

March 17, 2020

Dear Students and Scholars,

As you are aware, rapid spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) has led governments around the world to take serious precautions for public safety. Universities worldwide have been taking similar action for the safety and well-being of students and communities. At this time, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 on UNC's campus, but as you are aware from President Feinstein's email last night, UNC has decided that the safest course for everyone is to move classes online (or to other alternate delivery methods) for the remainder of spring semester, and close most campus facilities at the end of today. Updates on [UNC's institutional response to COVID-19 are available online](#) and updated as new information becomes available.

We are asking all of our international students and scholars to complete an online form as soon as possible to help us track your plans and your wellbeing during this uniquely challenging time: https://unco.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5c258OEZMnHhq73 In addition, we ask that you keep us up to date on any changes to those plans as things evolve. We will do our best to provide available support.

Although campus buildings are closing, UNC is aware that not everyone is in a position to or should return home right now for a variety of reasons, including difficulty of travel. Unless directed otherwise or a decision is made in the interest of public health and safety, **student housing remains available to you, and contingency plans are being made for summer housing** in case travel restrictions make returning home term difficult or impossible or if there are other reasons it would be better to "shelter in place" in the United States. **To be clear, you are still welcome at UNC, and we will support you to the best of our ability if you intend or need to stay.**

For those of you who are able and wish to return home, we encourage you do so as quickly as possible – waiting longer may make the travel situation even more difficult and expensive as airlines cancel flights and countries impose additional travel restrictions. A list of current restrictions and exceptions updated daily is available from [Fragomen Worldwide](#) and while we cannot absolutely guarantee that the information is correct, it has matched individual restrictions we're aware of directly from individual governments, and appears to be a good consolidated resource. We also strongly recommend reaching out to the [Embassy or Consulate](#) of your home country for assistance if you have trouble with departure arrangements. Please let us know when you arrive home safely.

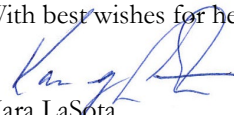
Active students and scholars who will need to maintain contact with ISSS to maintain valid immigration status whether you stay or go home. Guidance for F-1 students at the end of their program or OPT is still unclear, but we will provide updates as the information becomes available from the Department of Homeland Security.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone in CIE. We are very much still working, and will respond as quickly as possible:

- 24/7 UNC International Emergency Phone - +1-970-576-9572 (call or text)
- Center for International Education Main Line- 970-351-2396
- Kara LaSota, Director of International Student & Scholar Services, 970-351-3017, Kara.LaSota@unco.edu
- Brandy Tackett, Director of Study Abroad, Brandy.Tackett@unco.edu
- Olga Baron, Executive Director, Center for International Education, Olga.Baron@unco.edu
- Jacob Sutton, International Advisor, Jacob.Sutton@unco.edu
- Meiren Chen Meiren, Coordinator for International Partnerships, Chen@unco.edu

On behalf of the entire CIE team, I want to thank each of you for your patience and understanding as we work through unprecedented circumstances. We will continue to respond to your important questions and concerns, but we do encourage you to regularly check the UNC [COVID response page](#), which will address many issues, even before we are aware of the answers at CIE.

With best wishes for health and safety,



Kara LaSota

Director, International Student and Scholar Services, PDSO/RO