

**From:** Office of the Provost  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 3, 2020 10:40 AM  
**To:** Coltman, Heather - coltmahj  
**Subject:** Letter to Faculty and Staff - Coronavirus

Dear colleagues,

James Madison University officials are closely monitoring the spread of coronavirus and following guidance from the CDC, the Virginia Department of Health, and the federal government related to university operations at home and abroad. We have made [changes to a number of international programs](#), including closing our Spring 2020 program in Italy, and cancelled a spring break trip to Japan as well as two short-term Summer 2020 programs in China. Additional announcements about other Summer 2020 programs are expected in the coming weeks.

While there are currently no cases within our JMU community or the state of Virginia, the CDC has [identified a number of cases](#) in the U.S., and is expecting that number to rise. To protect the health and well-being of everyone in the JMU community, the university has advised anyone exhibiting symptoms of a communicable disease to remain out of class, away from work, and avoid others for the duration of the illness and for 24 hours after symptoms abate.

It is important that students are able to adhere to this guidance and practice social distancing and self-isolation, and we would like to remind everyone of the university's [Medical Excuse Policy](#), which states that the JMU Health Center will not provide students with medical excuses for short-term absences from class, labs or the like. This allows our providers to dedicate their time to providing medical care for our students, and focus their limited resources on tending to the large influx of patients suffering from the flu and other communicable diseases typical for this time of year. It also encourages students to communicate their situation directly with faculty members. We ask that faculty make every reasonable accommodation to allow sick students to stay out of contact with others. This could include providing course materials or testing online. For information on how the university can support you in these efforts, please contact [JMU Libraries](#).

Also, with spring break approaching, we remind faculty planning personal travel that the entry of foreign nationals to any country for which the CDC has issued a Level 3 Travel Health Notice has been suspended. Countries currently carrying a Level 3 travel warning are experiencing widespread sustained transmission of Coronavirus, and include China, South Korea and Italy. The university also asks those planning travel to countries carrying a Level 2 warning, which currently includes Japan, to adhere to the CDC's recommendation to reconsider travel. This situation is evolving rapidly, and the most up to date information on CDC travel notices can be found [here](#).

Lastly, I want to extend my thanks and support. We recognize that our faculty are globally connected, and there are some of you who are worrying about family, friends and colleagues abroad. There are others who

are going above and beyond to accommodate our students who have unexpectedly returned home from study abroad programs or have had their international programs cancelled altogether. Others of you continue to travel the globe, rearranging and changing travel, but continuing to promote your scholarship and JMU on the global stage. I recognize this work, and thank you for it. It is faculty like you that make JMU so special.

Please be assured that the administration is meeting regularly and closely monitoring this situation. Our primary goal is to protect the health and safety of our faculty and staff, students, and our Harrisonburg community. We will continue to communicate as more information becomes available.

Sincerely,

Dr. Heather Coltman

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs