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University Communications

Minot State to shift to remote instruction; campus to remain open

Please continue to follow MSU's COVID-19 webpage:

<https://www.minotstateu.edu/health/covid-19/>

MINOT, N.D. – The health and well-being of our entire community of students, faculty, and staff is our highest priority. In light of the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak and rapidly changing conditions, including the fact that North Dakota's first confirmed case was identified yesterday here in Ward County, **MSU will shift on-campus/in-person classes to remote instructional delivery for the two weeks following Spring Break. Minot State University will remain open, but there will be no face-to-face classes held on campus during the weeks of March 23-27 and March 30-April 3.** Faculty will determine how best to utilize technology so students can continue with their education during these two weeks.

Please read below for more information on how we will support the teaching and learning environment at MSU.

University Operations: At this time, the MSU campus intends to remain open during the next three weeks and has no plans of suspending operations. However, hours of operation and services in certain departments may be limited depending on employee availability and campus needs.

Remote Learning: Course information will be available through Blackboard as the main communication tool beginning Monday, March 23 through Friday, April 3. Individual faculty members are best positioned to determine alternative methods of instruction that will meet course objectives and student needs during this time – especially in courses involving labs, clinical experiences, music lessons/performances, etc. Be sure to monitor Blackboard and your MSU email account for updates from your instructors.

Residence Halls & Dining: Residence hall students are asked to take their essential personal belongings and academic materials home with them as they depart for Spring Break and to not return to campus until April 5. While we are encouraging students to remain away from campus, for those students unable to leave, our residence halls and dining services will remain open. Please note Dining Services will be closed from March 14 until 5 pm on March 22, as previously scheduled for Spring Break.

Remote Technology Needs: If you have any concerns about engaging in your classes through remote learning, please call MSU's IT Central at 701-858-4444 and let your instructor know immediately so we can find a solution for you.

Travel: As you consider traveling during Spring Break, stay informed regarding state emergencies relative to the coronavirus, and consider limiting your domestic travel. International travel is discouraged as you may have difficulty returning to the U.S. without a quarantine period.

Athletics: As the University will remain open, Beaver Athletic teams will continue with their seasons as scheduled. The Athletic Department is in close consultation with conference officials as well as our team physician, and will adjust and utilize best practices as recommended. This is an evolving situation and could quickly change, but for now our teams will continue with their practices/games as scheduled.

Some Final Tips:

1. The risk of acquiring infection increases substantially the more you are around other people. One of the key principles of mitigating serious communicable diseases is to practice social distancing, (i.e. avoiding events and situations that put us in close contact with many people). Frequent travel puts us in close contact with many people, such as in airplanes, airports, restaurants, and large events or gatherings. Please consider if your travel is necessary, and if it could possibly be postponed or altogether canceled.
2. People who are at higher risk of more severe outcomes from COVID-19 should strongly consider foregoing any travel. This would include people over the age of 60, or those with underlying chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, chronic respiratory diseases, or immunosuppressive conditions.
3. If you must travel, try as much as possible to practice social distancing by avoiding large crowds and keeping space between you and others where people congregate. Practice frequent hand-hygiene by washing hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based sanitizer, cover your mouth when you sneeze, sanitize frequently-touched surfaces, and avoid touching your face, mouth, and eyes.
4. Please be vigilant for the development of any signs or symptoms of respiratory tract infection. If you develop any symptoms of fever, cough, or sore throat, please see your own medical provider as appropriate, and do not come to work or class until you have been evaluated and your symptoms have resolved.

We will continue to monitor the situation and may adjust our course delivery timeline as conditions warrant. Students, please read your email and log into Blackboard daily. We expect to resume face-to-face classes on April 6. However, this is obviously a fluid situation and any changes will be communicated via email. This decision is complicated and may cause some obvious disruptions, but it is certainly best to err on the side of caution during these challenging times. We are committed to ensuring you can complete your courses and get the support you need as we navigate this pandemic situation.

About Minot State University

Minot State University is a public university dedicated to excellence in education, scholarship, and community engagement achieved through rigorous academic experiences, active learning environments, commitment to public service, and a vibrant campus life.

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