

UPSOM Response to Covid19 Coronavirus Outbreak: *3/13/20 UPDATE*

We have updated our community guidance in a few areas, which are highlighted at the top. At the bottom are previously issued but still valid recommendations, just as a reminder.

The situation continues to be rapidly changing. We will continue to post guidance as necessary, to keep our community informed. Check your e-mail frequently for updates from the school. We will post updated guidance on Navigator (bannered at the top):

<https://navigator.medschool.pitt.edu/alerts/UPSOMResponsetoCovid19.pdf>

Although there still have not yet been reported cases of this coronavirus in Pittsburgh, it is likely it will come to our community. The safety of our students, faculty, staff and the overall university community remains our highest priority.

In issuing guidelines, UPSOM is closely following recommendations from the CDC. We are obliged to follow guidelines from the University of Pittsburgh.

New Guidance (3/13/20):

As we all know, the last 48 hours have been difficult and confusing. It has become increasingly challenging for anyone to concentrate on a classroom-based curriculum amidst the crisis, with fears about travel restrictions, ongoing anxiety about infection risk, and closures/cancellations of institutions and services all around us. Some have family members and friends affected directly by coronavirus. Given the change in circumstances, we have decided to **suspend in-person classes for MS1-2s effectively immediately.**

MS2s will be able to connect remotely for ICS groups next week (details to be shared later). The final Clinical Procedures session will need to be made up in the summer or later. We will be flexible. MS1s will finish their last week of Microbiology remotely. Lectures will be podcast. The PBL will be delivered through Teams. Your exam will be given to you on Friday through Examsoft; we'll give you details later, but it will be an open-book exam delivered at the appointed hour that you are expected to do on your own, respecting our Honor Code.

EBM and Behavioral Medicine are cancelling their sessions on March 18th but picking up remotely after that. APE and CE will be postponed until the situation clears. Your course directors will be back in touch with more information.

There will be no printed syllabi for Neuroscience or Psychiatry. And to be clear, there is no reason for you to be on campus—everything will be done remotely.

Many MS2s have asked about Step 1 and the closure of testing centers. We do not have any clear information about what will happen, and thus can't offer any real guidance on what you should do. Laura Jeannerette can help you decide if you are considering moving up your exam or finding a different testing center.

Students are encouraged to go home, wherever that is, to stay safe, but of course you will be allowed to remain in the dorm at Darragh, and you can study at Scaife if you wish (the building will still remain open).

MS3-4s are expected to continue to report for duty, although you are still prohibited from seeing confirmed or suspected COVID patients. You are, however, essential to care, and our attendings and residents are grateful for your help with the OTHER patients on service, even ones that are not “yours.” All help is appreciated at this time. On each rotation, follow the instructions from your course directors who have our guidelines.

Bootcamp/ILS sessions will be delivered remotely, although some simulation/SP sessions and dissections may continue. The CSCS trip to Washington has been cancelled. CCAs, however, will go on as planned.

Visiting student rotations and away rotations for MS4s will be cancelled through May; Applications will be processed for rotations in June and later, with the advisement that changes may need to be made.

Some individuals may be at higher risk than others (e.g., immunocompromised, medical conditions, age). We encourage you to have a lower threshold for social distancing to protect yourself and the community. Please consult with your health care provider (or Student Health) if you have questions about your specific situation.

For everyone, we remind you to **practice effective social distancing**—even if you’re not infected or quarantined yourself. This means staying home as much as possible, avoiding crowds unless absolutely necessary, maintaining 6 feet of distance between individuals when you can, not shaking hands, covering coughs, washing hands, etc. You can be a role model for the community and help prevent the spread of infection!

Some of you may wonder if we’re going too far in our recommendations. Isn’t influenza worse? Some in our community are going about completely typical social activities, hoping this isn’t so bad. But we want to make it clear that this IS bad and is likely to get worse. Early action now, especially social distancing, can reduce mortality 10-fold. For details on the severity the role of social distancing, see: <https://medium.com/@tomaspueyo/coronavirus-act-today-or-people-will-die-f4d3d9cd99ca>

Again, things may change in the next few days. You all have been good about letting us know your thoughts about what should be done—thanks for working together on all this. Let us know if you have questions or concerns.

General Guidance:

- Any student or staff member should consider themselves at risk if they have EITHER:
 - recent exposure to an infected person, OR
 - a fever (Temperature >100.4) and signs of lower respiratory track illness (cough, shortness of breath)
- High risk individuals should stay home and call for medical guidance.

Group	Call...
Students	Student Health 412-383-1800 Nordenberg Hall—Wellness Center (Mon-Sat) https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/shs/about-us/contact/
Staff	Employee Health 412-647-4949 Medical Arts Bldg, 3708 5 th Ave, Suite 505 https://www.hr.pitt.edu/current-employees/work-life-balance/wellness-life/myhealthwork-center

- Exposed individuals who have been screened and cleared for return to work can do so.
- Individuals who are severely ill should go to the emergency room.
- Students and staff are encouraged to avoid exposure to symptomatic individuals or travelers returning from high-risk areas, if possible.
- Some individuals may be at higher risk than others (e.g., immunocompromised, medical conditions, age). We encourage you to have a lower threshold for social distancing to protect yourself and the community. Please consult with your health care provider (or Student Health) if you have questions about your specific situation.
- Our lecture rooms, hallways, and small group rooms in Scaife have hand sanitizers and bathrooms—wash your hands frequently! Avoid touching your face, cover your cough, and practice other routine precautions against infection. Use surface disinfectants frequently (rooms are cleaned daily).
- Practice social distancing routinely—even if you’re not infected or quarantined yourself. This means staying home as much as possible, avoiding crowds unless absolutely necessary, maintaining 6 feet of distance between individuals when you can, not shaking hands, covering coughs, washing hands, etc. You can be a role model for the community and help prevent the spread of infection!
- CDC guidelines will help inform other prevention and treatment strategies, in collaboration with UPMC Infection Control. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

UPSOM promises to do everything we can to ensure that students are able to get what they need from the curriculum, even during this crisis. We will work so that students aren’t held up in terms of their timeline towards graduation or other milestones. We will individualize this to provide accommodations to those who need it. Everyone needs to be understanding and flexible, recognizing that this is a very unusual situation, and the guidance may change in a short time. Communication is key—in all directions.

Travel Guidance:

- Individuals should avoid **any** travel unless necessary. If international travel is necessary, individuals are expected to register the travel through the [University of Pittsburgh International SOS Travel Registry System](#)
- University advisories must be respected.

Do not travel	China
Non-essential travel discouraged	Iran, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Germany, Spain, France

Effective 3/10/20

- Students returning from any country on the advisory list should voluntarily practice social distancing for a period of 14 days. They will be notified by the school who will assist them in arrangements, although they are still allowed to travel in the community as necessary (just not to the Pitt campus).
- Students travelling domestically won't need to socially distance unless they've been exposed to cases or are ill.
- We recommend that students carefully consider their travel plans. If you travel, you should be prepared for changes in re-entry procedures that may affect your plans—make sure you have money, supplies, or other resources in case you are held up or become ill. Depending on the situation, you may not be able to return to the university community.

Curriculum Guidance (MS1-2):

- ALL students will participate in the curriculum remotely effective March 13, 2020.
 - Lectures will be available on podcast (Navigator and Panopto).
 - Patient panels/interviews will be cancelled or postponed.
 - Small groups will be accessed remotely, utilizing MS Teams to allow for both audio/video capture. Participation will still be required.
 - Assessments (exams/quizzes) will either be postponed or done from home using Examsoft, depending on the course/assessment.
 - Laboratories or other course requirements/activities will be reconfigured or cancelled.
 - Advanced Physical Exam (APE) and Clinical Procedures (CP) sessions will be postponed and made up later.
 - Students may be asked to complete some activities in the summer to make up lost curriculum.
 - OMED and course directors will provide more specific details moving forward.
- Research and laboratory work will continue as usual, including the summer research program.

Curriculum Guidance (MS3-4):

- We will follow guidelines from UPMC; students returning from travel or who had exposure will require UPMC clearance before returning to clinical sites—this will be done at MyHealth@Work 412-647-3695, Kaufmann Medical Bldg (3471 5th Ave Suite 1111).
- All international electives will be put on hold.
- Visiting student rotations and away rotations for MS4s will be cancelled through May; Applications will be processed for rotations in June and later, with the advisement that changes may need to be made.
- Students are encouraged to report for duties on their clinical rotations for now. If the Pittsburgh community were to experience an epidemic (large outbreak of cases in a short time), students should follow the community emergencies policy, which allows them to use their discretion about reporting for clinical duties if they feel safe to do so.
- Students are NOT to work with suspected/confirmed Covid19 cases to protect student health and ensure that our best-trained providers are working with these high-risk patients. This guidance could change in the event of a true pandemic.
- For students engaging in voluntary social distancing, classroom-based activities (e.g., bootcamp, ILS, Assessment Week) would be postponed or done asynchronously/remotely, depending on the activity.
- Didactics, standardized-patient activities (OSCEs), and other assessments (SHELF exams) in the clerkships will go on as planned, although may occur in smaller groups or remotely.

Staff Guidance:

- Staff should follow guidance from the University of Pittsburgh.
- Individuals engaging in voluntary social distancing may be given the opportunity to work remotely. Human Resources may help in guidance for specific situations.
- Staff deemed “non-essential” will be given every opportunity to work remotely.

Event/Facilities Guidance:

- Most school-sanctioned gatherings are being cancelled/postponed. This includes the large Match Day ceremony with all students, faculty, and families attending.
- If you are sick, you are advised to stay home and contact the school for further instructions.
- If you are not sick but are concerned about attending, it is absolutely fine for you to opt out. Contact the school.
- Scaife Hall will remain open. The library will remain open. Students can use the building to study if you wish. However, we are strongly recommend that you maximize the distance between you and others, to protect yourself and them.

Important websites to monitor:

- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Pitt: <https://www.emergency.pitt.edu/covid19>
- Prepare your home: <https://www.wesa.fm/post/guide-how-prepare-your-home-coronavirus>

