Update on UW COVID-19 Response, Preparations

To all members of the UW community:

With spring break approaching and widespread concern about the COVID-19 virus, we understand the need to keep everyone updated about the situation at the University of Wyoming. That includes the measures being taken to prevent the spread of the virus, as well as how the university will deal with it if it arrives.

To date, no known cases of COVID-19 have been identified in the state of Wyoming. Should a case be reported on campus or in the Laramie community, we will inform the UW community immediately, and we have developed response plans to support students, staff and faculty.

At this point, overall UW operations are not changing, and the spring semester will resume as scheduled after spring break. Any changes to the current status that might occur during spring break will be communicated before the resumption of classes March 23.

Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to re-evaluate spring break plans so as to avoid potential exposure to the virus or to limit the likelihood of exposing older people, and those of any age who have compromised immune systems.

In addition, students are advised to take with them any materials they might need to resume instruction in an online format. The university is developing contingency plans for online-only teaching, should that be necessary.

Besides the restrictions on some international travel the university announced last Friday, we are asking all departments and campus members to assess the necessity of both international and domestic travel. If you travel to high-risk areas within the United States -- meaning areas where a "state of emergency" has been declared -- we ask that you self-quarantine for 14 days before returning to campus.

Faculty and staff members who are apprehensive about job-related travel should not feel compelled to travel. Faculty and staff members should work with their unit heads to make travel decisions.

Again, be assured that we will communicate any changes to the current status as soon as possible. In the midst of the concern surrounding COVID-19, we wish all of you a healthy and restful spring break.

Neil Theobald, Acting President