



IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING COVID-19

Dear Colleagues:

In light of the recent news and growing concerns about the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), I want to take this opportunity to inform you that the College is monitoring the issue very carefully and continues to follow guidelines from the United States Center for Disease Control (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the Suffolk County Department of Health (SCDOH). Inasmuch as this is a very fluid situation, we will provide periodic updates as warranted.

The following protocols are adopted by the College effective immediately. We ask that all members of the community adhere to them:

I. TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES

Travel abroad is now contraindicated for all students, faculty and staff. While the list of countries affected and subject to travel restrictions is still somewhat limited, that list may be altered or changed by the Federal government at any time. This may result in students, faculty and staff being stranded abroad, or quarantined upon their return.

The College strongly urges all members of the community with travel plans outside of the United States, to delay their travel until the situation stabilizes.

The Following Policies will be adhered to by the College:

- The College will not endorse travel abroad for any student with an F-1 Visa, except for those withdrawing from the College without plans to return. Any previously issued travel endorsements are withdrawn and will be noted to SEVIS.
 - F-1 Students may remain on campus during Spring Break without fee. If the situation is not stabilized by summer, the College may expand this to cover the Summer Intersession as well.
- All members of the College Community contemplating travel abroad to any nation, are required to self-disclose such plans to the Dean of Students and to obtain medical clearance before returning to campus. Those who travel abroad without self-disclosure may be sanctioned by the College, up to and including suspension, withdrawal or termination.

II. ON-CAMPUS PROTOCOLS FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

While there is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19, the NYSDOH has established some preventative measures to slow the spread of this and other respiratory viruses. We ask that all members of the College community adhere to them:

- If you are sick, stay home! See a healthcare professional, and follow their instructions. Before returning, you are required to obtain medical documentation that states that you are healthy enough to return to school or work. Students must present documentation to the Dean of Students. Faculty and staff must present documentation to the Business Office.
- Resident students from the United States who are sick will be required to leave the residence halls until they obtain such clearance. F-1 students may be quarantined on campus or referred to the NYDOH as determined by the Dean of Students.
 - Students who must miss class due to documented illness will be accommodated through the Academic Affairs Office, and provided with extensions and other accommodations to minimize any disruption to their education. Please do not come to class if you are sick, even if you have exhausted your maximum absences.
 - Do not waste your absences. If you are not sick, do not miss class. Save your absences in case you really need them.
 - If there is a spike in reported cases in New York, the College may begin to restrict access to campus, and thermal scan everyone at campus entrances. Individuals with fever will not be permitted on campus.
- No outside guests may be present in a campus residence hall. Inasmuch as the travel history and potential exposure of persons from outside our community cannot be effectively monitored, guest privileges are suspended until further notice. Only resident students and Five Towns College commuter students who are guests of resident students, Residential Life Office, Maintenance, and Public Safety Staff may be present in a campus residence hall until further notice.

III. ADHERE TO GOOD SANITARY PRACTICE

To protect yourselves and our community:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Hand-wipes are located throughout the campus. Use them regularly to wipe down your desk and other frequently touched objects and surfaces at the start of each class. Properly dispose of hand-wipes in bins provided for that purpose.
- If there is a spike in reported cases in New York, mandatory hand sanitizing will be implemented at campus entrances.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When possible maintain a distance of six feet.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in trash. If unavailable, cough or sneeze into your arm or elbow, and not into your hand or fist.

- Do not share food, utensils, and other personal care items.
- Avoid shaking hands, fist pumps and hugging as a way of greeting. Everyone will appreciate a simple “hello” for now.
- Be fever free for at least 24 hours (without fever reducing medicine) before returning to campus. If you have specific questions, please call your physician. If you live on campus and need to see a physician, the College will provide Uber service to an urgent care facility upon request.
- If you are going to see a physician or healthcare provider and have symptoms of respiratory illness, inform them in advance before entering a waiting room, so that proper precautions can be taken to prevent the further spread of any possible virus.
- If anyone you live with is sick with fever, or subject to a quarantine, you should self-quarantine as well and see a healthcare professional to avoid spreading the virus.

Based upon the guidance we are receiving for the governmental agencies listed above, I remain cautiously optimistic that this episode may be resolved. Until that time, we must all act together to protect our health and safety.

I want to emphasize that the risk of contracting COVID-19 remains low in New York State. The measures and recommendations listed here are precautionary. Avoid overreacting, but do act responsibly by adhering to safe sanitary practices, both on and off-campus.

I apologize in advance for any inconvenience that these new policies and protocols may cause.

On a more academic note, I extend my best wishes for your success as we enter the mid-semester examination period.

Sincerely yours,

David M. Cohen, J.D.
President