

Re: Important Update from Deans Office:  
March 26, 2020

To all students, faculty, and staff of the USC Suzanne Dworak Peck School of Social Work:

We hope this correspondence finds you and your family well. First and foremost, we are committed to your safety, health and wellbeing.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this challenging time when our school leadership team is dealing with a high volume of internal and critical university communications and requests. We are all trying our very best to adjust to the situation. Our intention is always to be as responsive as possible and to continue to update you with relevant information and facts that affect our communities.

We want to provide you with pertinent updates for our school based on the most recent memos from the President and Provosts Office. We included additional updates specific to our school.

Recent communications can be found here:

- [3/24: COVID-19 New Actions](#)
- [3/20: COVID-19 Latest Updates and Actions](#)

**Building Access:**

- USC is operating under Safe at Home order.
- All USC City Center and UPC buildings (MRF and SWC) are locked, with access to authorized personnel only.
- Mail delivery has been suspended.

**Faculty:**

- All campus-based and virtual instruction should take place at home.
- Please record all class sessions via Zoom, use closed captioning, and make recordings available to students outside of class time. This is a requirement by the university.
- Class management and Zoom security: In the event that you encounter a disruptive participant during class, remove participant from class and use the lock feature to keep participant out of class. See [3/25: Message to Faculty Regarding Zoom Security Changes](#).
- Faculty should not be teaching from their assigned faculty offices.
- Research: Principal Investigators have completed their research continuity reports. A detailed memorandum with updated guidelines and pertinent information from the Associate Dean of Research and the Research Administration Center Director will be released soon.

**Students:**

- Thank you for sharing your concerns at last Friday's Student Town Hall meeting. Some of the updates here relate to those issues. Currently, faculty leadership is meeting to review and address any pending concerns. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

- **Misinformation:** We are aware there is a lot of misinformation that is shared through social media. Please check with the Student Affairs office if you need clarification on any issue related to your program and to verify factual information (sandrapa@usc.edu).

#### **MSW Field Education:**

- In-person activities have been suspended until the end of the semester. Alternative models for field education learning and service delivery have been designed to allow students to accrue hours and meet accreditation standards. Please contact your Faculty Field Liaison for guidance (sswfield@usc.edu).

#### **Course grading options:**

- The Pass/No Pass option is available to undergraduate students. This option does not apply to graduate students in the same way. Each university graduate program will determine the best plan for their students. Please note, the Pass/No Pass grading option is not factored into your grade point average, nor is it used in the determination of honors. If you select the Pass/No Pass option for any classes, a final grade of B or above will be reflected on your record as a Pass. Students should note that at the graduate level, “Pass” means an underlying grade of B or better. A student with a marginal or low GPA may be better served by taking courses for letter grades. This week, faculty governance groups in our school are meeting to discuss and decide on the best course of action for our students considering the implications for licensing boards, accreditation requirements, and with consideration of our students’ future careers. We will update you as soon as possible.

#### **Administrative Support:**

- Faculty: For any matters regarding appointment and promotion timelines and faculty affairs, please contact Felicia Harris at feliciah@usc.edu.
- Students: Please contact your respective academic advisor or registrar if you have any questions or concerns through email.
- Advancement and External Relations: Working remotely; available via email.
- Human Resources and Payroll: Working remotely; available via email.
- Research Administration Center: Working remotely; available via email.
- IT support staff will be working remotely and are available through email (SOWKMIS@usc.edu) or phone (Steve Hong: 213-821-6606).

**Events:** An in-person Commencement 2020 has been postponed until a later date. FAQs regarding commencement have been posted <https://sites.usc.edu/coronavirus/commencement-2020/>.

**USC Student Health** will continue to remain in operation to serve students. Hours for in-person visits are available to students living in the area as needed. Medical and mental health services also are available to students who live in California via TeleHealth. <https://studenthealth.usc.edu/>

#### **COVID-19 best practices:**

- **Social distancing** (keeping a distance of six feet from other people, avoiding congregating in groups, not sharing food/drinks/utensils).
- **Handwashing** (or sanitizing gel of 60% alcohol solution) is the best protection for contact from surfaces.
- **Cleaning of common surfaces** in your environment with a household cleaning product.

**If you develop symptoms, please begin self-isolation.** Faculty and staff should contact their health care providers. Students should contact Student Health and make a TeleHealth appointment immediately.

Be Social From A Distance. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Suzanne Wenzel, Ph.D.  
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