MEMORANDUM

From: Grant Hayes, Ph.D.
Acting Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

To: ECU Campus Community

Date: January 31, 2020

RE: ECU update on emerging respiratory illness 2019-nCoV || REVISED

East Carolina University is closely monitoring the outbreak of respiratory illness caused by coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in China, originating in Wuhan.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended that travelers avoid nonessential travel to China, but states that the virus poses little risk to persons in the U.S. at this time. There are currently five confirmed cases of the virus in the U.S., in four states, all tied directly to travel in and through Hubei Province, China. There are no confirmed cases in North Carolina at this time.

If you have not visited the affected region or had close contact with someone who has visited the affected region in the past two weeks, you are not at risk of exposure to this illness. Public health officials are continuing to learn more about 2019-nCoV and ECU continues to monitor information provided by local, state and federal health authorities. The university will provide updates as they become available.

Following guidance from the U.S. Department of State and CDC, ECU is prohibiting university-sponsored travel to China by students, faculty and staff until further notice under ECU policy REG 02.30.01.

ECU students and personnel who have recently traveled to the affected area or have been in contact with someone who has confirmed coronavirus infection AND are exhibiting fever or respiratory symptoms are encouraged to seek health care. If possible, inform your provider of your potential exposure in advance of your visit. ECU Student Health Services can be reached at 252-328-6841.

Coronaviruses are in the same family of viruses that include the common cold. This virus, like the flu, can cause fever, coughing and shortness of breath. The CDC believes that symptoms of 2019-nCoV may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. The illness can be more serious for individuals with a weakened immune system, the elderly or those with underlying respiratory problems. It could result in bronchitis and pneumonia.

Reminder: We are in cold and flu season. The standard recommendations to stay healthy during cold and flu season apply to this virus as well:
- Avoid contact with persons who are sick.
- Frequently clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Cover your cough and sneezes (into your flexed elbow or tissue) and wash your hands immediately.
- Didn’t get a flu vaccine yet? It’s not too late.