

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff,

As we continue to monitor the spread of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), our first priority is the health, welfare and safety of our students, faculty, staff and community. After meeting today with the university taskforce and continuing to work closely with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Centers for Disease Control, I have made the following decision about our academic schedule after spring break:

- Spring Break will be extended for a week (March 16 – 20) and no classes will be held.
- All campus events next week will be cancelled.
- The university will remain open, including residence halls, food services and limited transit.
- Scheduled Athletics events are expected to continue. We will alert fans if anything changes. Regardless, per guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control people over the age of 60 with preexisting medical conditions should avoid attending events with large crowds because they are a greater risk of complications related to Covid-19.
- Students, please use your best judgement when deciding whether or not to return to campus next week, taking into account any preexisting health conditions and alternative housing options.
- We will keep you informed about plans for the week of March 23 – 27 and beyond, which could include some classes moving to online instruction.

In the interest of protecting our community and based on the best information available, extending spring break for a week and preventing the return to campus of 32,000 students at the same time is the best measured approach to prevent a high risk situation and is an attempt to mitigate the spread of the virus.

I realize that changes of any kind to our normal schedule are inconvenient, but I am confident that our plan for next week and the weeks to come will help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 on campus and provide us with the flexibility we need to plan our next steps.

Updated guidance for preventing the spread of COVID-19 continues to be updated on the university's [COVID-19 landing page](#). For additional questions, please contact our dedicated hotline: 803-576-8511.

Thank you,

Bob Caslen