

# MCCCD in-person classes temporarily suspended due to COVID-19 outbreak

Michael Manny, Online Editor

GLENDALE, Ariz. – In-person classes at all Maricopa Community Colleges are being suspended March 16-20 to prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) according to an email from MCCCD Interim Chancellor Dr. Steven Gonzales.

“Out of an abundance of caution and following much discussion with our governing board, college presidents, provost and senior staff, as well as a variety of other leaders representing our community, I have made the decision to extend spring break for our students by one week,” Gonzales said in the release.

College faculty, staff and administration will return to campus March 16 to prepare for a potential transition from in-person to online/distance learning for up to two weeks or longer. All other college and district services will remain open as normal at this time, according to the release. Current online classes will continue as normal March 16 through the end of the semester.

Lab-based, Career and Technical Education and performance based classes will need to be reviewed for a solution, per the release.

The district will notify the community of its plan moving forward by March 20.

According to the Arizona Department of Health Services, as of March 12, 115 people have been tested in Arizona. Two cases have been confirmed positive, with seven presumptively positive cases, 24 pending tests and 82 ruled out. Three positive cases have been reported in Maricopa County.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough and shortness of breath, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

The World Health Organization classified the virus as a pandemic March 11.

The announcement comes after the district’s suspension of non-essential travel to locations with community spread of COVID-19 through May 15. Colleges and universities across the country, including Arizona State University, The University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University, have made the decision to temporarily move online.

ASU classes will shift online March 16, and will last for two weeks, the university announced March 11. UArizona will delay the start of classes after break to March 18 and move online where it is possible. NAU will shift to online classes for at least two weeks once their break concludes March 23, school president Dr. Rita Hartung Cheng announced in an email to students.

\*This story has been updated to include more information about the universities in Arizona shifting temporarily online.