



A Message
from the **PRESIDENT**

Anthony L. Jenkins, Ph.D.

Dear Yellow Jacket Nation:

As public concern continues regarding the Novel Coronavirus (also referred to as COVID-19), my office has been in regular contact with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC). HEPC is working with local and state health officials to monitor the latest information being made available to the general public. Information regarding preparedness, response efforts, and outreach to public health partners is being discussed but, as of yet, we do not have specific state-level guidance.

Current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) continue to advise the general public to follow these everyday actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- * Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- * Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- * Stay home when you are sick.
- * Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- * Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- * Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
 - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
 - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers.

The CDC is providing updates regularly online at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

The state of West Virginia through the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) has created a website to share the latest information available in the state at www.coronavirus.wv.gov. In addition, DHHR has established a toll-free hotline that you can call 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the latest information at 1-800-887-4304. DHHR announced this past Saturday that testing for COVID-19 can now be performed in-state by DHHR's Bureau for Public Health's lab.

Here at the University we have also created a webpage where we will provide updated information about COVID-19 as it becomes available. This can be found at www.wvstateu.edu/coronavirus.

I want to encourage everyone to follow the CDC's advice, especially as it relates to staying home if you are sick, without fear for our faculty and staff of not having enough sick days, or for our students of missing class too many times.

For our faculty and staff who have exhausted all of their paid time off, I am extending three additional days of paid leave to be utilized so that you have time to stay home and care for yourself. If you have any questions about this, I encourage you to contact the University's Department of Human Resources at (304) 766-3156.

For our students, if your professor has stated in their class syllabus that you will be penalized for missing too many classes, I am suspending those penalties for absences. If you are sick, stay home. This does not relieve you of completing class assignments; please work with your professor.

As this is an evolving situation, I will provide further updates as they are available.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anthony L. Jenkins".

Anthony L. Jenkins, Ph.D.
President

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