

March 10, 2020

Dear New England College Community,

As promised, I plan to regularly update the community on the contingency planning underway related to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) at New England College in Henniker and Manchester. Our plan moving forward is to update the community on Tuesdays and Fridays immediately following the Corona Taskforce meetings that take place twice weekly.

The Taskforce and I continue to monitor Coronavirus news from the NH State Department of Health, the NH Department of Education, the Center for Disease Control, our regional accreditor NECHE, and other reliable higher education agencies and sources for the most up to date information on the Corona virus and its impact on higher education.

Below you will find specific updates related to numerous areas of focus for the Taskforce. I ask that you take the time to read through the information provided. And, as always, I urge you to be vigilant in your commitment to promoting a healthy work environment.

Possible Transition to Online Courses

I have asked VPAA Lesperance to work with his team to prepare for the possibility that we will need to pause temporarily teaching and learning face to face in Henniker and/or Manchester. To this end, it may become necessary for courses to move online and to ask students to leave campus. While we will make a decision to move online only when it is absolutely necessary for the health and safety of our community, it may result in a need for students and families to make arrangements quickly. As a result, we are asking that all students begin to plan how they will facilitate leaving campus/going home on short notice. Students who do not live close enough to be driven home should begin explore their options for traveling home if the need arises. The most appropriate first-step may be leave campus with a friend/classmate until further arrangements may be made. The College will assist students who live especially far from campus such as our international students or those from other areas of the country, but those students should begin to explore their options to prepare for this possibility.

While students may not be present on campus, our expectation is that teaching and learning will continue albeit in an online and remote setting. The Academic Affairs team is working diligently to capitalize on our years of experiencing delivering education virtually and to be in a position to continue uninterrupted the educational work of our campuses utilizing Blackboard and Zoom. Our expectation is that classes would continue at their scheduled times. The only difference will be where those classes meet.

Health and Well-Being

What is prompting our contingency planning is an abundance of caution for the health and well-being of all our community members. We want you all to take serious the recommendations for preventing the transmission of the virus to yourselves and to community members. Please visit the CDC ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) for details on steps we can all take to this end.

Residential Henniker students who are experiencing flu or COVID-19 like symptoms such as a fever and cough, or have visited a high risk COVID-19 area should call the Wellness Center prior to going to the center for testing and/or assistance. The medical staff will work with you with the appropriate steps to take prior to your visit to the Wellness Center. Any student who is experiencing a fever, cough and/or shortness of breath must put a mask on when entering the Wellness Center which are available in Wellness.

Residential Manchester and/or commuter students should visit a local clinic, urgent care, or hospital for testing and assistance.

All students, faculty, and staff who have a fever are expected to stay away from NEC's campuses until they have been fever free for 24 hours without medication. Residential students will be asked to go home until they are fever free for 24 hours without medication. Residential students who live too far to leave will be quarantined on campus according to the College's flu policy. Faculty and staff will work with students to ensure they can continue academically with as little disruption as possible.

The College will contact the New Hampshire State Health Department regarding any suspected case of COVID-19 in order to assist properly the individual and protect the greater community.



Office of the President

98 Bridge Street
Henniker, NH 03242

Facilities and Environmental Precautions

At the suggestion of our Taskforce and at my direction, all facilities staff in Henniker and Manchester have initiated protocols for heightened attention to maintaining clean and sanitized environments including extra attention paid to high traffic and high touch areas on campus. We are making available hand sanitizer, cleaning solutions and wipes, and other supplies to promote healthy and safe living, learning, and working environments. Custodial staff are working diligently to promote safety. Still, it's important that we all do our part as well. Maintaining a healthy environment require us all to pitch in. So, do your part too!

Study Abroad/Away and Immersion

We have contacted all students who are currently studying aboard to offer the College's assistance should they be facing the decision to stay or head home. We will work with those students and their host institution regarding their academic credit. Immersion courses are mostly concluded and did not attend areas flagged by the CDC as high risk for the COVID-19 virus. Remaining spring immersion courses have been canceled and we will work with those faculty and students to reschedule as appropriate. One remaining immersion course is scheduled to run to Alaska in June. That trip is subject to cancellation should conditions warrant and we will be monitoring the areas associated with that trip closely. As of the time of this message, future College sanctioned study abroad is suspended until further notice.

College Travel

New England College employees should refrain from non-essential travel. Please coordinate with your division heads to determine whether or not planned travel is essential.

Conclusion

Please remember that all New England College community members should not return to campus until they are fever free for 24 hours without medication. I would like to thank everyone for their patience and cooperation as we work through this important issue together. Thank you for your vigilance to the guidance provided by health care providers, the State Health Department, and the Center for Disease Control regarding important personal hygiene, cleaning, and sanitizing habits. We will continue to communicate with the community on Tuesdays and Fridays or more often as needed until this issue has subsided.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michele D. Perkins
President