15 March 2020

From: Rama Venkat
Dean, College of Engineering

To: College of Engineering Graduate Students

Subject: Covid-19 Safety Procedures for Graduate Students working in their campus office or research and graduate laboratory...

Dear Graduate Students,

During this challenging time with Covid-19 pandemic, I want you to know that college administrators and staff are here to support your continuing education and research assistant duties in any way possible without compromising your health and safety. We can work together to make sure we are following CDC (Center for Disease Control) guidelines to slow down the spread of the virus and at the same time you do not contract it from your co-workers. To this end, we would like you to adhere to the following guidelines.

1) As instruction is transitioning from in-person to online, you are encouraged to use your home computer to attend the courses that you are enrolled in. For those who do not have a home computer and cannot borrow or use somebody else’s computer, you may continue to use your office computer, but must follow the “Safety and Disinfection Procedures” outlined below.

2) College encourages stopping laboratory based graduate research that can wait for a month (until April 13). But there may be situation that research work cannot be stopped for various reasons. It is left to the department and Principal investigator to decide, but it should be approved by the chair and dean based on a written justification. Those who would like to continue their laboratory work for graduate studies and research projects, first consult your thesis/dissertation advisor as to their advice as to their guidelines for their specific laboratory and your work. If they are allowed to work in the laboratory, then these students are also expected to follow the “Safety and Disinfection Procedures”.

Safety and Disinfection Procedures

1. Keep a social distance of about 2 meters (7 ft) from other students in your laboratory or office. If that is not possible in your current office,
   a. see if you can work with your office mate on staggering the time schedule.
   b. See if you can find alternate space to work in, working with:
      i. Your faculty advisor
      ii. Department Lab Director and
iii. Space, Safety and Inventory Control Manager, Aldo Chavira (aldo.chavira@unlv.edu)

2) Do not accept any hard copies of homework and projects reports from students. Let the students scan and email them to you or post on Webcampus.

3) The College has prepared and made available bottles of disinfectants to graduate students and undergraduate researchers and work study students. These disinfectants can be picked up from Peter Faught, Jeff Markle or Dr. Kazim Jadidirendi (TBE B Machine Shop). Please check with them if they plan to work remotely and make arrangements to get disinfectant supplies. The bottles are small to facilitate carrying and avoiding fire hazard. Note that Alcohol is flammable. You can bring your bottle for refill at any time during work hours of M-F 8 am to 5 pm. Note that only solutions with at least 70% alcohol are effective against the virus.

4) Laboratory work benches should be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with bleach (sodium hypochlorite bleach, also commonly known as Chlorox). Use the Bench cleaning solutions given in the order of their use.

5) As soon as you enter the building and after passing doors and elevators, go to the closest restroom and wash your hands with soap and hot water for at least 30 seconds.

6) When you are at your office desk, wipe keyboards and your desks with a paper towel doused in alcohol or bleach solution. Discard towels into the garbage cans right after one use. Also wipe the door knobs of your office using the same procedure.

7) Do not let tip of your water bottle touch the spout of water dispenser at a Hydration stations. Use a small bottle to catch water from the Hydration station and transfer it to your water bottle, if you have a large and does not fit under the spout of the Hydration station without touching it.

8) Wash your hands before drinking or eating or rub them with alcohol. Avoid touching your mouth, eyes or nose.

9) As advised by the UNLV Health Center, if you feel sick (high temperature or cough or shortness or breath), don’t come to campus or go to any public places. Follow the guidelines below.

If you are experiencing fever, cough, or shortness of breath, call your primary care provider or the Student Health Center (702) 895-3370 If it is outside of normal business hours, call or visit after hours care. If you are experiencing severe symptoms, call 9-1-1 or seek immediate care at the nearest emergency room.

**COVID-19 emergency warning signs and actions:**

Useful website: [https://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/coronavirus](https://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/coronavirus)

If you experience difficulty breathing, chest pain or pressure, confusion or lack of alertness, high fevers or bluish color to your lips, seek immediate medical attention at the nearest emergency room or call 9-1-1.

If you have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19, call the Student Health Center at (702) 895-3370 or the Faculty and Staff Treatment (FAST) Center at (702) 895-0630. If it is outside of normal business hours, visit after hours care.

If you are at higher risk, (people with chronic medical conditions, such as heart disease or lung disease, and older adults) then the CDC recommend them to take everyday precautions to prevent infection, such as handwashing, cleaning surfaces frequently, staying away from people who are sick, and avoiding
crowds. It may be best to try to stay home as much as possible. People who have compromised immune systems or underlying health conditions should also consult with their health care provider(s) to obtain guidance on their specific situation.

If I feel worried or anxious or stressed due to COVID-19 outbreak, you may seek help at Student Counseling and Psychological Services. Call (702) 895-3627 or email caps@unlv.edu for an appointment.

**Availability of additional Hardware and Facilities**

There are computers, workstations, and teleconferencing capabilities for graduate students in the Lied Graduate Commons and the Professional Development Academy Commons on the 2nd floor of the new University Gateway building.