

To: The OUAZ Community
From: President Dennis Tyner
Re: Latest Covid-19 Information
Date: 3/13/2020

Since late January, we have been communicating our position and responses to the still-emerging coronavirus situation. We have urged and practiced vigilance, best practices for hygiene for the community and as individuals and have taken many steps to continue to provide a safe and healthy learning and work environment. Fortunately, thus far, we have had no actual or threatened cases. Of course, this is a rapidly evolving circumstance, and things can and do change on a daily and even an hourly basis as we have all observed over the past several weeks.

Today, I am announcing the following:

1. We will encourage all residential students to continue to reside in University housing over spring break if they are concerned about traveling to and from their homes. We will not charge extra amounts for those who choose to do so. Food service will continue to be available through our OUAZ Dining Center. Our housing and food service, student support services, health services, and the like will remain open unless or until we have a documented case of exposure to the virus.
2. Students who do leave campus for spring break will be required to document where they traveled and, if they travel to a location currently deemed at higher risk by the federal government for the virus, will be asked to verify that they have had no known exposure to a person known to have been infected by the virus. Based on advice and guidance from our local health authorities, they may also be asked to submit to examination and possibly to approved coronavirus testing.
3. Our current plan is to complete the academic terms through June as planned with courses delivered as currently scheduled in both online and face-to-face modalities. Should it become advisable for us to move to more distance education delivery, including but not limited to online instruction, we are fully prepared to do so, building on the robust online platform that already exists for OUAZ.
4. All athletic program competitions have been cancelled until March 25, as we are complying with NAIA and athletic conference requirements and recommendations. This date may be extended but that decision will be made later. Practices and conditioning programs will continue for all OUAZ athletes other than football, which is subject to the recently announced Sooner Athletic Conference stipulations.
5. To help retard the spread of the virus, we, like most institutions, will be limiting large group gatherings and will seek other ways to engage with our students where this is feasible. This includes Spirit Life (will be done through electronic and other means), conferences, special presentations, travel for tournaments and courses, and international travel of any kind.
6. Staff travel is to be limited to that necessary to fulfill individual responsibilities for admissions, athletic recruiting, academic oversight, and other leadership roles.

We certainly regret the need for these actions, but we are thankful that we are thus far able to maintain most of the elements of what makes OUAZ a special place to work, live, study and play. We remain completely committed to our mission and to the health and well-being of our students, faculty and staff. When and as changes are necessitated, we will respond with timely and accurate communications.

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