



General Communication on Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Fri 6th of March, 2020

**Dear University for Peace Community,
Students, Faculty and Staff**

We wish to inform you that at UPEACE we have followed very closely the COVID-19 Outbreak:

- we have been observing the guidance and leadership of regional and global public health organizations, namely the Panamerican Health Organization (PAHO) & the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC, USA)
- we have also been in active communication and following the recommendations of local & national public health authorities, namely the Costa Rican Health Ministry, and

Hereafter, UPEACE will issue regular updates, news and information about the development of this outbreak that may become relevant for our UPEACE Community, and thereby guaranteeing that essential information is known by everyone.

UPEACE has created a Task Force charged with the monitoring of the outbreak, informing & educating our community on both infection prevention & infection control measures, assuring UPEACE's compliance with the Costa Rican Government national response by informing and advising the administration on the recommended actions to be implemented and that are proportional to each different phase of development of the outbreak.

So, to receive and address your questions, concerns, comments and suggestions, UPEACE has created the email COVID19@upeace.org

I. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OUR UPEACE COMMUNITY

<i>Source</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Link</i>
WHO / OMS	Basic protective measures against the new coronavirus	English Spanish
PAHO / OPS	Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), Situation in the Americas as of 5 March 2020	English Spanish
Costa Rican Health Ministry	National guidelines for the surveillance for Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19)	Only Spanish
Costa Rican Health Ministry	Coronavirus Official News Center	Only Spanish



II. RECOMMENDATIONS TO PREVENT THE CONTRACTION OF A RESPIRATORY INFECTION

The current new Coronavirus outbreak coincided with the annual peak of influenza (the flu) in the northern hemisphere, and although not all respiratory tract infections are caused by this new virus, the challenge in its control lay on the fact that several different types of pathogens also can bring about the same type of symptoms in large masses of people and thus creating the conditions for fast and easy transmission. In this context, the agency of vigilant hygiene & self-care as well as empathetic & supportive attitudes towards fellow community members is essential for a successful & effective response.

The following are general measures of social hygiene and self-care, effective to limit the spread of respiratory-disease-inducing-pathogens:

1. Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. **Why?** Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands
2. Maintain at least 1 meter (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. **Why?** When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.
3. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth. **Why?** Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.
4. Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent/flexed elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately. **Why?** Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.
5. Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. **Why?** National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.
6. Keep up to date on the latest COVID-19 hotspots (cities or local areas where COVID-19 is spreading widely). If possible, avoid traveling to places – especially if you are an older person or have diabetes, heart or lung disease. **Why?** You have a higher chance of catching COVID-19 in one of these areas.



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III. RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT BUSSINESS, ACADEMIC AND INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

At this time UPEACE is discouraging its faculty, staff members and students from undertaking any international non-essential travel, be it academic, business, or independent.

While at the same time, since beginning of February, UPEACE has been already implementing a history travel registry protocol by which the travel pattern of all campus visitors is being declare before their arrival to campus.

Considering that the Costa Rican Government have not introduced any type of travel restrictions and that health authorities are now practicing active screenings at the airports; we will carry on with our scheduled activities on campus while constantly monitoring the developments in the response.

IV. RISK COMMUNICATION AND INFECTION CONTROL EDUCATION ON CAMPUS

Starting today relevant information will be made available in the forms of posters all over campus. Staring next weeks, our Medical Team will visit all offices and classrooms, to provide 15 min trainings and hand washing/cleaning and respiratory etiquette.

V. INFORMATION SESSIONS - BROWN BAGS

We are coordinating with personnel from PAHO/OPS to bring an evidence-based information session for our community on campus.