

**March 14, 2020**

**TO:** MSU community

**FROM: Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D.**  
President

Dear Spartans:

As we collectively continue to monitor the novel coronavirus pandemic, the number of cases of across our community and state continues to accelerate. The leadership at Michigan State University continues to meet daily on this topic and make decisions we think are best to keep our Spartan community healthy and safe.

**Today, we decided that all classes and instruction will continue to be offered in virtual settings through the conclusion of the semester, including finals.** Students do not need to plan for the possibility of returning to campus by April 20 as we had originally announced earlier this week. The university remains committed to providing a strong education to all our students and especially helping those who are graduating this year to succeed.

The colleges of Human Medicine, Nursing, Osteopathic Medicine and Veterinary Medicine have unique requirements to complete because their students are involved in providing care. Students, staff and faculty in those areas will receive additional guidance from the deans of their respective areas.

**We also have decided to postpone commencement.** We will make every effort to reschedule and allow our Class of 2020 an appropriate time and place to celebrate their successful Spartan journey.

**As we said earlier this week, students are strongly encouraged to return to their permanent residences.** We recognize that for some students MSU is their permanent residence and we will continue to care for them during this time. The campus does remain open. Also, many of our international students are in unique situations and we continue to work with them to provide the best solutions possible. For students living on campus, you will receive follow up information from your residence hall. For those living off campus, in Greek houses, co-ops, apartment and houses – we urge you all to consider where the safest place is for you to be. All students are in our thoughts as they battle through these unprecedented circumstances. We understand that our students, and staff come from very different and unique backgrounds and have different levels of social supports, and food and housing securities. If you have any concerns about your options, please don't hesitate to contact your advisor.

**For our employees, as we communicated yesterday, we are encouraging remote working and telecommuting when possible.** The work needed to keep our university running will continue, and we are grateful for the commitment from all.

Along with many others, we are doing our best to mitigate the spread of the virus across our state and country. We know that these measures will not be effective in protecting every individual, but we can slow the extent and speed of the epidemic and potentially save many lives. We were notified yesterday of our first confirmed case related to our MSU community, and we anticipate there will be more. We

are making all our operational and educational decision based on scientific data and healthcare practices that will keep us safer.

In this regard, **I am very concerned and troubled by the photos and media coverage I've seen of crowded student lines at local East Lansing bars over the past few days.** The spread of the novel coronavirus is very serious, and our students need to understand the critical importance of social distancing and how the virus can spread quickly in large crowds. I want to remind everyone again, that this is a time for personal responsibility and personal hygiene – make smart decisions to keep yourself healthy and please consider those around you. The university is in constant contact with health and law enforcement officials about how we can prevent the further spread of coronavirus and stop irresponsible behaviors. **We need everyone's cooperation in this crisis.**

Finally, I would like to thank our entire community for their understanding this past week. The coronavirus situation is evolving quickly, and we have had to adjust many elements of our lives. Faculty and students have responded very well to the virtual instruction and lessons, and I have the utmost confidence that our students will receive an excellent education no matter what format it is delivered in. As a research institution, we have impactful studies happening all over campus and that work is continuing as well.

**The dedication I have witnessed to support our students, keep our campus running, and support one another is uplifting and shows our Spartan spirit.**

The novel coronavirus is impacting all of us in some way. Please take care of yourselves and your loved ones. For more information, please visit our website [www.msu.edu/coronavirus](http://www.msu.edu/coronavirus) and utilize our toll free line: 888-353-1294.