

COVID-19 Academic Response Update for Students—March 13, 2020

Winthrop's Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) continues to monitor DHEC and CDC information on the development of COVID-19. Communications will continue to come from CIMT via our University Communications and Marketing team and be updated on the [campus coronavirus website](#). Notifications from Academic Affairs will be added to the site as well. Please continue to check the website and your email for ongoing notifications.

As President Hynd noted yesterday, Winthrop University will move all instruction and academic advising activities to remote formats for the two weeks following Spring Break.

I am sure your faculty have already reached out to share communication plans and start the conversation on what to expect after Spring Break. They will need the next week to firm up those plans and communicate them more to you. We are not expecting faculty to transform face-to-face classes into fully online classes, but to use digital tools (Blackboard, email, social media, etc.) to maintain continuity of instruction for the two-week time period after break. We will follow this schedule:

1. March 16 – 20 (Spring Break): no instruction; faculty preparation for delivery of remote instruction
2. March 23 – 27: advising begins March 25; week one of remote instruction
3. March 30 – April 3: advising continues; remote instruction continues
4. At this time, our plan is for classes to resume on Monday, April 6, 2020.

In order to ensure that we continue to meet your learning needs and provide the high quality instruction you expect, all faculty have been instructed to take the following steps:

1) Establish a digital mode of communication.

- Ensure students all have access to and are aware of the class's preferred communication method (Blackboard, email, app, listserv, phone).
- Use your Winthrop email when communicating whenever possible.

2) Create a plan for how your course will continue using digital resources and/or assignments based upon the current syllabus, communicating expectations for March 23 through April 3.

- Faculty are encouraged to use Blackboard for sharing documents, whenever possible, in order to limit attachments and links sent through email. Bad actors will be taking advantage of this opportunity and may target higher education more with phishing schemes as email traffic increases. Remember your security training and reach out to IT with any concerns/questions.

3) Make their syllabus available within Blackboard so that students can locate all materials in one location. If the course has a separate site, provide a link to it from Blackboard.

4) At this time, Academic Affairs staff will continue to work normal hours on campus. We do not close business operations during Spring Break, so please reach out with any questions you have to any of our offices.

Additional guidance:

1) Technology concerns:

- A limited number of laptops are available for degree-seeking students who do not have their own personal devices. Please contact Dacus Library and/or the ITC on the third floor of Withers if you need to check out a laptop.

- Library access will be available on limited hours for local and commuter students without access to computing or WIFI at their homes.
- 2) Advising will need to happen virtually.
- Your advisor will contact you on how to sign up for an advising time, using Sharepoint, GoogleDoc, or another similar product to schedule advising sessions electronically.
 - Please check DegreeWorks for your progress and have a list of courses prepared to discuss remotely with your advisor.
 - Meetings will need to take place virtually, on phones, Collaborate, Skype, etc.
- 3) Until further notice, Deans will provide guidance to departments on access to studios and labs. Talk to your department Chair and faculty about any questions.
- 4) Until further notice, Deans will make decisions on essential experiential activities, such as internships in school districts, which may follow school rules. Talk to your department Chair and faculty about any questions.
- 5) All university-sponsored events from March 15 through April 3 are cancelled, and alternative options for satisfying requirements in these areas will be considered. The Registrar's Office will send notifications about outstanding Cultural Events requirements to students who are graduating.
- 6) Student Affairs has prepared the following link as a way for you to ask questions if you're not sure who to ask, but see the bullets below for some basic guidance in areas where we have received the most questions: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WinthropUniv&layout_id=10 (if this link does not work for you by clicking on it, please cut and paste into your browser)
- Decisions about study abroad student experiences, faculty-led study abroad offerings, and international student travel and enrollments are being made through the International Center and sent directly to involved individuals.
 - Decisions about access to Residence Halls will be made by Residence Life in consultation with campus Senior Leadership, Deans, and faculty. Information will be released shortly.
 - Decisions about student work assignments will be made and communicated through your supervisors, in consultation with Human Resources. Stay in touch with your supervisor with any questions.
 - For any questions about your academic progress, please reach out first to your advisor, faculty, and/or department Chair.
- 7) Finally, thank you for your resilience as we move through this exercise. Please know that all of your faculty, staff, and the administrative leadership of the institution have your best interests in mind as we make decisions that will protect your health and the continuation of your learning experiences at Winthrop University. Please travel safely as you leave for Spring Break!

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