

**From:** Office of the Provost  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 9:14 AM  
**Subject:** COVID-19

Dear Colleagues,

I last wrote to you [on Tuesday](#) about our work to monitor the evolving COVID-19 situation and align university planning with guidance from health officials. Our Academic Affairs Infectious Disease and Campus Tech Response Teams are active and integrated with the ongoing work of the university's larger Infectious Disease Response Team.

I have urged you make reasonable accommodations for students who may be out of the classroom in the coming weeks or months. One way to do this is by making online teaching and testing options available. To be clear: there is no mandate at present to move courses online. However, I do encourage you to explore options for alternative modes of delivery in the event of any possible disruption to normal operations. The JMU Libraries is here to help. I recommend reviewing the resources they are assembling [here](#).

Also, we recognize that public health emergencies are stressful times for communities. Fear and anxiety about a disease can lead to social stigma toward people and places, for example, associating COVID-19 with a population or nationality, or with people who have traveled. Stigma hurts everyone by creating fear and anger toward others. The reality is that diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity. *(Adapted from the CDC's [webpage](#) on Stigma and Resilience.)*

We ask you as faculty and staff to continue to model the JMU way, that Dukes take care of Dukes. If you or your students have experienced stigma, please contact JMU's Office of Equal Opportunity at [oeo@jmu.edu](mailto:oeo@jmu.edu). If your students are in need of mental health services, have them contact the JMU Counseling Center through their [Outreach Request Form](#).

Please continue to check JMU's [COVID-19 FAQ page](#) for the most up to date information.

Thank you for all that you do.

Sincerely,

Dr. Heather Coltman

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs