Dear graduate and professional students,

This message is being sent to you by the Office of Graduate Education and Life (OGEL) to supplement and expand on information being provided to the University community about WVU’s response to the Coronavirus pandemic. Please share this information as appropriate, check coronavirus.wvu.edu for more details, and watch your email for additional updates, as the policies and procedures described here may change at any time.

· **Summary of WVU’s response to the coronavirus crisis relevant to graduate and professional students.**

  - On-campus classes will resume in an online format on Monday, March 30.
  - Students are encouraged to not travel back to Morgantown unless necessary to help limit the spread of the virus.
  - Campus will be largely closed by the end of the day, Friday, March 20.

· **Graduate assistants (GAs).**

  - GAs should work with their supervisors to develop a plan for remote work.
  - GAs will not be allowed to work on campus without Research Office or Provost’s Office approval. Some GAs may need to be on campus to assist with research lab maintenance or undergraduate instruction. These GAs’ faculty supervisors must request approval through their department chair, who will forward the request to the Dean’s Office, and then to the Research/Provost Office.
  - In addition to those GAs who have worked during spring break according to their letter of appointment, all GAs should resume working (remotely) on Monday, March 23.
  - GAs will continue to work and be paid through the end of the spring semester (check letters of appointment to determine final dates).
· Graduate student workers (hourly workers).
  
  - Graduate student workers should communicate with their supervisors to determine if there is work that they can complete remotely.

· Research labs.
  
  - Summary of a message from Fred King, Vice President for Research: Research faculty has been asked to reduce their lab work to the absolute minimum by the close of business on Thursday, March 19. In addition, researchers (including graduate research assistants) should NOT be using their offices for work that can be conducted elsewhere. In rare exceptions, waivers will be granted for high-priority activities. Waivers need to be requested by faculty and authorized in writing by VPR King. Concerns or questions should be sent to coronavirus_RO@mail.wvu.edu.

· Access to offices, computer labs, etc.
  
  - Graduate students may briefly visit their offices or other locations to pick up needed materials for working and studying from home.
  
  - Computer labs, libraries, and other campus areas will not be available for graduate student use.
  
  - Graduate students should not plan to work or study on campus.

· Thesis and dissertation defenses and other small group meetings related to student progress.
  
  - These meetings may take place, but only through remote access to avoid person-to-person contact. The Graduate/Professional Catalog allows remote participation in defenses with Dean’s Office approval. The chair of a thesis or dissertation committee planning a defense with remote participation should email the appropriate Dean’s Office administrator to
describe the plan for the defense and to request approval. Dissertation defenses should continue to be posted to the University calendar, with an added comment that community members who wish to observe the defense should contact the committee chair to arrange remote access (which can be provided through live streaming, a conference call, or other strategies). Note that faculty and graduate students have access to both Zoom and Microsoft Teams to facilitate meetings with remote participation. Note that ETDs (Electronic Theses and Dissertations) will still be due on May 1 for May graduates.

· **Students in professional programs or others engaged in practical work.**

  - Students in professional programs and other students involved in practical work off-campus (internships, practica, traineeships, etc.) should check with their faculty supervisors as well as their on-site supervisors concerning the continuation of their activities.

· **Pre-registration for fall classes.**

  - Please watch for messages from the Office of the Registrar for changes in the dates for fall pre-registration.

· **Commencement.**

  - No decision has yet been made about whether or not commencement ceremonies will be held in May.

Please refer to the information at coronavirus.wvu.edu for updates and details concerning the University’s response to the coronavirus outbreak. General questions about the University’s response may be submitted to coronavirus@mail.wvu.edu.
Contact the Office of Graduate Education and Life (GradEd@mail.wvu.edu, 304-293-7173) with questions or requests for assistance specific to graduate education. The OGEL office in the Mountainlair will be closed until further notice, but OGEL staff will be working remotely and available for consultations through email and telephone. All in-person OGEL activities and events for the remainder of spring semester are canceled, but we will be working on remote versions or replacements for some of these activities and events, so watch for further notices.

Stay healthy and safe, and let us know if we can be of any help to you,

The Office of Graduate Education and Life team