WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE

TUES, MAY 5
DAILY UPDATE: COLLEGE RESPONSE TO SWINE FLU

This daily communication from the Office of the President is the only official campus communication on this matter. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please direct it to Michelle Long-Coffee, Director of PR/Advertising at 310-287-4597 or LongCofm@wlac.edu

NORMAL OPERATIONS TODAY

- All college classes, meetings and events will go on as scheduled.
- No employees/students have reported having contracted Swine Flu.
- For past updates and continuing updates, visit WestWeek or www.wlac.edu/updates (mobile phone)
- We continue to take vigorous steps to prevent the spread of the flu and to make contingency plans should campus operations need to be interrupted.
- To link to the CDC: www.cdc.gov/swineflu

The flu emergency seems to be stabilizing. While there are reported cases in Southern California, most appear to be relatively mild. You are surely aware of reports that some very few elementary and secondary schools in the area have closed, but along with our sister colleges, LAUSD, CSU and UC, we will continue “watchful waiting”.

For your further information, the CDC itself is considering changing its advice from automatically closing schools with flu cases to asking schools, parents, teachers and administrators to identify ill students and individually send them home for at least a week. This procedure is already followed in Canada and Seattle, whose officials ask people to really push hard on personal responsibility. Given that the current flu does not seem worse than a normal seasonal flu, health and education officials there released updated school closure guidance that asks parents, teachers and administrators to identify and isolate students who have a fever and a recent onset of flu like symptoms.

For today and the foreseeable future we will continue normal operations. But since the situation could change at any time, I ask you to please read this entire update and do your part to prepare.

CONTINGENCY PLAN IN THE EVENT OF CAMPUS CLOSURE

Yesterday I met with the faculty leadership and senior staff: Rod Patterson, Olga Shewfelt, Fran Leonard, John Oester, Betsy Regalado, Bob Sprague. We developed the following contingency plan and will take immediate steps to implement this plan:

1. Faculty please inform students that in the event of a campus closure, they will be notified immediately and automatically by the Admissions and Record Office via email and phone. For this reason, it is always important that students have updated and correct contact info with A&R.
2. Academic Affairs will implement a phone tree notification system for all faculty: VPAA>Deans>Chairs>All Faculty. Vice President Sprague will review this with the divisional chairs at your next meeting.

3. Faculty, please inform students that in the event of a closure classes will be conducted as directed by you, the instructor. Our primary goal in any closure is to make sure that grades will be submitted on time to avoid disruptions in the graduation and/or transfer process. Please circulate a sign-in sheet in each class to gather up-to-date email addresses and phone contact information from your students. This is important because if you are not currently on Etudes or ADX you will be able to continue your course in some fashion via email. You will NOT be permitted to meet your classes off campus.

4. In order to continue your class in some form during a closure the three current options are:
   a. Migrate your syllabus and course materials to the ADX system, something that will take about two hours of training.
   b. Take the Etudes certification course and migrate your materials to the Etudes platform even if you have no intention of teaching online. If you are Etudes certified and wish to migrate your courses please contact Eric Ichon.
   c. Email. This will mean you will need to be able to access your college email over the internet at home. Please make sure you know how to do this—it only takes a few minutes to learn. All you need to do is click “email” on the faculty page of our website and then input your user name and password.

   NOTA BENE: The options described above will clearly take time for all faculty to be able to implement one of them. Vice President Sprague will begin discussions with chairs and faculty this week to develop an implementation plan. I stress that these options are not compulsory and no edict will come down to ‘do this or else’. At the same time, I stress the importance of each individual taking personal responsibility to be prepared. We are continuing to do research on what other community colleges have done during emergency closures so we can improve our plan (Katrina is one example). This is an “open source” process so if you possess experience, knowledge, interest, or extra energy by all means let us hear your thoughts.

5. Make sure your essential teaching materials and files are backed up now and stored on portable plug-in storage devices, then kept at home. If the campus is closed, no one will be permitted to return to campus for any reason until the emergency is over. Academic Affairs will begin the process this week of a college-wide plan for distributing the storage plugs and training people how to use them. In the meantime, if you already have a plug-in and know how to use it, back up your essential files now.

In the Event of Campus Closure, The Following Would Occur:

In the event that a student/employee is confirmed as having Swine Flu (or a governmental agency instructs us to close for some other reason):

- Report the incident of illness to Michelle Long-Coffee, Director of PR/Advertising.
- The President’s Office will be notified and coordinate with the Department of Health.
- The Department of Health with contact the student/employee (all information will be kept confidential).
- The Department of Health will advise the President’s Office with a recommended course of action.
- I will consult with LACCD officials.
- Communications will go out to employees, students and the community. The campus web site will announce the closure and signs will be posted. Students will receive a recorded phone message and email. No one, except a handful of “essential” personnel, would be allowed on campus. Those personnel would be required to sign in and out with the Sherriff when arriving or departing. The PR/Advertising office would also alert the local press.
- Faculty will contact their students and implement their plans for conducting the class during the closure.
Students, faculty and staff should check the web site each day to check for any change in status or updated instructions. Notice of the re-opening of campus will be posted on the web, and conveyed via an automated recorded phone call and email.

CONTINUE THESE IMPORTANT MEASURES TO KEEP THE CAMPUS HEALTHY

• Report Illness & Sick Leaves Daily – Each Division VP will report all illness absences daily to Michelle Long-Coffee. So far illness absences are not above normal levels. The Governor’s office recommends the closure of a school for at least one week should a student or employee be confirmed as having Swine Flu. On that note, it is important that we are aware of any employee or student who may have a confirmed case of Swine Flu. We ask that you would report such an occurrence to your supervisor or instructor. This will allow the campus to take appropriate steps, under the direction of the Health Department. (Note: any such report would be treated confidentially).

• Need Soap? – If a bathroom in your area has run out of soap, contact Facilities.

• Sick Students – As an instructor, you have the authority to ask students who are clearly ill and maybe coughing, sneezing or otherwise exposing the class to an illness to leave the classroom. Please do so discretely, compassionately and direct them to the WLAC Student Health Center.

• Student Health Center. Building A-9 (310) 287-4478
The Student Health Center is an on-campus health resource for all DURING THE SWINE FLU EMERGENCY. The Student Health Center is open Mon/Wed: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Tues/Thur: 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.; Fri: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

• Prevent the Spread of Germs -- Cover your cough or sneeze; Wash your hands; Stay home if you are sick and seek medical treatment if appropriate.

In hope and heart,

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