Managing Distress Related to Coronavirus

Recent news reports about the novel coronavirus, travel restrictions, and concerns for our own and our loved ones’ health may contribute to increased mental and emotional health distress. Common reactions to distressing events and uncertainty may include:

- Increased anxiety, worry, and fear; feelings of being overwhelmed
- Sadness, hopelessness, and/or dread about the future
- Inability to concentrate or focus
- Significant changes in sleep, appetite and/or self-care
- Social isolation or withdrawal
- Thoughts about death, dying and/or suicide
- Unhealthy coping behaviors (increased substance abuse, impulsiveness, self-injury, etc.)

**Tips for Managing Distress**

- **Acknowledge reactions**: Allow yourself time to reflect on what you are feeling and how you may be reacting to or coping with these feelings.
- **Avoid too much exposure to news**: Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- **Take care of your body**: Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- **Take breaks**: Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- **Connect with others**: Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- **Seek accurate information from credible sources**: The Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration are good resources. You may also find useful information from local or state public health agencies. Limit exposure to social media and reports that sensationalize the facts.
- **Follow protection and prevention tips provided by qualified medical professionals, including Student Health Services**.
- **Seek out and utilize campus resources**: The Counseling Center, Student Health Services, International Student Services, professors, and advisors are all great resources. Don’t be afraid to reach out!
Practice Respect, Civility, and Dignity

Fear and anxiety can lead to mistrust, bias, prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping and micro-aggressions. In an effort to maintain and promote mutual trust, respect, civility and dignity in our community, please consider practicing the following:

- Be mindful of your behaviors, thoughts, beliefs, and/or biases about international students, faculty and staff
- Avoid making generalizations about students, faculty or staff who may be sick, protecting themselves from getting sick, and/or from abroad
- Do not avoid international students, faculty or staff
- Listen and attend to each other with empathy, kindness and compassion