Dear Colleagues,

Washington State University has mobilized to prepare for the potential impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on University operations across the state. An executive policy group is meeting daily to review developments, an incident command structure has been implemented and an emergency task force is developing and implementing contingency plans for maintenance of all functions within the system. A coronavirus informational website has been created and is updated regularly.

As of this writing the number of confirmed cases in the Pacific Northwest is low and there is no reason to disrupt normal operations. Faculty and instructors should continue to conduct their classes as usual and should not alter the mode of instruction without explicit permission from their unit leader. However, we encourage all instructors to begin planning ahead for possible campus closure by reviewing the Tool Kit for Extended Campus Closure. This site will explain how to record your lectures through Blackboard using either Panopto or Zoom. The videos will be saved in your Blackboard course space.

You might consider beginning now to record your lectures in case conditions change quickly and large numbers of students are unable to attend class. Some colleges have information technology personnel who can assist if you are unfamiliar with video capture. If your college does not have such personnel, Academic Outreach and Innovation (AOI) will be glad to help you. We also have available a proctoring service that will allow you to securely administer exams online in the event of campus closure.

We ask that you be supportive of students who believe they have been exposed to the virus. The Centers for Disease Control recommends that anyone who suspects they have been exposed self-quarantine at home and avoid public settings. Students who choose to do this should be accommodated as you would any other student who is under instruction to remain at home. We will not require proof that the student consulted a medical professional about possible coronavirus exposure. We also want to remind faculty that you should not confront a student who, for whatever reason, you think may have been exposed to the virus. If you have reason to think that you have been exposed to the virus, we ask that you self-
quarantine and either go on sick leave or arrange a temporary work-at-home plan with your supervisor.

There is, understandably, much concern surrounding the coronavirus in our state. We are working to monitor this rapidly changing situation and quickly adapt our operations accordingly. Thank you for your help in addressing the needs of our students and the concerns of their guardians.

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