

2020

COVID-19 Campus Update – March 23, 2020

Eastern Michigan University

Monday, March 23, 2020

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To the Eastern Michigan University community:

In light of Governor Whitmer's "[Stay Home, Stay Safe](#)" [Executive Order](#) issued this morning, the University implemented a number of actions today. They are designed to further reduce the workforce working daily on campus beyond our initial actions, which require non-designated employees to work remotely.

This remains an extremely fluid and evolving situation, reflecting the emergency and uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 global crisis. As we all know, guidance and directives are changing daily. The University is working diligently to adjust operations rapidly to meet the changing situation as we assess their impact on University operations and implement the new directives.

Today, under the terms of the Governor's Executive Order, we are instructing employees to refrain from coming to campus unless they are part of a smaller group of designated employees, which include those:

- Needed to maintain essential business and facility operations.
- Providing instructional support services for online/virtual/distance learning.
- Involved in urgent health and wellness needs of students.
- Assisting in the wind-down of on campus housing and student resident checkout, which is to be completed by 5 p.m. March 31. A majority of our on campus residents have moved out, including more than 1,200 students who left over this past weekend. As noted previously, not everyone can move out. For some students, Eastern is a permanent address, or a destination for international students and students from far away in the U.S. Other students have special circumstances that affect their ability to return to their permanent place of residence.
- Involved in vital public communications during the crisis, such as WEMU 89.1, the University's National Public Radio station.

Employees who are included in this smaller group and designated to work on campus will be notified by their supervisors. Other employees who have been working remotely should continue to do so.

Employees who have items in the workplace they need to retrieve before the order goes into effect at midnight should get them this evening. Swipe card access to all buildings is in place for today only. Buildings will be closed tomorrow. Employees designated to work on campus should call DPS (734.487.1222) to advise them of the building they are working in and the length of time they will be there.

Due to the Governor's Executive Order, the Student Center closed at 5 p.m. today and will remain closed at least through April 13 as noted in the Governor's Executive Order. This includes:

- [EMU Credit Union](#), which had been open by appointment only. Drive thru operations continue at nearby branches; and,
- [EMU Bookstore](#), which offers several free online initiatives to support students, including eBooks, access to Lumen Learning OER Courseware, online shipping, and deadline extensions.

Student grade and withdrawal options

Under these unprecedented circumstances and consistent with our commitment to support the academic needs of students in every way possible, the Provost's Office is adjusting student grade and withdrawal options. These include:

- Extending the deadline for students to request the Pass/No Pass grading option;
- Extending the deadline for students to request certain types of withdrawals from courses;
- Waiving degree requirements related to the cancellation of one-credit hour in person PEGN courses since the decision to suspend in person operations; and,
- Implementing alternative means of completing LBC requirements for graduation.

Summer registration

The Provost's Office today announced the delay of the start of Summer Registration until Monday, March 30 in order to allow for a review of the Summer A course schedule. Fall Registration began today as previously announced.

Student employees

Student employees may, if they wish and if their supervisor approves, continue to work remotely (and only on campus within the bounds of the Governor's Executive Order, with the approval of a vice president and following strict social distancing guidance). Timesheets are due tonight by 11:59 p.m. per the standard reporting process. Students should only report on their timesheets those hours that they have worked.

Tips for working remotely

The Division of Information Technology has prepared a set of tips for working remotely: [Resources to Prepare for working remotely \[PDF\]](#).

Swoop's Food Pantry reopens tomorrow

The John and Angie Sabo Swoop's Food Pantry Room reopens tomorrow (Tuesday, March 24) from noon – 3:30 p.m. It will be open during those same hours from Tuesday - Thursday of this week. Swoop's is seeking donations of these supplies:

- Refrigerated items such as milk, eggs and cheese. Also, beans - both canned and dried - and pasta, rice and bread.
- Self-care items such as body lotion, soap and bubble bath. Also creative outlets such as used (but with all the pieces!) puzzles, games, journals, and other creative things such as coloring books, markers, and crayons.

Swoop's can arrange pick-up of these items from your porch if you are in the Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor area. Please email Swoop's to inquire about making a food or self-care product donation, or to arrange a pickup, at swoops_pantry@emich.edu.

For those who wish to contribute financial support so that Swoop's can purchase necessary items based on client needs, donations are accepted here:

[Swoop's Student Food Pantry donations](#)

In addition, donations to support students can be made here:

[EMU Student Emergency Fund](#)

Please join me in thanking the staff of Swoop's for their extraordinary efforts on behalf of our students and the community.

[Additional community resources](#)

Engage @ EMU has compiled a [list of community resources](#). It includes services available for financial assistance, childcare, business support, food services, housing, internet, volunteer opportunities, and other community needs.

[The Dean of Students Office](#)

The Dean of Students Office is a resource for students on any issues or concerns they are facing. Like other campus offices, the Dean of Students Office is operating remotely. It is prepared to assist with student questions or concerns of many types, including food insecurity, academics, technology, health and wellness, or any other challenges a student may face. Please contact the Dean of Students at EMU_DeanofStudents@emich.edu.

[Urgent need for donations to local hospitals](#)

Many people responded to our campus wide initiative that we shared yesterday. As noted in the message, area health systems are being tested as a result of COVID-19,

with several seeking supplies for patient care. The University is soliciting the following items, in any quantity, to help our colleagues on the frontline of caring for these patients:

- Face masks, N95 masks, and face shields
- Gowns
- Surgical caps/protective caps
- Eyeglass shields/goggles
- Lysol or Clorox wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Nasal testing swabs
- M4 viral media
- Acetate transparency sheets - blank ones (which will be used to make "face shields")

Please drop off donations at EMU's Department of Public Safety located at 1200 Oakwood.

Additionally, our local hospitals are down to a 1-day supply of blood. If you can donate, please contact the [American Red Cross](#) and schedule your appointment today.

Questions about these needs can be directed to the School of Nursing at Nursing@emich.edu or 734.487.2310.

Student Gold Medallion Awards to be live streamed

In an effort to celebrate this year's nominees and award winners, Campus Life will live stream the announcement of the winners tomorrow, Tuesday, March 24, at 4 p.m. That is the time the event was originally scheduled before it had to be canceled. Watch the announcement live on Campus Life's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages.

Future steps

The actions we are taking today, consistent with the Governor's Executive Order, further reflect our ongoing commitment to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the Eastern Michigan University community. I ask you to continue to heed social distancing guidance, as well as hand washing and other [prevention \[PDF\]](#) measures.

Please continue to follow your University email and our [COVID-19 website](#) for additional updates, as well as resources to keep you safe.

Thank you for your continued attention to these urgent matters.

James Smith, Ph.D.