



Greg Steinberger Mar 12

COVID-19 Update

Updated: Mar 13

March 11, 2020

Dear Friends,

We are living through extraordinary times with worry and insecurity sitting heavily on our collective shoulders. As a community, we have just concluded the celebration of Purim, the Jewish holiday in which we recognize the topsy-turvy nature of our world, where, as they saying goes, a Jew learns to laugh with one eye and cry with the other.

Earlier today, the University of Wisconsin-Madison took action concerning the COVID-19 virus. While there have only been a handful of cases in Wisconsin, the virus continues to spread across the country and world. In an effort to mitigate the effects of the disease on our campus population, the university has decided to suspend face-to-face instruction beginning March 23 and through at least April 10. The delay in the start date is because we begin spring recess in just two days. Additionally, students living in the residence halls are being asked to continue their coursework remotely and not return to Madison.

UW Hillel is actively engaged with the University administration, University Health Services, our local Jewish community, Hillel International, and our many other partners. We will be continuing to monitor the situation as we make decisions about our programming.

In light of this message, UW Hillel wants you to know the following:

We are guided by our commitment to welcoming and nurturing our students. Toward that end, we are having conversations with our staff and leadership about Hillel programming and building use and will make decisions on our activities in the coming days. With spring break beginning this Friday, we will not be hosting Shabbat services and dinner on Friday the 13th and our café and will be closed for spring break. During spring break we will assess our programming schedule and future celebrations for Passover and Shabbat.

Given the University's request that schools and units "consider postponing or canceling any events or gatherings, on campus or off, we will assess how this might affect our Shabbat and Passover meals (including Seders) during the first part of April. We will keep you updated accordingly.

Following the recommendations of the University and health officials, we strongly request that, if you do not feel well, please refrain from visiting the Hillel building or attending any Hillel-related activities.

As we consider concerns about the Coronavirus, we recognize that this is a difficult time and that each person in our community has different needs. The University of Wisconsin Hillel staff is committed to supporting our students in whatever ways possible. Please don't hesitate to call us at 608.256.8361 or contact me directly at gsteinberger@uwhillel.org or Rabbi Andrea Steinberger at asteinberger@uwhillel.org if you have specific questions or

concerns.

Sincerely,

Greg Steinberger
CEO

Rabbi Andrea Steinberger
UW Hillel Foundation

P.S. Additional Information about the UW Hillel response and campus response to Covid 19

[UW-Madison Protocols](#)

UW Hillel is in close communication with the UW-Madison administration and plans to follow the [protocols](#) they put in place. Additionally, the staff has been following the [Center for Disease Control](#) and [Madison and Dane County's Public Health Department](#) for updates. In a time when fear and misinformation can also be a contagion, we encourage you to check reliable news sources for accurate information about what is going on.

SELF-CARE IS COMMUNITY CARE

It may be tempting to push through illness instead of staying home to rest.

Please do not go out if you are not feeling well or are exhibiting signs of illness (i.e., coughing, sneezing, etc.). Not only is it good for you to rest until you are well, it protects others from getting ill themselves or spreading it to those who are more vulnerable to this virus, such as people over the age of 60 or those with compromised immune systems.

SPRING BREAK & TRAVEL

We strongly encourage you to follow the [recommendations of UW-Madison](#) regarding any travel you had planned for the next month and avoid any non-essential travel. If you do travel, make sure to take essential items, including items related to your coursework, in the event that you are unable to return to campus.

SOCIAL DISTANCING & VIRTUAL CONNECTION

In accordance with the University's requirement that all student organizations cancel in-person meetings beginning at 5pm this Friday, March 13th, UW Hillel will cease in-person gatherings at that time. It is important that we practice physical social distancing in this time to protect more vulnerable populations ("[Flattening the Coronavirus Curve](#)").

As a community, we are called to love all our neighbors, especially those who are most vulnerable. Please consider that even if you are well, you can unwittingly be a carrier for the virus and impact others. Even as we practice physical social distancing, UW Hillel will seek to cultivate virtual social connection and meetings. In anxious times like these, it is important to have supportive relationships and community.

Shalom

As anxieties rise, let us resist the temptation to be led by fear. Be aware, [practice good hygiene](#), and take good care!



0 comments



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