

Subject: Study abroad programs suspended due to coronavirus

Date: Saturday, March 7, 2020 at 1:37:23 PM Eastern Standard Time

From: BGSU Provost

To: Andrew M. Schocket



B O W L I N G G R E E N S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y
Office of the Provost

March 7, 2020

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff,

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced that the global spread of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) makes it almost certain the United States will experience an outbreak. Bowling Green State University is closely monitoring COVID-19 developments nationally and internationally in conjunction with the Wood County Health Department, the Ohio Department of Health and the CDC.

Protecting the health and safety of students and the larger community is our highest priority. This situation is not only about our personal health and wellness, each of us needs to consider how our actions impact the health of others who may be more negatively impacted by COVID-19. Containing the spread of a contagious disease presents challenges and will require BGSU to take proactive measures to protect the health and safety of all members, and particularly the most vulnerable members, of our community while working to maintain University operations and responsibilities.

BGSU has prohibited all University-supported travel to countries under a CDC Level 3 travel restriction and all student group trips to CDC Level 2 or 3 countries. That list currently includes China, South Korea, Iran and Italy as level 3 and Japan as level 2. The University has facilitated the return of a number of BGSU faculty and students from these countries over the past weeks.

BGSU has suspended all spring break study abroad trips outside of the U.S. This is a rapidly evolving situation and it is likely that summer and fall trips, even to countries not currently at a CDC level 2 or 3, will be impacted as well. The University will continue to evaluate and provide updates on the status of planned summer and fall programs.

With the approach of spring break, be aware of [CDC travel guidelines](#). Travel to or through areas at high risk for the coronavirus can impact the health and convenience of the traveler, and also the exposure of risk to others in our community upon their return. Be mindful that the process for subsequent reentry into the United States may change rapidly and without notice. If you travel abroad, it is possible that you may be required to self-monitor your health upon your return. This can be as simple as monitoring and reporting temperatures twice a day for 14 days; however, higher-risk individuals may be quarantined or isolated and not permitted to return to class for a time.

I encourage all members of our community to weigh the potential risks of their spring break and other near-term, personal travel plans. If you have been to an area that has had COVID-19 cases within the last two weeks and have a fever, cough, runny nose, headache, sore throat or difficulty breathing, it is recommended that you call ahead and report to the Falcon Health Center or your medical provider for evaluation.

President Rogers has named an executive team, led by Dr. Sue Houston, vice president for partnerships and chief of staff, to lead our COVID-19 response and preparedness efforts. We are meeting regularly to update our plans and protocols in consultation with local, state and national agencies.

Please remember the best prevention for coronavirus, influenza or the common cold is to practice good personal hygiene. These measures impact our personal health, and also the health of others who may be more susceptible to infectious diseases.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. It is especially important to wash your hands:
 - Before, during and after you prepare food
 - Before you eat and after you use the bathroom

- After handling money
- More frequently when someone in your house is sick
- Before and after using public computers
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with your arm.
- Avoid touching your mouth, nose or eyes.
- Don't share personal items like water bottles.
- Frequently clean doorknobs, light switches and other commonly touched surfaces with disinfecting wipes.
- Avoid being around people who are sick, and stay home from work or school if you are sick.
- Get plenty of sleep and eat well-balanced meals to keep your immune system healthy.

Please see the [everyday precautions](#) on the CDC website for more detailed information on precautionary measures. Additional information on COVID-19 can be found at the [CDC website](#). Monitor the [BGSU COVID-19 website](#) for updates.

Students and Education Abroad program directors with questions or concerns should contact International Programs and Partnerships at edabroad@bgsu.edu or 419-372-2247. Faculty members may contact the Office of the Provost at provost@bgsu.edu or 419-372-2915. Staff may contact the Office of Human Resources at ohr@bgsu.edu or 419-372-8421.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe B. Whitehead, Jr." in a cursive script.

Joe B. Whitehead, Jr, Ph.D.

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs