



# Office of the President

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

March 2, 2020

Dear Lumberjack community,  
Northern Arizona University continues to closely monitor the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak in coordination with federal, state, and local health and emergency preparedness organizations. This is a rapidly evolving situation, and NAU will continue to provide updates for our community as new information becomes available.

This isn't a time to panic or to react to rumors, but to focus on the latest information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local health officials, plan ahead, prepare, and respond with common-sense action. The health of the Lumberjack community is our top priority, and I'd like to share how NAU is prepared to respond and how you can help.

## **NAU following county, state, and U.S. officials' advice on planning and preparedness**

While there is no imminent threat, the CDC has indicated that the prudent action at this time is to prepare for the potential spread of COVID-19. We are working closely with the State of Arizona and the Coconino County Health Department to monitor the virus and take appropriate action.

NAU has an emergency preparedness function and an incident management team that is actively monitoring the outbreak and working to ensure we minimize operational disruption while ensuring the delivery of classes and the continuation of essential services to our students, faculty, and staff throughout the state.

Academic plans include the full use of Blackboard (BbLearn). The majority of our faculty are already using BbLearn, and we recommend that all others move class material to BbLearn to ensure we are prepared if classes need to be moved online. We are creating training modules and materials for faculty who may need some additional support.

Details related to the NAU Campus Emergency Management Plan and contingency measures will be released if there is a need for implementation.

## **NAU Study Abroad**

Following level 3 travel advisories from the CDC and U.S. State Department, NAU has required all students studying abroad in China, South Korea, and Italy to return home as quickly and safely as possible. NAU and the Center for International Education (CIE) are actively monitoring the global situation in concert with national and regional governmental agencies and will continue to provide appropriate direction to NAU students studying abroad based upon travel advisories and updates from the CDC and the U.S. State Department.

### **Restriction on University Travel**

The CDC has issued a Travel Warning-Level 3: Avoid Nonessential Travel for all travel to China, South Korea, Italy, and Iran. The U.S. Department of State recommends reconsidering travel to these countries.

Following NAU policy, any university-related travel to a level 2+ or higher country needs to go through the campus travel review committee for approval. This ensures the university is able to provide health and safety information before, during, and after travel.

Travel to China, South Korea, Italy, and Iran on university funds is not permitted at this time, or for the foreseeable future until further advised. Travel through any heavily affected areas should be avoided.

### **Spring Break and Non-Essential Travel**

At this time, NAU strongly urges all members of our university community to follow CDC advisories and avoid nonessential travel to or through areas of high risk.

### **Safety Information and Recommendations**

There have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in any NAU students, faculty, or staff members. NAU's Campus Health Services (CHS) is working closely with the Coconino County Health Department and will continue to screen students, faculty, and staff as appropriate and within its normal intake and triage process. Recommended resources for our NAU community, including statewide and NAU Online, are listed below:

- **State of Arizona: Arizona Public Health Director Dr. Cara Christ has provided an update on the state's planned response to COVID-19.**
- **Center for Disease Control: The CDC has additional resources for guidance, planning, and preparedness.**
- **Department of Health and Human Services: The Department of Health and Human Services has issued guidelines on how best to prepare your household.**

## **Prevention**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if you're sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your arm or a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces with regular household cleaning spray or a wipe.
- Get a flu shot through your primary care provider, local urgent care clinic, or NAU's CHS.

### **Treatment**

Should you feel ill or have questions or concerns about your health, please contact your health care provider or CHS at (928) 523-2131. Individuals who have been in a high-risk area such as China, South Korea, or Italy within the last 14 days and are now experiencing a cough, difficulty breathing, or a fever should contact their local health care provider.

### **Staying Informed**

As we work to protect the well-being of our Lumberjack community, we are committed to providing timely and factual information on an ongoing basis. We have developed an NAU website to share official information and updates.

[nau.edu/coronavirus](https://nau.edu/coronavirus) is Northern Arizona University's official source of information about COVID-19. It will be updated regularly. We will continue to share important information on how to stay healthy, remind you of the health and wellness resources that are available to you, and inform you of the national and international protocols to which the university is adhering to help minimize the spread of illness.

In an effort to support and inform all Lumberjacks, the website includes a resources page to keep you abreast of the latest developments from local, state, federal, and global agencies. Please rely on information that links directly from this site and be aware that other sources may not reflect the most current and accurate information.

We also will push out updates through campus messages like this and by using our NAUgo app. As necessary, social media updates will be provided through officially-approved university communications channels, including **Facebook** and **Twitter**.

### **How you can help**

A good response for every Lumberjack is to get serious about staying healthy with everyday preventive behaviors.

Coughing or sneezing into an arm or tissue; washing hands frequently; avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth; and staying home if you are feeling ill. It's also important to take care of yourself—eat healthy, maintain good sleep habits, and manage stress wisely. Encourage co-workers, roommates, and friends to take simple precautions as noted above.

### **Thank you**

The health and well-being of the Lumberjack community is our utmost concern, and I want to thank you for supporting each other. Together we will navigate through this. Please do not share misinformation; instead, continue to check the NAU website for updates related to our community and stay informed by referring to state and federal websites for accurate updates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rita".

**Rita Hartung Cheng**  
President