Howdy Student Organization Leaders and Advisors!

As you are probably aware at this point, Texas A&M University is closely monitoring the worldwide situation regarding COVID-19. As such, I wanted to share a university update, how we in Student Activities are responding to the evolving concerns surrounding COVID-19, and how you and your student organization can continue to navigate the remainder of the semester.

In light of the fast-evolving circumstances surrounding COVID-19, here are some guidelines and recommendations to assist you as you prepare for organizational activities in the weeks ahead. Our goal is to slow the potential transmission of the virus and protect all populations from exposure. Every member of the TAMU community has been asked to help in this effort.

CLASSES AND COURSEWORK
- As of March 12, classes scheduled from March 16-20 are cancelled.
- **Coursework will resume (online only) beginning March 23-April 28,** however campus will remain open to faculty, staff and students. Texas A&M leadership will advise faculty members on all protocols in the days to come. As this is an evolving situation, make sure you stay informed, as we are receiving regular updates.
- No undergraduate students will be required to be physically on campus, but students are permitted to be on campus for services and facility usage as long as capacity numbers are followed – see below. Graduate and professional students should contact their respective programs for guidance. Students conducting clinical activities should consult your respective program leadership for guidance.

KEY INFORMATION
- Class cancellation March 16 – 20
- Online classes March 23 – April 28
- New meetings and events guidance with maximum of 50 participants
- Guidance for self-monitoring (all) or self-isolation (Level 3 country travelers)
- New travel restrictions internationally and domestically
- Campus services and other information

STUDENT ORGANIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS
- Stay informed. Communication is being updated on the tamu.edu/coronavirus/ page regularly.
- Map out what is upcoming for your organization the rest of this semester (meetings, elections, interviews, programs) with your organization leadership and advisors.
- Communicate with your organization members and share the university’s message. Send regular reminders and communications so your membership stays informed.
- Begin working now to develop contingency plans for upcoming programs and events that might be impacted – keep in mind the University guidelines on meetings, events, and activities.
- Look at your attendance policies. Set out appropriate expectations for participation and respect individuals’ decisions regarding their specific situations.
Stay healthy by washing your hands for 20 seconds, use hand sanitizer, stay home if you are sick, and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Other precautions can be found on the tamu.edu/coronavirus/ website.

Remember that staff in the Department of Student Activities and your advisor(s) are here to help you navigate these unique considerations and conversations.

MEETINGS, EVENTS, AND ACTIVITIES

- Meetings and events are now restricted to less than 50 participants with no participants from off campus (other than campus community members such as RELLIS, etc.) or traveling from other states or countries through April 3. Meeting rooms must have considerations for appropriate social distancing.
- If you are planning an event or meeting at TAMU, remember this is an evolving situation. Please make all participants aware of the potential for last minute adjustments and/or cancelations. Your organization should make contingency plans just in case. Work with the Department of Student Activities and your advisor if you have questions or concerns.

BEST PRACTICES FOR HOSTING

- Re-evaluate the necessity of meetings or events.
- Use remote technology to collaborate via teleconferencing instead of meeting in person. For more information on how to utilize teleconferencing, visit DoIT guidelines for remote work. We will be providing training opportunities for those interested in learning how to use technology.
- For all gatherings, remind attendees of simple measures to lower risk and prevent the spread of viruses (e.g. not shaking hands, practicing social distancing, etc.).
- Ensure easy access to handwashing facilities, and make sure alcohol-based sanitizers are readily available to all participants.
- To reduce the chance of transmitting illness into or out of the TAMU community, events with speakers invited from off campus—whether the speakers are international or domestic—should be cancelled, postponed, or conducted remotely. Talk to your advisor or the Department of Student Activities if you have questions about contracts.
- Organizers should know and understand all restrictions and take into consideration the COVID-19 status of all areas that participants may be traveling from.
- Choose a room or event space large enough to prevent crowding for the expected attendance.
- Consider staggering food and drink stations, and serve food in individual units like bag lunches, individual water bottles, etc.
- Avoid serving foods where multiple hands will touch the food (e.g. bowls of chips). Provide serving utensils if needed or arrange for food to be served by staff who are trained in safe food handling.
- When possible, increase the frequency of any shuttle service provided to the event location so there is more space on board for passengers.
- Education and communication from event organizers should include:
  - Acknowledgement that coronavirus is a concern
  - Recommendation to stay informed by following TAMU COVID-19 webpage: https://www.TAMU.edu/coronavirus
  - Advice to stay home if ill (organizers should consider refunding costs such as tickets, apparel, etc. in these circumstances)
- Display Signs/Posters/Table Tents/Digital images reminding participants of prevention measures.
- Ensure you have a protocol if a participant showcases symptoms of illness.
- Announce actions participants should take to protect themselves and limit infection spread at the start and throughout the event.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Below you will find a few additional resources with updated information about COVID-19 disease activity and recommendations:
The Department of Student Activities staff is here to support you and your organization! We will provide regular updates over the next few weeks. Additionally, we will be available Monday, March 16, 2020 to assist student organizations as needed. Please email soda@stuact.tamu.edu to schedule an in-person or virtual appointment.

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