
Subject: COVID 19 Update – March 12, 2020

Date: Thursday, March 12, 2020 at 5:33:50 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: President Lugo

To: All-faculty-staff, AllStudents

Dear Faculty, Staff, Students and Families,

We are facing unprecedented disruption due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 across our nation. Circumstances are changing by the hour, and our senior leadership and emergency operations teams are monitoring the developments closely, as I'm sure you are as well. Just yesterday, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic. North Carolina officials have declared a state of emergency. We are seeing government, corporate and non-profit organizations take extraordinary measures including the NBA suspending the rest of its season and NCAA canceling the NCAA Division 1 basketball tournament and ALL winter and spring championships. We are taking all this information into account, along with the latest recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and local health authorities in order to take the decisive actions detailed in this message.

The following decisions were not made without rigorous debate and scrutiny. In fact, we are devastated by the disruptive impact that this has on our community. Yet our goals must prioritize the health and well-being of our entire campus community.

First, it is important to note, **we have no confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the campus community.** However, in order to protect our students, staff and faculty and our greater Charlotte community, we need to do our part to slow the spread. We can make campus and our community safer by taking the following steps, which have the support of our board of trustees:

Course instruction

Queens will move all instruction online effective Wednesday, March 18, 2020 and through the remainder of the semester. We will suspend all undergraduate and graduate on-campus courses Friday, March 13 through Tuesday, March 17 to allow faculty time to make final preparations for the shift to online instruction. If there are exceptions, those cases will be handled and communicated directly by the Provost.

Living on Campus

We are requiring residential students to leave campus with their belongings by Sunday, March 15 at 5:00 p.m., and complete coursework from home or an alternative safe location. We recognize this may not be possible for every student, and some groups will require an exception. If you have extenuating circumstances that will prevent or delay you from moving off campus, please [fill out this request form](#). It will be reviewed as soon as possible.

The following services will be available (some on a limited basis) to the students who remain on campus – academic support services, campus police, campus services, dining, library, and health and wellness.

Those who remain on campus are strongly urged to practice social distancing and maintain a high standard of preventative measures including handwashing, coughing into a tissue and staying in your room if you are sick.

Athletic Events

As of late this afternoon, the NCAA has canceled all winter and spring NCAA championships. As a result,

Queens is ceasing participation in athletic competition and practice effective immediately for the health and safety of all. Additional information will be provided to student-athletes through the coaching staff.

Faculty and Staff

Campus will remain open, but we will make every attempt to reduce the number of people here at one time.

Leaders of individual units should consult with their vice presidents to implement strategies to reduce the number of people who must come into the office daily (i.e. creating a rotating schedule for telecommuting and office coverage). If you are an employee who is at high risk of severe complications from COVID-19 and you have been working from home, please continue to do so. Employees who are sick or have compromised immune systems should work remotely until further notice.

Meetings should be held via Ring Central whenever possible.

We have tightened the suspension on travel to a 100-mile radius until further notice. Please continue to work closely with the vice president in your area to determine if your trip is essential.

We recommend limiting personal travel if possible. If you choose to travel outside the 100-mile radius from this point forward, we ask that you [self-report using this link](#) and be prepared to self-quarantine and work from home for 14 days and be in communication with your direct supervisor.

We recognize everything isn't covered in this message. We ask individual units to use these guidelines and bring recommendations and questions to their vice president.

Events

We are canceling or postponing events of 25 people or more through April 4, 2020. This includes Accepted Student Day, Reunion, Scholars Luncheon and the upcoming Learning Society lecture. Event registrants or ticket holders will receive specific instruction from the event managers via email.

There are other details of Queens' response that can be found on our [dedicated web section](#), including updates on student travel and health and wellness policies. I also invite you to respond to this email. We will check it regularly and address common questions and concerns in subsequent emails.

We understand the disappointment and uncertainty that these decisions create. I know and have personally heard from many students who are heartbroken over the cancelation of their May international experiences, winter NCAA championship competitions, and spring sports. We, like you, value the in-person interactions that make Queens so special.

Seniors and May graduates, I am most saddened about the ways this global pandemic may deprive you of the many experiences and memories that so many college students have enjoyed in their senior year for generations. I am so deeply sorry.

We hold out hope that we will be able to invite you and your family and guests back to campus for commencement. We will monitor the situation and use the best and latest information to make that decision with as much advance notice as possible.

In the meantime, please take care and help us do our part to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

President Lugo