MEMORANDUM

To: USC Community

From: Charles F. Zukoski, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date: March 6, 2020

Subject: Campus-wide Test: Classes Temporarily Move Online Effective March 11-13

As the COVID-19 (coronavirus) situation evolves, your safety and wellbeing are our main priority. As a result, we continue to take precautionary measures to ensure that we are prepared for any potential disruptions to teaching and learning at USC.

There are no cases at USC of COVID-19. As you may be aware, California and Los Angeles County have declared states of emergency, though we are mindful that there is no immediate threat to the general public.

Our university must be nimble and flexible in the event that we need to make any further changes to the semester. We have about 7,000 lecture classes this spring. We need to test our technical capabilities to ensure academic continuity in an online environment should there be a disruption.

With this in mind, we will test our online lectures and seminars starting Wednesday, March 11 through Friday, March 13. The online modality will replace in-person classes for those three days. Please work with your instructors if special technical accommodations may be needed.

I emphasize that this is a test of our capabilities. The university is fully functional. Student residential colleges, dining halls, offices, libraries, health centers, and recreation and athletics facilities are open. Campus events are scheduled to take place as planned. Employees are expected to be at work.

Should students’ academic schedules only include lectures and seminars, students need not remain on campus as these will be held online.
All faculty are being required to switch to a Blackboard or Zoom platform (or another school-specific online learning system) so classes and office hours can continue online. Please review the March 2 memo for important guidance on how to do this, along with this resource from the Center for Excellence in Teaching. It is also important to record your classes on Zoom.

During Spring Recess, we will review feedback from faculty, students, and staff to determine how to improve the online experience. Should the situation erode and we need to take stronger measures, we will be able to smoothly and quickly adapt, having tested our resources for three days.

I am proud of how supportive our community has been. We will continue to follow the guidance of our health experts and we will take every step possible to ensure the wellbeing of our students, faculty, and staff.

Please continue to check your email including during Spring Recess for updates.

**Class Schedule**

- Monday, March 9 through Tuesday, March 10 – Normal classroom activities
- Wednesday, March 11 through Friday, March 13 – Online testing; lecture and seminar classes will be held online
- Monday, March 16 through Friday, March 20 – Spring Recess
- Monday, March 23 – Classes scheduled to resume in person

**Resources:** USC’s official page on COVID-19 has all the latest messages and status updates. Check it frequently. For questions, please use the COVID-19 hotline: 213-740-6291 or email: studenthealth@usc.edu.

**Hygiene practices:** Please remember to take care of yourself, and use common sense hygiene practices. Please stay home if you are sick, wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, cover your cough with your elbow or sleeve, and avoid touching your nose and mouth.

**Travel recommendations:** We strongly advise against international travel for students and employees over spring recess. USC Chief Health Officer Sarah Van Orman provided details in her March 4 memo.

cc:
Office of the President
Academic Deans
President’s Senior Leadership Team
Provost’s Leadership Team
Academic Senate
Staff Assembly