

Social Sciences v COVID-19

Dispatch #2 | 23 March 2020

MSO's: please share this with your faculty, staff & graduate students.

As we start week #2 of the virtual university, we want to be in touch again with all of you, through various means, including this weekly SOSC Dispatch.

First and foremost, we hope you that you are staying healthy and resilient, in the face of adversity. If you know anyone in the Division—faculty, staff, students, physical plant workers—who is experiencing extraordinary hardship, please reach out; we want to do anything possible to help.

Second, I would like to highlight this call from UCOP, asking for research directly relevant to the COVID crisis. Although many of the categories are biomedical, as we know, the societal dimensions of the problems, and the solutions, are absolutely critical. If you are doing, or aware of, COVID-related research (either ongoing or new ideas) in our Division, please send relevant information to the Dean's Office.

Our questions that remain unanswered (including answers from last week)

- Some universities are suggesting generalized shift to C/NC to relieve stress all around; has this been discussed?

There has been much discussion about this in the Academic Senate. It appears they are leaning toward a proposal that would designate the last day of classes as the deadline to change from grade to P/NP. The revised policy has yet to be finalized.

- Was consideration given to cancelling spring quarter, to preserve educational integrity, making special arrangements for those who have compelling needs to be enrolled?

This has not been addressed specifically in any meeting I have attended. There are major reasons for keeping the University up and running.

- What if instructors are signed up for a class spring quarter that simply cannot be converted to online form?

This has been discussed in various admin meetings. The watchword is flexibility. If the course is impossible to teach in a modified remote format, the advice is to find a workable alternative. We assume there will be lots of improvisation.

- How to handle concerns about possible exposure?

See this [flowchart](#).

Suggestions for Admin actions to address specific dimensions of the crisis

From Raquel Pacheco, an ANTH faculty member: *I'm deeply concerned about the University's decision to move Spring quarter online. Without measures that make Internet access a public good and public libraries closed and so many families losing their jobs, how can the University of California pretend all students can access the Internet? We are less than two weeks away from the start of Spring quarter and have not heard the University, Faculty Association, or Faculty Senate even broach this grave issue.*

We have convened an ad hoc group, including Raquel, Amy Gonzales (COMM), Victor Rios and Aida Hurtado, to work up a document with info and suggested guidelines on this critical issue. Stay tuned.

Resources for confronting the challenge of online education and operations

- Extension of 8-year clock for Assistant professors. See this [link](#) to the AP policy statement.
 - Here is the [link](#) for admin leave for all University employees
- On these two abovementioned matters, if you have questions that are not answered by the official statements, please contact us.
- Help is on the way for remote instruction; there will be special TAs assigned to each department; you'll receive this information soon.
 - **Advice** to colleagues from the Chronicle of Higher Education (CHE) that seemed useful;
 - Undergrad education has suggested that departments make sure their majors know about **UC online courses**, which they can add to help fill out their schedules.
 - **Bayne adjusted syllabus advice**, also from CHE.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom **announced** that 56% of Californians could contract the dreaded virus. In actual numbers that means that "roughly 25.5 million residents could be infected with the coronavirus over an eight-week period." However, not all residents will be affected the same. Inequalities based on race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and physical ableness will all have a bearing on the life and death chances of surviving contamination. In this section of the blog, we will be taking several issues at a time to uncover the "hidden injuries" of inequality as we all work towards a safer and continued productive California and beyond. Stay tuned and take care. And please send your own observations and articles that address these inequalities and we will strive to include them in due course.

- They Clean the Buildings Workers Are Fleeing. But Who's Protecting Them ([NYT](#))?

Resources for resilience and reasons for hope amid adversity

The key stanza from Leonard Cohen's **Anthem** is fitting:

"Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering,
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in."



Charles R. Hale

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