

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY COVID-19 UPDATE

March 24, 2020

Stay Home Order: What faculty and students need to know

A letter from Provost Rick Muma • Updated March 28, 2020

These past two weeks have been a period of great transition for our university as we navigate the uncertainty of COVID-19 and its impact on university operations. There have been changes to classroom instruction, housing operations, university-sponsored travel and commencement.

Today's Stay at Home Order issued by Sedgwick County will require us, as a community, to pivot yet again as we enter the next phase of our operational plan. Our county officials understand and recognize that WSU, as a higher education institution, must be allowed to continue essential services and operations to support our learning and research. **However, effective 12:01 a.m. tomorrow (March 25), we must do so in compliance with the Stay at Home Order.**

In an effort to help guide you through the weeks ahead, below is a link with updated information in light of the Stay at Home Order. We fully expect students, faculty and staff to comply with these temporary emergency measures as we work to do our part to slow the rate of community spread of COVID-19.

[READ FULL STATEMENT FROM PROVOST RICK MUMA](#)

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- **Essential Business Operations:** WSU campus will operate primarily remotely with only “essential business operations” continuing to operate on campus. All departments must now fully implement their plans to reduce their on-campus presence. Consistent with the county’s order, certain essential business operations at WSU **may continue with employees on-site as directed by the divisional supervisor**, but social distancing rules must be observed. For more information on essential business operations, [click here](#).
- **Facility access:** All university buildings are closed to walk-in traffic unless otherwise posted at the building entrance. Employees will still be able to access their building with their Shocker Card.
- **Returning to campus/collecting Items:** Given the short notice of the Stay at Home Order, we are permitting faculty to return to campus for a limited period of time to collect any items they may need for the next 30 days until 5 p.m. Thursday, March 26, 2020. If you require access to campus after March 26, please inform your dean.
- **Internet access:** Do not come to campus to take advantage of better internet connections. We understand that it may be difficult for individuals to conduct academic and research work from home. WSU has procured a limited number of portable internet hotspots to help faculty to conduct online instruction. [Learn how to submit a MiFi request here](#). Additionally, in response to the federal government’s call to “Keep Americans Connected,” several national internet service providers are providing internet access for free or at a greatly reduced expense. We encourage you to reach out to these providers for additional details.
- **Loaner laptops:** ITS is providing a limited amount of loaner computers for faculty and students to facilitate online instruction. For more information on how faculty can take advantage of these loaner computers, [click here](#). Students should contact their college dean’s office. Note: there are only a limited number of computers. Requests will be filled based on priority of need.
- **Use OneStop:** If you have additional questions or are in need of assistance, please contact [OneStop](#). OneStop provides 24/7 student support via live chat, phone and web ticket options on a variety of topics.
- **Research lab access/performance of research:** Last week, we asked all university PIs and researchers to prepare for the potential impact of COVID-19 on their research. While the university remains committed to research in all forms, we also must prioritize the health, safety and well-being of our campus community. The university has therefore made the difficult decision, in light of the Stay at Home Order, to suspend all **on-campus**, non-essential research activities, effective immediately. Going forward, only essential research activities will be permitted to be performed on campus.

Essential research activities are those that cannot continue without on-campus presence and for which suspension of the research would cause irreparable harm to the project.

Examples include, but are not limited to, activities related to:

- irreplaceable biological specimens (e.g., plants, samples, cell lines, etc.) that would otherwise be lost
- the care of animals (e.g., continual treatment, manipulation, special feeding, etc.)
- preservation of unique or rare reagents
- maintenance of essential equipment that cannot be attended to remotely or powered down without significant cost or consequence to the research effort
- experiments that have a small window for completion (i.e., data collection that is time sensitive in order for the long-term research and/or experiment to come to fruition)
- the understanding, treating or preventing of COVID-19 viral infection
- national defense
- compliance activities

To the extent possible, those individuals who must be on campus to conduct essential research activities should limit their on-campus presence to only the time it takes to secure the continuity of their research program. Individuals on campus must observe social distancing rules.

We know and understand that all research – your research – is critically important. We are not saying that research must stop, only that non-essential research activities in WSU facilities must temporarily cease. WSU’s Office of Research continues to work with our funding partners to determine allowability of certain costs during this time and will be issuing guidance as it becomes available. In the meantime, please continue to work directly with the Office of Research if you have questions regarding your funded projects. For more information, please contact the Office of Research at proposals@wichita.edu.

- **Rhatigan Student Center:** The RSC will be closed to the public beginning Wednesday, March 25, at 7:30 a.m. Certain areas will be open for limited services.
 - **Books and Supplies:** [The Shocker Store](#) is offering convenient curbside pickup and free shipping on orders over \$25. Please call 316-978-7033 for additional information.
 - **Food Options:** Starbucks and Chick-Fil-A will utilize their Boost platform to provide curbside service.
- **Shocker Dining:** Shocker Dining (inside Shocker Hall) will reopen on Sunday, March 29, and will have limited hours going forward. Entry will be limited to 10 people at a time. All food and beverage will be served by dining staff in a to-go container. Hours of operation are as follows:
 - 5-7 p.m. Sunday, March 29
 - 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and 5-7 p.m. every day, Monday, March 30-May 15
- **Child Development Center:** Given the restrictions imposed by the Stay at Home Order, the WSU Child Development Center will be closed effective March 25, through April 23.
- **Shocker Support Locker Food Bank:** The Shocker Support Locker is currently closed for Spring Break and will reopen for limited service beginning Monday, March 30. Individuals are asked to submit an online form and pick up items between 1-5 p.m. Wednesdays and Fridays. More information to come.

- **Student Health Services:** Student Health Services (SHS) will remain open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. All normal services will be available. Appointments are available by calling 316-978-4792. Appointment times will be spaced to accommodate social distancing. Students can also use the [myShockerHealth portal](#) to send a secure message to a health care provider. Starting Thursday, March 26, please use the southwest entrance to access the Student Wellness Center. This entrance is off the parking lot closest to the lake. Please note: students experiencing fever, cough and/or shortness of breath are asked to call SHS before coming in for their appointment. All students will be screened prior to entrance to the clinic. Only student patients are allowed in the clinic at this time – all other visitors are asked to stay home.
- **Counseling and Prevention Services:** Counseling and Prevention Services (CAPS) will continue to offer mental health services during the shut-down in a remote fashion and is no longer taking in-person appointments. CAPS can help with obstacles such as: difficulties with depression, anxiety, and are available to consult via telephone or Zoom to help you develop a self-care plan for your mental wellness during this crisis. Please call 316-978-4792 to set-up a remote consultation. You can schedule with a receptionist by calling between 10:00 am – 3:00 pm, Monday – Friday or leave a message and someone will call you back during that time. Follow us at ShockerCAPS on Facebook and Twitter for tips on how to beat COVID-19 stress. If there is a mental health emergency, please call 911, the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or text “support” to the crisis text line at 741-741.
- **Student Disability Services:** The Office of Disability Services sets up accommodations and services for students with disabilities and advocates for students with disabilities with faculty, staff and campus and off-campus entities. The office hours are 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Wichita State University is encouraging limited operations and remote working to promote social distancing. We are still committed to serving you. You can call 316-978-3309 or email us at disability.services@wichita.edu to set-up a remote intake meeting or to answer any question you may have about accommodations.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

As a reminder, “social distancing” means maintaining at least 6 feet of social distancing from other individuals, washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs and sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces and not shaking hands.

[Get more information about steps you can take to protect yourself](#)

We understand that each new announcement and communication from the university about COVID-19 and our operations plans creates new and unique challenges for all of us. We know we have asked a lot from you these past few weeks – we greatly appreciate your willingness to adapt at a moment’s notice to alternate methods of almost everything as we work to provide a meaningful and productive experience for our students while preserving the health, safety and well-being of our entire campus community.

Please continue to monitor wichita.edu/covid19news for the most up-to-date information and answers to frequently asked questions.