Dear CSUSM community,

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday next week, we want to thank you for your perseverance. This has been a fall semester like no other and you have come together in new and unprecedented ways to support one another and keep each other safe and healthy. We know it hasn’t been easy, but we are in this together.

We want to share a few updates about how we are moving forward toward the end of the fall semester with health and safety at the forefront. As you know, we have been seeing reports of COVID cases beginning to increase in our region, and as a third wave of the pandemic sweeps across our nation, our collective and individual efforts are more important than ever before.

Public health experts warn that even higher rates of infection are expected in the coming weeks as we enter the winter season. Please continue to do your part by wearing a face mask when around others outside of your immediate home or family unit, and maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet. Practice good hygiene and get tested if you think you may have been exposed, have been in a high-risk environment or are showing symptoms of COVID. The university-operated testing site at CSUSM offers free testing to the public and open seven days a week, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (including Thanksgiving).

Here at CSUSM, we are continuing to take precautions and follow updated guidelines from state and local health officials. Here are some additional actions we are implementing as part of our ongoing CSUSM COVID plan:

In-Person Instruction and USU Computer Lab
As planned, most in-person courses will shift to virtual instruction beginning Nov. 30 as an out of an abundance of caution. Students enrolled in courses that are still fully in-person are required to wear masks and practice social distancing in class. The campus continues to operate at reduced on-campus capacity. The campus maintains its own COVID-19 testing plans.

Modifying Traditions
Many traditional Thanksgiving activities can be high-risk for spreading viruses as multiple households come together. The greatest risk of spreading COVID-19 comes from convening larger groups, so it is important to keep gatherings small. Consider alternative ways to celebrate or modify your holiday traditions. Both the CDC and the Indian Country COVID-19 response have made suggestions for safer ways to celebrate Thanksgiving.

We are aware that Thanksgiving is an important event for some students. As important as it is to prepare our University community, we also recognize the impact the holiday has historically had on Native communities. If you are considering other ways to celebrate Thanksgiving, here is an article with suggestions for nine things you can do to create a safe Thanksgiving experience that will continue following all prescribed COVID-19 safety guidelines. Faculty will communicate with students if the modality of a class is shifting.

Travel Advisory
The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and regional public health officials are discouraging holiday travel. If you must travel, you should get COVID-19 tested prior to your trip if you will be traveling outside of your home area, or 1-3 days prior to the start of your trip. Many health experts recommend that you self-quarantine for 14 days following your return to California. Avoiding travel can reduce the risk of virus transmission and bring the virus back to California. Employees who currently have an on-campus role and choose to travel out-of-state for personal reasons should notify their manager and make appropriate arrangements to comply with this guidance. Students should notify their faculty member if they have in-person courses to make appropriate accommodations.

Additional Support
This time of year can bring up many emotions and feelings. The impact of the ongoing pandemic is adding to the stress, anxiety and depression that many are experiencing. Just as you are taking care of your physical health, your mental and emotional well-being are also important. CSUSM offers a full range of virtual support services, including mental health services, for students. For employees, CSUSM employee health, CSUSM/CUSD mental health, CUSD employee health, CSUSM employee health and CSUSM/CUSD mental health.

Recreational Facilities at CSUSM
Facilities at CSUSM will be open for the fall semester with health and safety at the forefront.

Add the school to your email list.

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