TEXAS HEALTH AND SCIENCE UNIVERSITY

THSU COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

03/23/2020

Texas Health and Science University
4005 Manchaca Road
Austin, Texas 78704
Tel: (512) 444-8082
FAX: (512) 444-6345
Website: www.thsu.edu

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this plan is to help Texas Health and Science University to prevent the spread of pandemic viruses among students, staff, faculty, and visitors to the THSU community and to continue, when possible, normal school operations to minimize disruption.

To prepare for the possible outbreak of the virus, THSU is taking steps now to help stop or slow the spread of respiratory infectious diseases. **All THSU staff are strongly encouraged to prepare for the unlikely event they are called upon to assume their community safety roles.**

COMMUNITY SAFETY MANAGEMENT TEAM

THSU Community safety Management Team - Austin and San Antonio Campuses

Name	Emergency Role	Email
Louis Agnese	Team Leader	agnese@thsu.edu
Shu-Chiang Lin (John)	Team Leader	sclin@thsu.edu
Maoyi Cai	Academic Leader-Austin	cai@thsu.edu
Roberto Guerrero	Academic Leader-San Antonio	rguerrero@thsu.edu
Priscilla Elizondo	Academic Coordinator	registrar@thsu.edu
Martha Calliham	Communications-Austin	mcalliham@thsu.edu
Linying Tan	Communications-San Antonio	ltan@thsu.edu
Iris Gong	Administrative Leader	irisgong@thsu.edu
Antonio Holloway	Administrative Leader	faid@thsu.edu
Leon Liu	Website and Media	leon@thsu.edu

Team Leaders gather information from local, state, and national resources (CDC, WHO, DSHS), decide courses of action and communicating actions and updates to the Communications staff and Website/Media staff.

Academic Leaders arrange for the conducting of classes via an online format Moodle, and other means of communication including Orbund, Zoom, Skype, Call-In, Email, and Text Message, provide assistance for students that do not count on the electronic equipment.

Academic Coordinator sets up online learning platforms Moodle and Orbund, and coordinates any means of communication to transit classes to remote delivery, prepares training manuals for faculty and for students in the use of these materials.

Communications staff disseminate updates to faculty, staff, and patients via phone and email and communicate concerns or updates from them back to the Team Leaders.

Administrative Leaders secure school property, transfer land-line numbers to mobile phones, post signs, and manage business continuity operations (bookkeeping, admissions, financial aid, student services, etc.)

Website and Media staff update the website and social media.

THSU will coordinate on a daily basis with Austin Metro Health (for Austin Campus), San Antonio Metro Health (for San Antonio Campus), and Texas Department of State Health Services.

In addition, THSU will follow guideline documentation provided by the [American College Health Association](#), and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Direct communication can also be created with other Universities in the immediate area.

THSU also constantly monitor the update information from the following agencies and organizations:

ACHA Emerging Public Health Threats and Emergency Response Coalition
www.acha.org/ACHA/Networks/Committees/Emergency_Response_Coalition.aspx
ACHA Campus Safety and Violence Coalition
www.acha.org/ACHA/Networks/Committees/Campus_Safety_Coalition.aspx
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
www.samhsa.gov/capt/tools-learning-resources/coping-traumatic-events-resources
Federal Emergency Management Administration
training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/ICSResource/index.htm
CDC Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response
www.cdc.gov/phpr/index.htm
CDC Emergency Preparedness and Response
emergency.cdc.gov/index.asp

Office of the Texas Governor | Greg Abbott
https://gov.texas.gov/news/category/proclamation

Contingency Plan:

This plan includes campus infection control and preparedness in case of campus closure. The plan strictly follows state and federal guidelines and state executive orders.

Section 1. Infection Control

If classes are to continue, the following are a few preventive measurements that should be taken to prevent the spread of disease. Below are some of these proposed measurements for infection control on campus:

1. Students, faculty, staff, and visitors on campus will also be expected to follow social distancing measures recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization, including **maintaining a distance of at least three feet between individuals and practicing good hygiene**.

2. **Faculty members and students are encouraged to daily check their temperature, to monitor for a low-grade fever**. Although the symptoms of COVID-19 are not immediately apparent, a spike in temperature should alert the individual that their immune system is active. Screenings are available at the moment for COVID-19, but we still ask our Faculty and students to err in the side of caution. Currently, we are also going thru the flu season, and we ask you to stay home if you are sick, it was health etiquette in the past, and today is a matter of infection control. If you should develop a temperature, stay home and watch for other symptoms like cough and shortness of breath.

3. **Actively encourage sick employees and students to stay home and away from others**.

- Member of the staff, Student or subcontractor of THUS should seek medical evaluation if any of the following conditions is true:

    o Ill with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing AND have traveled from an affected area in the last 14 days.

    o Ill with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing AND have been identified by Public Health as a recent close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case or had recent close contact with someone who is being evaluated for COVID-19 infection.

    o Ill with a severe lower respiratory tract infection and unknown contact during known community transmission.

- **If the staff member, student or subcontractor is at Risk for COVID-19**

    o If a staff member or student meets the above criteria, it is important to place them in a private room away from others and ask them to wear a face mask. If the student is seen as a patient in THSU's Student Intern or Professional Clinic, ensure that they call the clinic prior to making the appointment. Make sure that the THSU's Student Intern Clinic is aware to immediately notify the local health department if they think the student has COVID-19.

- Develop flexible attendance and sick leave policies. Do not require a healthcare provider's note for staff or students who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness as healthcare providers may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.

- Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member. Employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual.

- Work with subcontractors to communicate your infection control policies.

3. **Separate from others, employees, and students who become ill**. Send them home immediately.

4. **Emphasize respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by everyone.**

- o Cover your mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing and put the used tissue in a wastebasket.
- o Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing, when entering or leaving a building. If running water is not available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer.

5. **Place posters that encourage** staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene at throughout campus where they are likely to be seen.

6. **Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by everyone**.

7. Instruct staff and students to clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol, or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. **Preferentially soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.**

8. **Advise everyone to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.** Information is key in this environment, and you are in a place of authority where you are able to provide valuable information to your patients, students, and peers.

9. **Provide soap and water, and alcohol-based hand rubs in prominent areas.** Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand rubs in multiple locations rooms to encourage hand hygiene.

10. **Perform routine environmental cleaning:** (for more information, refer to CDC website for businesses)

- o Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces, such as workstations, countertops, handrails, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.

- o No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time. Ensure that adequate supplies are available.

- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks) can be wiped down by staff and students (if indicated) before each use.

11. **Student and Professional's Clinic infection control. -** Besides the above environmental cleaning routines, other precautions must be taken to prevent the spread of infection.

- Everyone that enters the clinic reception area needs to be monitored for a low-grade fever, this includes Faculty, student, patients to the clinic and anybody that accompanies the patient to his/her visit to the clinic.

  - The person presenting a low-grade fever will be informed that they need to see their Primary Care Provider (PCP) and asked to leave the premises.

  - If the patient is seeking treatment for upper respiratory infection, must call first before showing up at the THSU's Clinic. They will also have been cleared first by his/her PCP, and will only receive treatment at our clinic, at the discretion of the Clinic Supervisor/Clinician.

- Patients that need to be accompanied by another must be limited to the company on only one other person. This will ensure that the reception area is not overcrowded.

- Clinic appointments need to be spaced out to avoid long waits in the reception area. Again, in order to avoid overcrowding in the reception area, patients will also be asked to show up as close as possible to the scheduled time for their appointment.

- Clinicians and Students are advised to wear gloves and use one needle with one insertion tube per sterile, individually sealed blister package, to avoid cross contamination of any kind.

- Clinicians and Students are advised to wash their hand in before entering a room and upon leaving the room.

Section 2. Disruption of Campus Operations

In the event of a disruption to campus operations, the university would place the developed plans into actions to maintain teaching and learning activities.

One common thread would be the use of online technologies to support teaching and instruction. The U.S. Department of Education is providing broad approval to institutions to use online technologies to accommodate students on a temporary basis, without going through the regular approval process of the Department in the event that an institution is otherwise required to seek Departmental approval for the use or expansion of distance learning programs.

ACICS, our institutional accreditor, gives a special dispensation for the request for a short-term change in educational delivery to serve the institution's currently enrolled students in the face of disruption of regular classes due to COVID-19. An application for the Short-Term Change in Educational Delivery was submitted to ACICS and was approved on March 18, 2020. This temporary modality would be utilized from March 23, 2020 to April 24, 2020, using Orbund system along with Moodle software.

ACAOM, our programmatic accreditor, also gives a special dispensation for the application to move to distance learning in the face of disruption of regular classes due to COVID-19. The following requirements must be met, and steps are taken to have our application submitted for a Substantial Change.

- Submit a Change Notification 1.15 DE application at the earliest opportunity; complete as much of the narrative content as possible. Indicate that the purpose of the application is to support a waiver request of ACAOM's DE requirements, should that become necessary. The Commission will not assess a fee for these emergency applications.
- If a local state of emergency or similar condition is declared, which will affect your campus, submit an emergency waiver request. The Commission will not assess a waiver fee if such a request is supported by a declared local state of emergency. THSU had summited the emergency waiver request and was granted the request on March 20, 2020. THSU is allowed to deliver all or part of the coursework via distance education delivery until the conclusion of the current public health emergencies, or the conclusions of its current academic term on April 24, 2020, whichever should occur sooner.
- Applications should specifically outline plans for addressing students that may be unable to access or be unable to afford technology or services required to participate in distance education alternatives.

1. Preparation for a switch to using online resources is going to take time. We should consider extending the current spring break for one more week to allow the faculty to transition to a web-based model. That will give us time to contact the students, inform them of the coming changes, and provide the resources that they will need to continue their instruction away from the classroom.

    a. **Moodle** will be used as the main LMS for classroom courses to improve the functionality of **Orbund**. While **Orbund** can provide the means for communication with our students via email and text, instructors will use **Moodle** as the primary online format to live-streaming lectures, video lectures, discussion boards, and other modalities to supplement

the course materials posted to **Orbund**. Classes will be held using the same class schedule as before.

b. **Zoom** is a web-based video conferencing tool with a local, desktop client, and a mobile app that allows users to meet online, with or without video, can be used to hold classes at predetermined times. The basic Zoom membership is free and can host up to 100 participants, with a limit of 40 minutes per meeting. For longer meetings, there is a fee for the Host. The student doesn't need to get a Zoom account to join the meeting.

c. **Develop communication methods for immediate contact with students** to ensure they are aware of cancellations or alterations in schedules and events. Make sure that students are aware of their Moodle and Orbund accounts, how to login and check their email communications.

d. **For instructors to make themselves available to the students** during this period, a Moodle account will be activated. The Academic Coordinator of the Moodle account for the school can make this service available to the Faculty to aid with communications with the students from their phones, tablets, and computers.

e. **For those students that do not count on the electronic equipment** to join our on-line meetings, web tablets can be provided by the university. If the students are also unable to afford online services, the school will have to address the students' needs on a one to one basis. Students can contact the Academic Leader Dr. Cai (Austin) or Dr. Guerrero (San Antonio) to discuss their options. THSU staff will continue to work from the school for now.

2. **In order to comply with SEVIS and SEVP program**, a remote learning system needs to be put in place where the students spend time in front of their computers, and the instructors can take class attendance. In addition the DSO of the campus needs to communicate with the SEVP the plans of the institution for the temporary online instructions. The communication must include the following:

a. School Name and Locations affected by the change
b. School Code
c. Mode and classroom setting
d. How the school will seek to provide oversight to these students
e. The names of the programs of study and classes that will be taught online
f. Projected time of online instruction.

3. **To assist faculty in ensuring continuity of teaching** and course material delivery training will be provided, and technology partners (Moodle, Orbund, Webmaster, Google, Zoom, Skype, AT&T, etc.) engaged to services to ensure proper scalability to meet the demand of increased user logins and large synchronous sessions, and to preserve the academic integrity of high-stakes exams.

Some issues that need to be resolved in training for the Faculty are listed below:

I. Communicating with Students with Moodle, our primary LMS. Learn how to send announcements and set up discussion boards.
II. Start moving lectures online through Moodle. Learn how to host a class session online, live-streaming lectures, discussion boards, and record lectures for students to view online.
III. Online Assignments. Learn how to set up Moodle for online assignment submission and how to implement active learning online. There are training videos and manuals for this open source LMS that are available online.
IV. Exams and Grading Online. Learn how to administer an exam online and ways to facilitate grading online. THSU is partnering with Online Testing Group, an affiliate of FAME (THSU's third party financial aid servicer) which provides security and identity protection for examinations. Final exam week at THSU is April 20-24, 2020.

4. Assist the Faculty to set up Technology:

a. **Moodle** is a learning platform designed to provide educators, administrators and learners with a single robust, secure and integrated system to create personalized learning environments. The features of the platform are:
    i. Peer assessment
    ii. Discussion and debate
    iii. Sharing files and media
    iv. Collaboration
    v. Independent and personalized learning
    vi. Submitting work online
    vii. Assessment, summative and formative
    viii. Gamification

b. **Chrome, or Firefox.** Make sure the computer has one of the recommended web-browsers for increased compatibility with Orbund. Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox are recommended, free, and available for Apple's Mac OS, Windows PCs, and most mobile devices.

c. **Email.** A simple option for communicating with your students and colleagues. Access your inbox from any computer by visiting the Orbund portal.

d. **Office 365.** For Faculty, students an online account can be set to meet the needs of anyone with access to Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, and Outlook, which are available for Apple's Mac OS, Windows PCs, and most mobile devices.

5. **In preparation for moving to an alternative to face to face** lessons, the Faculty must:

a. Convert your handouts into PDF files, make your PowerPoint files available in Moodle and Orbund, record narrated PowerPoint files, record a video lesson, or record your lessons, and make them available. The technology and delivery of recorder lessons needs to be decided as part of the preparation for online training

    b.   Instructors and students need to be able to record videos, screen capture, and publish your media that can be accessed in a secure environment.

    c.   Upload your PowerPoints or any useful files to the content area of Moodle and Orbund.

    d.   Prepare Faculty to collect students' work and provide feedback.

        i.   Move your quizzes and exams into Moodle or Online Testing Group (decided later in April).
        ii.   Familiarize faculty with Orbund and Moodle Communication as to comply with FERPA
        iii.   Create a discussion boards/discussion threads, as well as quizzes and exams in Moodle to support student interaction.
        iv.   Get familiar with the Adobe Creative Cloud suite or Office 365 to have use students to create their assignments.

    e.   Familiarize Faculty with best practices when delivering online content.

        i.   The attention span is shorter while online, and information is best delivered in segments of 15 to 18 minutes with breaks in between.
        ii.   Assignments and in-class discussion groups ensure student participation and engagement.

In addition to the above suggestions listed above, other more detail plans need to be developed to address any possible changes in the current situation. A team of academic advisors needs to be put into place to provide teaching and learning consultations to the faculty for moving coursework online and manage online teaching and learning using the Moodle platform.

This document should be updated regularly with current instructions to provide fluidity and a framework from where the administration can move forward in order to meet the needs of our students during this emergency situation.