

Update on Coronavirus and UWL

Joe Gow <jgow@uwlax.edu>

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Dear students and colleagues:

As the COVID-19 (coronavirus) situation continues to unfold nationally and internationally, our UWL team is constantly monitoring and responding to the travel notices and advisories issued by the U.S. Department of State (DoS) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC). We are also in consultation with UW System.

To date, the La Crosse area continues to have no cases reported and no known concerns of the virus. Still, UWL is committed to the health and safety of our students and our university is taking precautions.

In terms of travel, UWL follows the [CDC's Alert & Warning protocol](#). Our policy, as it pertains specifically to COVID-19, is to not allow any travel to locations with a CDC Warning-Level 3. For this reason, we will not be allowing spring study abroad students to participate on their exchange in South Korea. We also are currently monitoring Level 2 countries with UW System guidance and CDC recommendations.

Our International Education & Engagement staff will continue to make decisions related to other programs and locations as the university learns more. Please direct any questions from concerned study abroad students and/or parents to Emelee Volden, UWL Director of International Education & Engagement. And please contact our Student Health Center at 608.785.8558 with any questions related to COVID-19 or health concerns.

We ask that the campus community be mindful of xenophobia and the spread of false information associated with this type of crisis. Each of us plays a role in reducing the discrimination and stigma that are often associated with these types of public health situations. The World Health Organization and CDC have excellent resources for the general public that reflect the physical and psychological aspects of COVID-19 - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>.

Lastly, with spring break recess starting March 13, those planning to travel should pay close attention to the [CDC risk levels](#), information being released from destination countries, and updates from air carriers prior to departure and while abroad. Anyone traveling to an at-risk country is urged to seek an assessment with a health care provider upon return.

Our Student Health Center Director Dr. Abby Deyo tells us there currently is no vaccine to prevent a COVID-19 infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. At present, there are no additional precautions recommended for the general public to take. However, as a reminder, CDC recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Get a flu vaccine

We'll be sure to update everyone as this situation continues to unfold. Please take care.

Sincerely,

Joe

Joe Gow, Chancellor
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse