

Greetings:

In an effort to keep you updated with the emerging information about the COVID-19 strain of the Coronavirus, I am providing the following information.

In this message you will find information about:

- Spring Break travel guidelines
- What to do if you become ill
- Information about COVID-19 infection and prevention

You may already be aware that the situation around COVID-19 is changing daily, with news reports of increased cases globally. It's important to note that for the general public, as of March 9, 2020, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low. However, the situation is evolving rapidly. MCLA will continue to monitor alerts and adjust plans as needed to keep our community healthy and safe. Nonetheless, if you have questions about being ill, please do not hesitate to contact MCLA Health Services at 413.662.5421 or healthservices@mcla.edu and ask to speak with someone about your symptoms. You can also read a helpful [Fact Sheet](#) on the coronavirus from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

With spring break approaching, we wish to share travel recommendations with you to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Spring Break Travel Guidelines

As our campus community prepares for spring break, inevitably, many of our community members will have plans for personal travel. We strongly encourage those members of the MCLA community planning international and domestic travel to practice safe hygiene and health recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization. You can find links to those recommendations on [MCLA's COVID-19 landing page](#).

For students planning to stay in residence or travel internationally over Spring Break, please complete this [Spring Break Registry](#) form by Friday, March 13, detailing your plans and expected date of return. Please check in with MCLA's Health Services office upon returning and continue to follow MCLA's COVID-19 updates while you are away.

Should you decide to travel internationally, please also register your travel with the U.S. State Department's [Smart Travel Enrollment Program](#) (STEP) which provides access to alerts from the local embassies and Consulates. In accordance with CDC guidelines, travelers to regions with confirmed COVID-19 cases who feel sick with fever, cough, or are having difficulty breathing are advised to stay home, avoid contact with others, and immediately seek medical attention.

What To Do if You Become Ill

For Students: If you travel and start to exhibit symptoms prior to your return, we suggest you remain at home and seek care at a local hospital or urgent care center.

If you are on campus and start to exhibit symptoms, please contact MCLA Health Services at 413.662.5421 or healthservices@mcla.edu, during the hours of operation listed below. Outside these hours, please call Public Safety at 413-662-5283

Health Services Spring Break Hours: During Spring Break, Health Services clinicians will be available by appointment only during the following hours:

Monday, 3/16	8 am to noon
Tuesday, 3/17	8 am to noon
Wednesday, 3/18	8 am to 4 pm
Thursday, 3/19	1 pm to 3 pm
Friday, 3/20	8 am to noon

Health Services staff will be available to answer questions by phone, or schedule appointments, Monday through Friday, March 16 to March 20, **except the morning of March 18 from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.**

It is important that you call ahead before going to any medical facility if you may have been exposed to the virus or if you have any of these symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- If you have had confirmed contact with any COVID-19 patient
- And/or traveled from mainland China or any other country with a travel advisory within 14 days of the onset of illness.

Please keep in mind that we are in the midst of cold and flu season. Flu-like symptoms do not automatically indicate that you have COVID-19. Only a test will do that.

Information about COVID-19 infection and prevention

Helpful Links

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

www.berkshirehealthsystems.org/coronavirus

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/information-on-the-outbreak-of-2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19>

We will continue to track alerts around COVID-19 and will share news and information with you as needed, while keeping in close communication with the members of our community currently studying abroad. The best way to remain informed and healthy is to follow the CDC and WHO recommendations.

We also urge the campus community to follow some simple but effective illness prevention measures regardless of your location:

- It is not too late to get a seasonal flu vaccine. (Call your primary care provider or stop by any pharmacy as many now offer flu shots.)
- Cover coughs and sneezes in your elbow or sleeve.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If you feel unwell, stay at home in order to protect yourself and other people.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds to avoid spreading any virus to others, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Disinfecting commonly touched surfaces is suggested. Additionally MCLA facilities staff have increased sanitation maintenance around campus.
- A list of additional locations of hand sanitation on campus can be found [here](#).

It is our hope that you will follow good hygiene practices and that you have a restful and enjoyable spring break.

Sincerely,

James F. Birge, Ph.D.
President

Adrienne Wootters, Ph.D.
Vice President of Academic Affairs

Catherine Holbrook, Ph.D.
Vice President of Student Affairs