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**From:** Office of the President  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 18, 2020  
**Subject:** Update from Interim President Harroz - March 18, 2020



*The* UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA.  
*Office of the President*

March 18, 2020

Dear OU Community:

I write with important announcements across a range of issues related to COVID-19 and OU. The safety of our community and our fellow citizens is our first obligation, which is why we are taking the necessary measures noted below. We must do our part to help confront this public health crisis.

Fortunately, in making our decisions, we have the benefit of our subject matter experts at the OU Health Sciences Center. It is noteworthy, that well beyond advising us on our campus plans, our healthcare leadership is helping lead the state and nation through this crisis, including by performing important research that could lead to a medical breakthrough in the global treatment of COVID-19.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO CLASSES, RESEARCH, AND EVENTS**

**OU Norman Campus Classes.** Norman campus will remain online for the remainder of the semester. Students are encouraged to visit [ou.edu/learnanywhere](https://ou.edu/learnanywhere) for further information and resources on attending classes online. Faculty may visit [ou.edu/teachanywhere](https://ou.edu/teachanywhere) for instructional resources.

**OU Health Sciences Center Classes.** Students enrolled in Health Sciences Center programs have received direct communications from their colleges about online instruction and modifications to clinical and community-based instruction. Students in these programs with questions should contact their colleges directly. Additional information is available at [students.ouhsc.edu/coronavirus](https://students.ouhsc.edu/coronavirus).

**OU-Tulsa Classes.** Norman-based programs will remain online for the remainder of the semester. HSC programs will receive direct communications from their colleges regarding both classes and clinical rotations.

**Research Enterprise.** We are committed to continuing our research mission while making sure we take steps to keep members of our community safe. We will provide guidance on this in the coming days.

**Graduation Ceremonies.** The ceremonies are postponed, and we are working to modify them. We are actively exploring ways we can honor our graduates and their achievements at an appropriate time. This will likely look very

different, perhaps even virtual, with an opportunity to participate in an in-person ceremony when it is safe to do so. We hope to reschedule these events for later in the summer, and we will communicate updates as we have them.

**University-related Events.** All in-person events with greater than 10 attendees on all three campuses are suspended until at least May 11. Our decision is based on recommendations from the CDC and our state and national leaders. This restriction includes events that are not University-sponsored as well, including conferences, symposia, and social gatherings. This does not preclude small internal meetings, where social distancing should be the touchstone. The OU Athletics Department has suspended all athletics competitions, as well as all out-of-season practices and workouts, until further notice. More information on athletics events may be found at [soonersports.com](http://soonersports.com).

## **GUIDELINES FOR ON-CAMPUS HOUSING**

**Norman Campus Residential Housing.** We will have a reduced occupancy model for on-campus housing for the remainder of the spring semester with the exception of Kraettli and Traditions apartments. Certainly, students who have no other housing option will remain in on-campus housing, and we are committed to assisting all residents, including our international student community, in every possible way. On-campus housing residents can expect to receive specific information from OU Housing in the coming days. Regrettably, the rapid pace of this unfolding crisis does not allow us to have the answers for all questions at this time. We will, however, address all questions as quickly as is possible.

## **GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEES**

**Telecommuting.** Telecommuting is strongly encouraged across all three campuses. Visit [HR's Coronavirus and the Workplace guidelines](#) for more information. Employees from all three campuses should consult supervisors for position-specific details.

On the Norman campus, the five-day closure that started on March 15 comes to a close Friday, March 20. Wherever compatible with continuing operations, all supervisors should institute telecommuting plans for staff through the end of the spring semester. Any Norman campus faculty, staff, and students who return to campus are urged to use caution and practice social distancing and proper hygiene.

**Student Employees.** Managers are also encouraged to develop and implement telework plans for student employees and graduate assistants where the telework plan supports University operations.

**Counseling Services.** The counseling center will remain open during the semester and can provide services by phone or ZOOM. OU counselors can be reached at (405) 325-2911 to make an appointment.

COVID-19 presents an unprecedented challenge, but I'm confident as ever in the OU community's ability to navigate the coming days with care, wisdom, and a collective resolve. My profound thanks go to all our students, faculty, staff, and residents for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,

Joseph Harroz, Jr.  
Interim President

[OU COVID-19 Updates](#)  
[OU Medicine COVID-19 Resources](#)

