

## Urgent UWL Shelter in Place Starting at 5 p.m. Today

Joe Gow <jgow@uwlax.edu>

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Dear UWL students and colleagues,

Like many universities nationwide, UW-La Crosse has taken extraordinary measures to prioritize the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff and its community while providing in-person class this fall. In particular, we partnered with public health experts to develop a method of testing, isolating and managing COVID-19.

Unfortunately, cases of infection continue to increase and that must be addressed. Consequently, we are taking the following measures

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1. **Effective immediately, face-coverings are required on all campus property, whether indoors or outdoors.** Individuals must assume they may be in contact with others in any location and at any time.
2. Given the high number of positive test results among resident students in a variety of residence halls, and due to our isolation spaces approaching the point of being filled, **we are expanding the Coate Hall “shelter in place” restrictions to include all residence halls effective at 5 p.m. today until Sunday, September 27th at 5 p.m.**

National health experts suggest that students should not travel home during this two-week period. If you can stay where you are, that may be the safest course of action. Where you shelter, you are expected to follow quarantine protocols, or isolation protocols if you have a confirmed case of COVID-19. This is to protect you, your family and the community.

There are growing numbers of positive cases on and off-campus, including cases that have been confirmed through testing. The University may not have enough isolation space available and residents remaining in the halls must weigh their own risks. Residence Life will continue to honor requests for housing contract cancellations. To start this process, complete the cancellation application: <https://www.uwlax.edu/reslife/apply-for-housing/housing-contract/#tab-contract-cancellation>

### [Housing contract – Residence Life | UW-La Crosse](#)

Spread your wings as a UW-La Crosse Eagle! Experience the power of a UWL education through high-impact learning and life-long friendships, all while surrounded by the epic beauty of La Crosse.

[www.uwlax.edu](http://www.uwlax.edu)

Though these changes can only be enforced on campus, we ask that our off-campus student community observe the shelter-in-place that your on-campus peers will be observing.

3. **All in-person undergraduate instruction will be suspended on Monday, Sept. 14th and Tuesday, Sept. 15th and will resume remotely Wednesday, Sept. 16th, with a presumed in-person resumption on Monday, September 28th.** All graduate courses will continue in the mode currently indicated or as modified by the instructor. Classes and sections that are currently being offered hybrid and/or remotely will continue as scheduled but must be fully remote. UWL's contact tracing has not revealed any evidence of transmission from in-person instruction; however, this decision comes out of an abundance of caution for our students and employees. More information will be sent to instructors from the Provost.

In addition, the following changes will be made to our campus operations, effective at 5 p.m. today:

- Nearly all student-facing resources will be virtual with a presumed in-person resumption on Monday, September 28th. Each Vice Chancellor will share more information about the services housed within their divisions.
- All in-person study spaces, including those at Murphy Library, the Union and academic buildings will be closed.
- Dining services will shift to carry-out meals only.
- The REC will convert to virtual/remote programming.
- Student Health Center will only be open for urgent care needs and by appointment only. Telehealth and telemedicine appointments are available.
- In-person gatherings must be cancelled or be converted to virtual settings. Whenever possible, work meetings should continue to be conducted virtually.
- On-site essential operations will continue as defined by your Vice Chancellor. Generally, employees who are able to work remotely should do so. Starting today at 5 p.m. employees will be limited to card access to their assigned building. Supervisors should be flexible with employees who have returned to work on campus in non-essential functions.
- Campus Child Center will remain open at this time.

Each Vice Chancellor will send a message with more detail about the operations in their division following this message. Please keep an eye out for those subsequent messages as they may help to answer many of your questions.

These measures follow the precedent set by several other universities that have paused in-person instruction for two weeks in an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19. We will continue to consult with UW System and the UW Board of Regent leadership as we evaluate our situation and share more information about the rest of the semester. We remain committed to communicating our evolving plans as quickly and transparently as possible.

I share the disappointment and frustration of students, families, faculty and staff who had hoped we might enjoy the start to this fall semester together. To those of you who have been following our campus-wide health protocols, I thank you for your awareness and dedication to protecting our UW-La Crosse community. To everyone, please take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on and off campus: monitor your symptoms daily, wear your face coverings, practice physical distancing, and limit any gatherings with others beyond your roommates or household. All of our actions matter.

Please take care of yourself and others during this unprecedented time. And thanks for all you're doing to keep our university moving forward.

Sincerely,

Joe

Joe Gow, Chancellor  
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse