

How ACPHS is Responding to Coronavirus Pandemic

Updated: Now as of 5/4/20

READINESS AND RESPONSE

This public health crisis is rapidly evolving. Our top priority is the safety and health of our students, faculty and staff. Our Coronavirus Task Force continues to actively monitor all guidance being provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), New York and Vermont state health departments, local health departments and state education departments.

We are working quickly to make the decisions we need to protect our campus community, while continuing to provide an exceptional academic experience for our students.

Once decisions have been made, we immediately focus on determining how to implement them, and communicating the decisions and implementation details to our campus community. Please be assured that we will continue to communicate our decisions and response plans as soon as possible.

Since information and recommendations regarding the coronavirus pandemic are changing rapidly, our decisions may need to be modified. We appreciate your patience as we work to address multiple issues in a timely manner.

HOW TO GET LATEST INFORMATION

Please routinely check your email and read emails with [Coronavirus Update](#) in the subject line. We will also post the latest information on our [ACPHS coronavirus web page](#) and social media platforms as soon as we can, but sometimes there is a delay. So please use the latest email update as the most current information.

We've also added the recordings for the Faculty/Staff Town Hall and Student Town Hall on the intranet.

For the latest information regarding travel guidance, countries affected and public health resources, go to the [CDC's coronavirus web page](#).

Go here for the latest [number of cases in New York](#), and go here for the latest [number of cases in Vermont](#).

We understand that many of you have questions. To enable us to consistently and efficiently answer your questions, we're asking both Albany and Vermont campuses to email coronavirus-questions@acphs.edu or call Sue Conroy at (518) 694-7326 Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

New York State Health Department has a Coronavirus Hotline at 1-888-364-3065 (daily 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.)

Vermont Health Department encourages residents to dial 2-1-1.

2020-21 TUITION FREEZE

Since the pandemic has caused many unforeseen financial hardships for our students and their families, we've decided to not increase tuition for the 2020-21 academic year. It's important we do this to help our current students and attract prospective students since many colleges are also freezing tuition.

STUDENT REFUNDS ISSUED

In an effort to do what we can to help our students and their families during this difficult time, we provided students a prorated refund for on-campus room charges and meal plans, parking and student activity fees. Student refunds have already been directly deposited into accounts and checks have been mailed home.

STEPS TO MAKE UP PROJECTED BUDGET SHORTFALL

Like so many colleges and universities across the country, we must take steps to try and recover the unexpected losses and expenses associated with the pandemic, including providing student refunds and moving to remote instruction. We must also make up for the projected budget shortfall expected due to estimated declining enrollment.

EMPLOYEE FURLOUGHS

After extensive discussion, we've decided to temporarily furlough 20 employees who, through no fault of their own, are unable to perform their job duties due to the Governor's mandated social distancing requirements. This is about 6% of our workforce. Salaried employees being furloughed will be paid through April 30, and hourly employees being furloughed will be paid through May 1. At this time, the furlough period will be until July 31, but this date may be adjusted if we're able to return to campus sooner.

Employees being temporarily furloughed will be able to take full advantage of the benefits being provided to employees impacted by this pandemic. These benefits including being able to immediately apply for unemployment and receive the \$600 weekly supplement provided by the federal CARES Act. In addition, ACPHS will continue to provide health insurance benefits for employees during the temporary furlough period.

SALARY FREEZE

We're not providing any wage or salary increases for FY2020-21. In no way is this lack of merit pay a reflection of the faculty's and staff's efforts. It is just another measure being taken to ensure our financial security.

HIRING FREEZE

We've also imposed a hiring freeze on faculty and staff positions for the remainder of this fiscal year. There will be limited exceptions to ensure business continuity and grant funded positions are not affected by this. Employment offers already extended will be honored. We're not considering at this point furloughing or laying off any full-time faculty.

HALTING CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

As previously mentioned, we're halting construction on the Master Plan projects including renovating the Gozzo Student Center, the Campus Green, labs and library. While we'll continue to get plans and permits for these projects, we're postponing these campus renovations not only due to recent restrictions on construction, but as an additional cost savings measure.

RETURNING TO CAMPUS

We continue to monitor the guidance closely and will take whatever precautions are required to safely resume on campus instruction and activities. Even if Vermont opens sooner than New York, we'll continue to operate as one college and open simultaneously.

FALL SEMESTER

We'll definitely be starting the fall semester on time. If we must extend remote instruction into the fall, we'll adjust our curriculum so didactic instruction is at the beginning of the semester and the lab requirements are later. Our decisions regarding the fall semester will continue to adhere to the Governor's requirements to protect the health and safety of our campus community. We'll likely be making a decision on how we're starting the fall semester in early August.

COMMENCEMENT

We're continuing to work with students on planning a fall in-person commencement ceremony. For students on the Albany campus, the ceremony will be October 11 - the Sunday of Columbus Day weekend. This was the date chosen by the majority of Albany graduates. The venue is still being determined. We're still discussing with students on the Vermont campus what date they'd prefer. The Registrar's Office will be mailing students their diplomas the week of May 11.

HOW YOU CAN HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS

As the coronavirus continues to spread, we all must take the following precautions:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Refrain from shaking hands
- Cough into your sleeve, not your hand, to keep germs from spreading
- Avoid sharing drinks, food, cigarettes or vaping products
- Limit in-person contact; use email, phone calls and virtual meetings when possible
- When in groups, stay at least six feet apart when possible
- Routinely disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Stay home if you are sick (see sections: If You Have Coronavirus Symptoms and Employee Sick Leave)
- CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask

WHAT WE'RE DOING TO HELP STOP SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS

As the coronavirus outbreak continues, here are the decisions we've made to protect the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff. We are implementing the following community mitigation measures designed to slow the spread of this widespread outbreak. As a prominent health sciences college, it is important we model how to respond to this pandemic.

EXTENDING REMOTE INSTRUCTION THROUGH END OF SPRING SEMESTER

We extended remote instruction through the end of the spring semester to do our part to help "flatten the curve" and reduce community transmission of the coronavirus. We will be compressing content into the existing semester, not extending the semester. Moving forward, all class lectures will be recorded.

CONTINUING EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Domestic Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPEs) will continue as scheduled unless you are contacted by the Office of Experiential Education. Any students scheduled for international APPEs will be contacted to make alternative arrangements. If your site restricts access or changes relevant policies, please [email Courtney Caimano](#). For Clinical Laboratory Science students, rotations will continue as scheduled. If you have questions, please [email Amanda Philips](#).

CANCELLING ALL STUDENT PROGRAMMING EVENTS

All student programming events are cancelled on both Albany and Vermont campuses until further notice. This includes all in-person meetings, on campus and off campus events. All spring sports schedules have also been discontinued. Student Engagement and Residence Life are already brainstorming creative ways to continue to engage with students.

SUSPENDING ALL COLLEGE-SUPPORTED TRAVEL

We are suspending all college-supported domestic and international travel to any country until further notice.

KEEPING ALBANY CAMPUS OPEN (We Temporarily Closed the VT campus)

The Albany campus will remain open, but students are strongly encouraged not to return to campus. We have a process in place to assess which students will be allowed to remain in the residence halls. If you have questions regarding housing, please [email Alison Buckley](#).

We have closed the Vermont Campus for the rest of the spring semester. If you need assistance or have additional questions please [email Jennifer Mathews](#).

FOR STUDENTS APPROVED TO STAY ON CAMPUS

Students who have submitted [this online form](#) and have been approved to stay on campus:

- May not have any visitors, including ACPHS students, who have not been approved to stay on campus.
- Must abide by all residence hall policies and rules that are in place.
- Must remotely interact with campus offices, staff and faculty.
- Must take classes through remote instruction and other alternative learning options provided.

For those students who have been approved to return to campus housing, but are not back on campus, please understand that if you are experiencing these [coronavirus symptoms](#), you should NOT come to campus. If you have questions regarding housing, please [email Alison Buckley](#).

CLOSING AND REDUCING CAMPUS SERVICES

We are closing and reducing services on both campuses. To ensure we continue to provide an exceptional student experience, our campus services are being offered remotely including library services, tutoring, advising and counseling. Here is the list of closed/reduced campus services for Albany Campus and the Vermont Campus.

ALBANY CAMPUS:

Office of Student Engagement and Leadership (OSEL)

- The Office will maintain regularly scheduled campus hours (8:30am – 4:30pm, M-F).
- OSEL can be reached via email at ailen.schatz@acphs.edu, by phone at 518-695-7352, or you can connect via Zoom with advanced notice.
- All club, professional organization, SGA and CAPB events have been cancelled until further notice.

- OSEL is encouraging all student groups to stay connected and continue to hold virtual meetings via Zoom during this time of remote learning.
- OSEL is working to set up virtual programming and will send out more information.

Counseling & Wellness

- The Office will maintain regularly scheduled campus hours (8:30am – 4:30pm, M-F).
- All counseling services will be conducted via Zoom until further notice.
- To make an appointment, please email Beth (elizabeth.sweet@acphs.edu) or Peter (peter.cornish@acphs.edu).
- If you have an existing appointment scheduled, you can:
 - Cancel that appointment and reach out to schedule a new Zoom appointment; or
 - Confirm that appointment with the counselor and they will send you a Zoom invite.

Athletics & Recreation

- The Office will maintain regularly scheduled campus hours (8:30am – 4:30pm, M-F).
- The gymnasium, fitness center, track and field are closed.
- All athletic facilities rentals are cancelled until further notice.

Center for Student Success (CSS)

- The Office will maintain regularly scheduled campus hours (8:30am – 4:30pm, M-F).
- CSS will be switching all office advising hours to online via Upswing.
- Tutoring services will be available through Upswing.
- Programs and presentations will be done through Zoom.
- If students have any questions, they can contact their class advisor or student.success@acphs.edu.

Library Services

Library Services will be providing remote assistance to students through a number of tools and resources.

- Library Services hours are Mon-Thurs 8am-8pm, Fri 8am-4pm, Sun Noon-6.
- A portal to our online assistance is available on our website at libraryservices.acphs.edu.
- We have a robust digital collection and will be making strategic additions to assist students.
- To receive help from librarians, students can make Zoom appointments or use online chat, both available on the library website.
- Interlibrary loan requests for digital items will be filled to the best of our ability, but we will not be borrowing physical items from other libraries.

Campus Bookstore

The Bookstore will be closed until further notice. The Bookstore staff will ship essential supplies, when possible, at their discretion. Bookstore requests should be e-mailed to rkern@follet.com. The bookstore is offering free shipping, with no minimum purchase, to ensure students can get textbooks or any academic supplies they may need during our remote instruction.

Mailroom Hours

The Mailroom will be open on Monday and Thursday from 9am to 2pm.

For faculty and staff, mail will be sorted by department and available for pick-up by a department member between 11am and 1:30pm. Outgoing mail must be dropped off at the Mailroom during the hours the Mailroom is open. Resident student mail will be placed in student mailboxes in 84 Holland for now. When the mailroom staff is caught up, they will make every effort to send all mail and packages to students at their requested address. Students who have "essential" items in the mailroom (i.e., medication, checks to cover living expenses) should e-mail mailroom@acphs.edu and provide a description of the item/package and an address for it to be mailed. Staff will send those items ASAP.

Chartwell's Dining Services Hours for Students Remaining in Campus Housing

Chartwells will continue to operate with shortened hours (11am to 4pm, seven days a week). Chartwells management will also communicate information directly to students, faculty and staff, as their operations change based on need and volume. They will continue to provide food service for students currently living in residence and any faculty and staff on-campus to perform "essential functions." Service will be take-out only. The dining area will be treated as a restaurant and will not be available for eat in.

VERMONT CAMPUS:

- **Food services** are closed until further notice.
- **Counseling** is available by confidential telehealth visits or by phone. Counselors can direct you to internal and community resources to help you deal with needs during disruption of your academic-life balance. Please contact the UVM counseling team with any questions or if you would like to schedule an appointment at 802-847-2827 or efap@uvmhealth.org.

Other valuable resources are the Howard Center's First Call and Community Outreach programs. First Call 802-488-7777 is a 24/7 resource for immediate support, crisis assessment, referrals to services, and connection to follow-up care. The Community Outreach Team for Colchester 802-488-7778 is available 8:30am-8:00pm.

- **Library Services** are available through the Ask a Librarian chat function on the [library website](#). Library Services hours are Mon-Thurs 8am-8pm, Fri 8am-4pm, Sun Noon-6.
- **Advising** appointments can happen as scheduled, but need to be on the phone or done with Zoom. To schedule an appointment, email jennifer.payne@acphs.edu or call 802-735-2688.
- **Tutoring services** will be available through Upswing.

WORKING FROM HOME

We have directed faculty and staff to work from home to minimize the density of people on campus while continuing to run the College operations. Those employees who are required to remain on campus to perform their job responsibilities have been notified. If you are currently completing a weekly timesheet, please continue to do so in accordance with the payroll schedule. IT will be available to assist employees as needed.

REDUCING SOCIAL STIGMA

According to the [CDC's Reducing Stigma web page](#), the coronavirus pandemic could lead to social stigma and discrimination against persons of Asian descent, people who have traveled, emergency responders, healthcare professionals, and people who have been quarantined even if they did not test positive for the coronavirus. We are working to ensure no one in our campus community is subjected to social stigma, and are encouraging all students, faculty and staff to be supportive during this stressful time. We take pride in our close campus community and this is an opportunity to show our compassion, strength and resilience.