable disease response procedures at Mason, please see the Communicable Disease Guide.

We recognize that this situation may cause concern or anxiety, in particular for those whose families and friends in China and around the world are directly impacted. We will continue to provide support and guidance to the Mason community as this situation develops. Student Health Services shares updated information via their website, shs.gmu.edu, and additional information may be found on the ready.gmu.edu advisories website. We encourage you to go to these sources for updated information. In addition, students experiencing anxiety may seek support through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). For more information, please contact 703-993-2380 or visit caps.gmu.edu. Employees have access to support resources through Human Resources and Payroll available here.

Travel Restrictions: The United States has implemented restrictions on international travel to China; however, new restrictions may be put in place if this outbreak continues. Students, faculty, and staff planning international travel to East Asian and Southeast Asian countries should review the CDC’s guidance for travelers and current restrictions found here. Please take the time to understand these regulations before travel to ensure that you are not prevented from returning to the U.S. or quarantined for 14 days upon your return.

University Travel: Students and employees departing on university related or university sponsored travel to China and other Asian countries must contact the university to ensure that appropriate preparations are made before departure. All employees traveling to Asia are encouraged to contact Risk Management by email or at 703-993-2599 to discuss travel plans and precautions.

Students traveling on independent travel should coordinate travel with Mason’s Global Education Office. The Global Education Office is closely monitoring this situation and will communicate directly with students impacted by this outbreak to adjust study abroad and exchange programs as necessary.
**Spring Break Travel:** Student planning independent travel to Asia over spring break should stay informed of current travel restrictions and consider alternative plans in the event that new restrictions are implemented.

**Travelers Returning from China:** Students and employees returning from China must contact [Safety, Emergency, and Enterprise Risk Management](#) to discuss their return to campus. The university wants to ensure that returning travelers observe CDC guidance and receive the support needed if quarantine or self-isolation are recommended by the CDC or local health department.

As new information about the coronavirus outbreak and government response actions that might impact the campus community become available, updates will be sent via email. All communications and guidance provided by the university is available online [here](#).

**Respect and tolerance:** Mason is an incredibly diverse institution and as such, we have students, faculty and staff from all over the world. As always, we encourage everyone to treat others with dignity and respect and to not ostracize specific communities based on unconfirmed reports or suspicion of illness.

**Emergency Preparedness:** We would also like to take this opportunity to remind the Mason Community to take time to become familiar with the university’s emergency response procedures for dangerous situations that may occur on campus such as severe weather, active threats, utility failures, and other emergencies that interrupt classes or impact research activities. Emergency response procedures, the university’s [Active Threat: Awareness & Prevention video](#), and instruction on how to download the university’s public safety mobile application are available online at [https://ready.gmu.edu](https://ready.gmu.edu).

Safety, Emergency, & Enterprise Risk Management
George Mason University

703.993.8448  ehs.gmu.edu  risk.gmu.edu