



COLLEGE OF  
**MOUNT SAINT VINCENT**

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

To: Faculty, Administration, Staff and Students

From: Charles L. Flynn, President

Date: March 6, 2020

Subject: Update regarding Coronavirus Disease. COVID-19,

The College has been informed by a student that, in late February, s/he had direct exposure to a person with a [now] confirmed case of Coronavirus at his/her workplace. (The student informed us as soon as s/he was informed.) Consistent with public health directives, the student has been directed by her/his employer to self quarantine at home for 14 days. The student, a commuter, continues to display no symptoms and therefore has not been directed to be tested. The student was on our campus attending lecture classes for two days after the exposure.

The College will continue to be in contact with our student and will assist in connecting her/him to all appropriate resources she/he may need. We will keep the College community informed of any pertinent developments.

The spread of the Coronavirus is concerning to us all; however, this particular circumstance does not present a risk to our community that should alarm you or cause a disruption of classes or campus activities. Of course, the College will continue to monitor developments both on campus and in and around our community and develop plans accordingly to ensure the health and well being of our students, faculty and staff.

In all matters, we will continue to follow guidance, advisories, and directives from NYS and NYC Departments of Health. We have spoken directly with Dr. Don Weiss, Director of General and Syndromic Surveillance in the NYC Department of Public Health, who has reiterated that exposure to an infected person does not make it likely that a person will contract the disease. According to the CDC, the virus mainly spreads between people when they cough and sneeze in close proximity to others. It is a respiratory virus that is not contagious by just passing someone in the hallways or sitting in a room behind or in front of someone, and is unlikely to be transmitted by just touching surfaces such as a tabletop or furniture. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> We are particularly encouraged by news from Yeshiva University yesterday. The roommate and hallmate of the Yeshiva student diagnosed with Coronavirus have both been tested. Both individuals had "close personal contact with a person with a confirmed diagnosis," and both tests were negative.

Through an abundance of caution, the College recommends and prefers that any student or member of the faculty or staff who is immunocompromised work from home. This is intended to reduce their risk of exposure. We have written to employees whom we believe might be immunocompromised to suggest this alternative; however, the information available to the College is rightly limited. Any faculty member who is immunocompromised should contact Provost Stevenson. Any member of the staff who

is immunocompromised should contact Melissa Samuels in HR. Any student should contact the office of Student Affairs.

Everyone should continue to follow preventative guidance including thorough, frequent hand washing, coughing or sneezing into a tissue or elbow, and staying home if not feeling well. Anyone who has had direct contact with someone who tests positive for the Coronavirus is obligated to report that information to Human Resources or the Student Affairs office immediately for further guidance.

This virus has prompted understandable concern but also some disproportionate fears. I hope we will remain composed and rational. That's the only way we can truly be there for each other. And please, if you have questions to pursue, do not hesitate to call Student Affairs or HR.