

President's Update: Tuesday, March 10, 2020

[SACSEND] President Robert S. Nelsen <univ-mx-pres@csus.edu>

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To: Conejo, Diego G <diegoconejo@csus.edu>



To All Members of the Campus Community:

At Sacramento State, we all work hard every day to provide a first-class education to our students, foster academic innovation, and address the success of our community in a diverse and inclusive environment. Sometimes we face circumstances that challenge our ability to meet these goals, and the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) is one of those. We are in contact with public health officials as well as civic and higher education leaders to keep abreast of the changing situation. The health and safety of the Hornet Family is our first priority. But our mission remains the same: to educate students. We will not lose sight of that mission, and we know you will not, either.

So, we will **keep teaching**. The information and resources we have developed regarding [Academic Continuity](#) will help us. We will be as flexible as we can in delivering instruction, including allowing those faculty who choose to do so to shift their courses to a virtual yet synchronous mode. [After consulting with the Chancellor's Office](#) and our Faculty Senate Chair, **effective immediately and until local circumstances change, instructors can shift part or all of their remaining course content to a non-face-to-face setting and teach their classes virtually, using technology, as long as virtual class meetings occur during the normal scheduled class time (synchronously)**. Lecture capture and similar means of archiving synchronous teaching are encouraged, so that students who are ill or have difficulty accessing the instruction at the time can engage with it later.

If an instructor chooses to shift to virtual instruction, it is permissible to take some time to prepare. Faculty should inform their department chair if they plan to move to virtual class meetings before they take action. Faculty may cancel classes for two to four days to shift their instructional modality and give themselves and their students time to adjust. This preparation time

also can be used to ensure, to the extent possible, that course materials meet accessibility standards; information on how to do so can be found by consulting the [Accessible Technology Initiative](#) and the [Center for Teaching and Learning](#) websites.

At this time, **face-to-face class meetings are not cancelled for those classes whose instructors do not voluntarily shift to synchronous virtual delivery**. If in-person classes are suspended at a later point, the decision will be made after careful review of our local situation, which includes consultation with public health officials, civic leaders, and other higher education institutions. Under these voluntary circumstances, it is up to the instructor to determine if course objectives can be met by shifting the modality from in-person to virtual instruction. It is imperative that whatever decision is made by a faculty member, it is communicated clearly to students.

We understand that other universities have cancelled in-person classes and a local school district has closed. Given the uncertainty of the situation, if new information or guidance becomes available, then we may have to adjust our plans on short notice. We are conferring with the CSU Chancellor's Office and other CSU campuses as we monitor the situation. **Sacramento State is maintaining normal operations at this time.**

That said, **we encourage maximum flexibility and suggest that faculty or students who either should not or do not wish to attend in-person classes for COVID-19-related reasons should complete their work via alternate means**. Unless instructors voluntarily shift to virtual instruction, to the extent possible, they should provide supplementary online materials to help absent students continue the course at the same rate as students who come to class. Clear communication about these options is important so that no student who is ill feels pressured to attend class. Similarly, any instructor who is ill should arrange with their department chair for assistance, as they normally would. We further encourage instructors to coordinate at the departmental level as much as possible.

Once again, this is a challenging time. We have faced challenging times before, and as we have done in the past, we will face this one keeping our mission in mind and caring for our students and one another. The [Academic Continuity](#) resources page has suggestions, tips, and assistance as you **keep teaching**. Please reach out if you have any questions or need assistance.

We understand that there is a great amount of fear, anxiety, and concern around COVID-19. Let us support one another during this uncertain time.

COVID-19 is a virus that can affect all humans. Racism, discrimination, and anti-immigrant rhetoric about specific communities do not reflect the values of the Hornet Family. The [Hornet Honor Code](#) reaffirms our commitment to inclusion and to being a caring campus. We will not stand for misinformation, denigration, and stereotyping of Asian and Asian American communities.

If you become aware of a student or employee who has tested positive for COVID-19, please contact Risk Management Services at 916-278-6119.

Sincerely,

Robert S. Nelsen, President
Steve Perez, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Adam Rechs, Chair of the Faculty Senate

This official Sacramento State email was sent to diegoconejo@csus.edu.

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