



YOUR COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND THE CORONAVIRUS

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ABOUT US...

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PUTTING THIS IN CONTEXT...

- We are dealing with a virus more infectious (and potentially deadlier) than the flu (2% death rate compared with .01 of the flu)
- Exponential growth means the number of cases will double every 2.4 days (unless we do EXTREME “hunkering down”)
- The Spanish flu of 1918 lasted a year
- We should plan for a minimum 6 to 8-month disruption

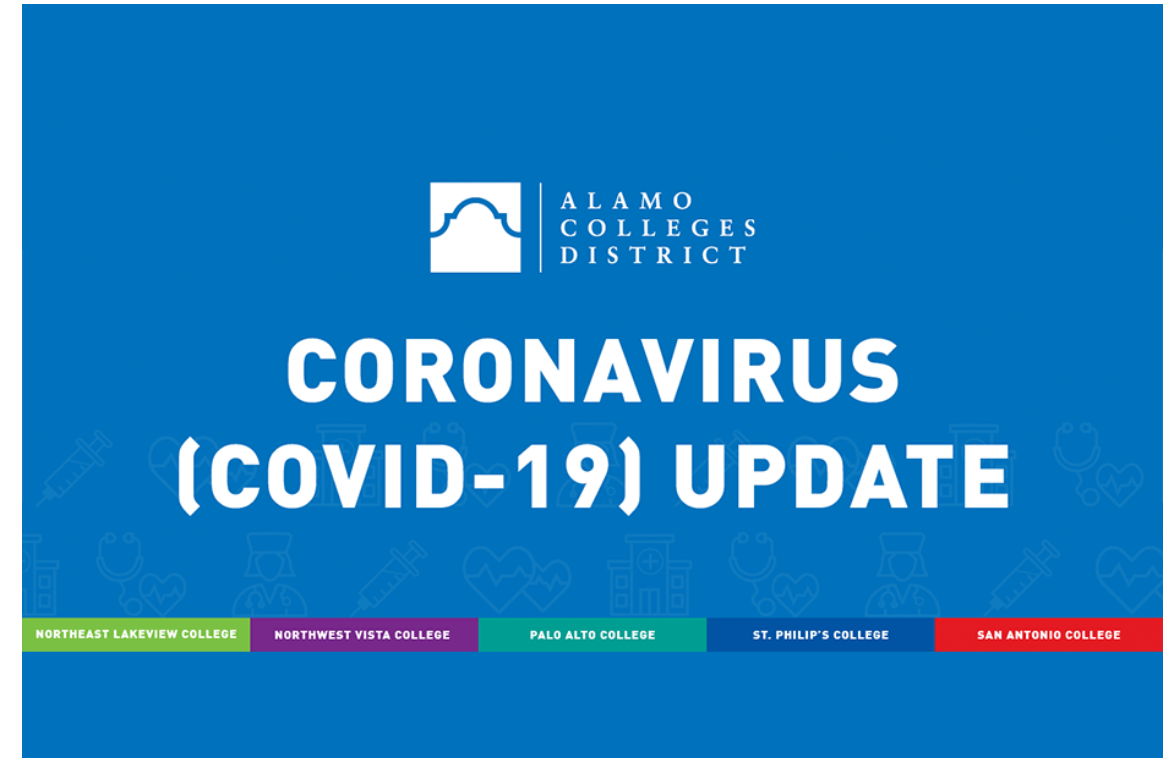


WHAT THIS HAS MEANT FOR EDUCATION...

- Dozens of states have closed schools statewide
- Locally, even more schools have closed
- When schools decide to close, CDC recommends 8-week period minimum
- Schools are still trying to provide services (free lunches, etc.) to those in need

WHAT THIS HAS MEANT FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES...

- All large gatherings have been cancelled or postponed
- Colleges across the nation are holding courses remotely for precautionary reasons
- Some colleges have started canceling graduation ceremonies
- Board meetings have moved online
- Some colleges are moving to remote for most on-campus workers as well

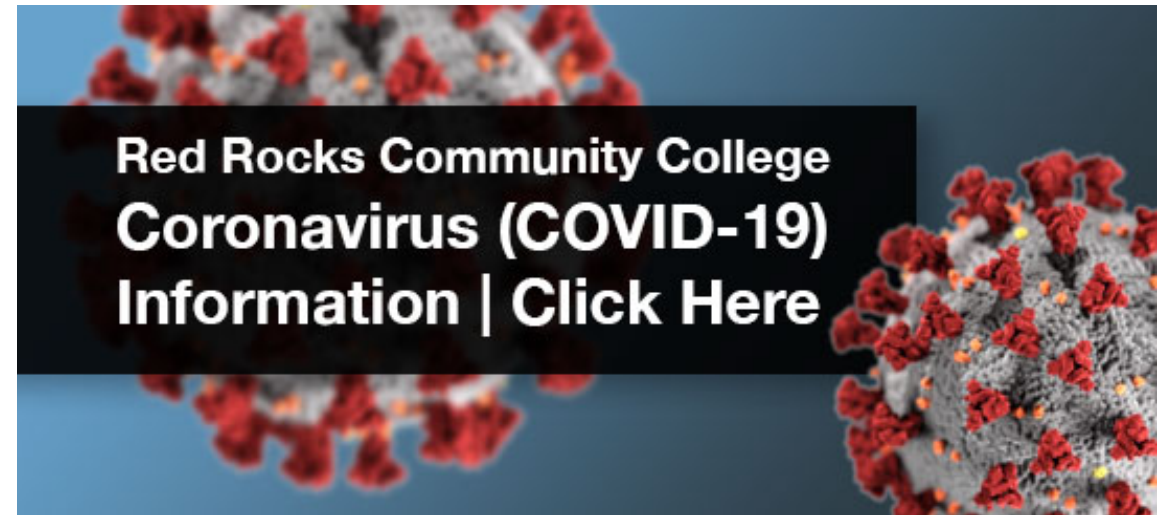


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WHAT THIS HAS MEANT FOR PIOs AND COMMUNICATION EXPERTS

- You are on the bubble to communicate all decisions, in real-time
- Constantly changing situation and new decisions made on an hourly basis
- Managing crisis communications with your other duties
- Still thinking about enrollments and how to market your summer and fall classes



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Crisis Communications Trends



Minimal attention spans

- Multitasking
- Keep your story simple



Empathy often missing



SM will drive your story

- Monitor, post, correct

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Crisis Communications Trends

Mobile news
consumption

Viral misinformation

JIC/EOC challenges

- Length of operation
- Staffing – likely no mutual aid
- Remote access

What You Can Do Now

Your guiding principles

- Over-communicate
- Empathy
- Flexibility
- Accessibility

What You Can Do Now

Create a communications team

- Should be cross-departmental

Adopt EOC/JIC approach

- Daily IMT and PIO team calls
- Who writes good staff reports?
- Who does personal SM?
- Who likes to do videos as hobby?

What You Can Do Now



OK to say “we don’t know”



Acknowledge fears



Avoid guesses about duration



Communicate how community
can access your campuses

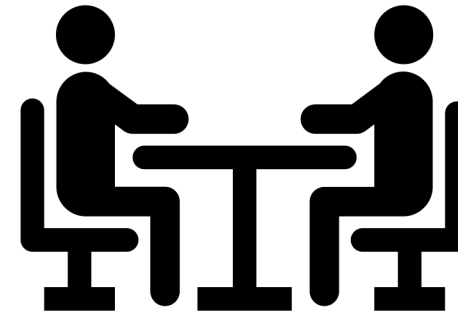
What You Can Do Now

Craft four vital documents

- Crisis communications approach
- Key message platform
- Rude/internal Q&A
- Holding statement

Monitor other
districts/colleges

What You Can Do Now



Be at the table

- Bring your plan and review it
- Point out pros and cons
- Push back when necessary
- Determine spokespersons
- Train your leaders

Internal Communications

Families first

- Support faculty/staff with kids at home
- Organize support systems – telecommuters and on-site

Be patient with media

- Reporters may not get it right

Internal Communications

Mental health

- Stress is at all-time high
- Offer counseling, time off
- Minimize financial burdens

Communicate EAPs,
other resources

Internal Communications



- Create forum to share concerns
- Continually updated intranet
- Share stories/examples of creatively meeting challenge
- Short-form videos
 - Policy and staff leaders

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A FEW KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- This may not go away anytime soon
- You should be worried about retention
- You should be thinking about commencement
- **How to keep students close, EVEN if they aren't enrolled**



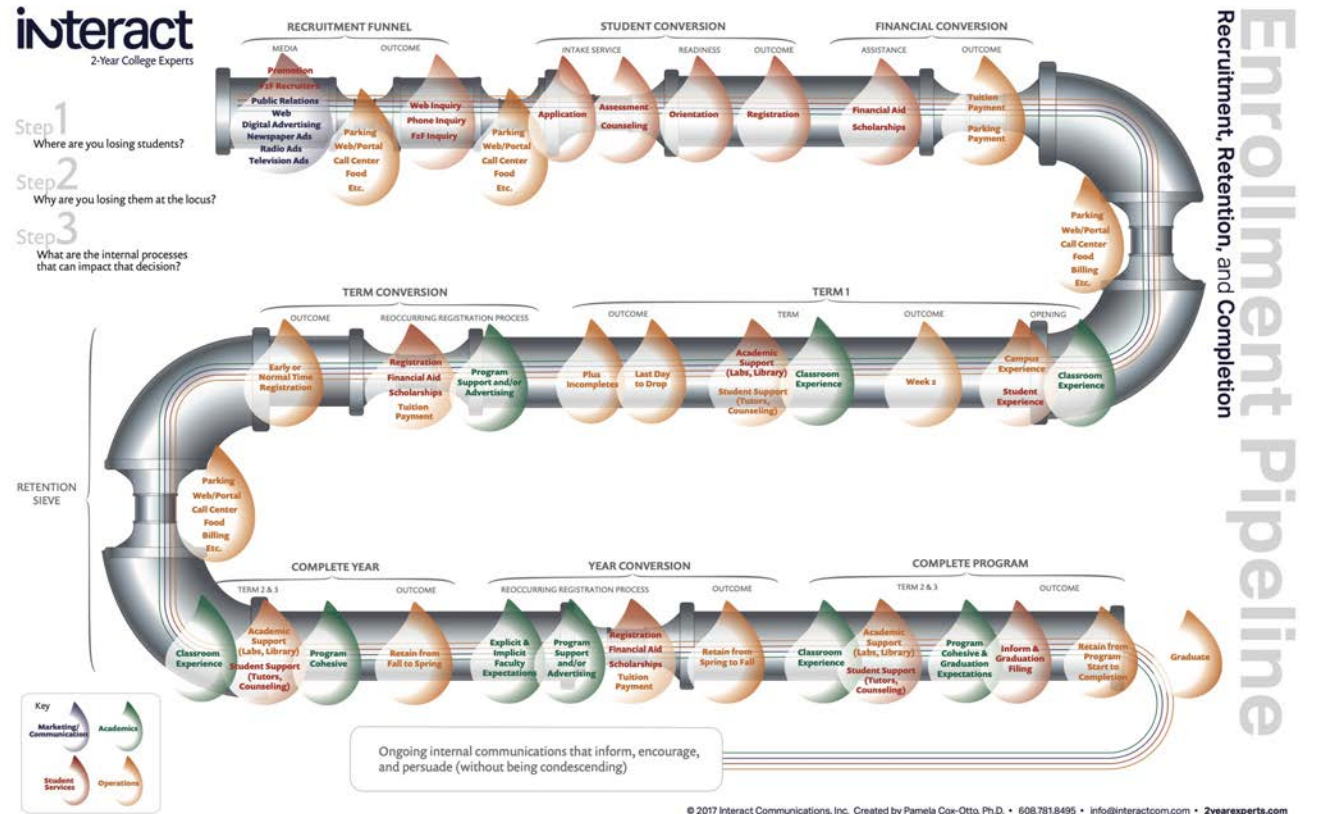
A FEW KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- It's a great time to market online education
- It's a perfect time to beef up your resources to help students succeed online



A FEW KEY CONSIDERATIONS

What you do now to recruit for summer and fall will make a world of a difference in your enrollment numbers!



Critical Points of Focus: Enrollment

- Retention will be key and **CANNOT** be left to Faculty Alone
- Creating Community While Distanced is Key
 - Not Just for Students
 - Faculty are at a disadvantage
 - Consider multiple old-fashioned phone trees not simply mass emails
- Creating a communication plan for support, not just news
 - Whatever culture you had before this...can change...for good or ill based on this connection
- Whatever digital assets you have had.... You don't have enough and will need more
 - Consider high-end editing from low-end phone recordings
- Short term classes are more likely to succeed than full 14-week courses.
- Don't forget to account for your non-credit and continuing ed populations. If you are going online for credit... can you do the same for them?

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Critical Points of Focus: Community

- When and If the hospitals overflow.... part of the emergency plan may be to reach out to your students for help. Are you ready?
- Colleges are natural overflow hospitals, and already have some equipment. How could that work?
- There may be hunger among the working poor and homeless, with cafeteria facilities your college may be the center of hope.
- Consider the Daily Beat Check to update news when LOCAL information slows down.

This can be the moment where you separate yourself from the Universities.

How?

You are the community's college with *solutions*
for the community.

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QUESTIONS?

Thoughts, tips, advice to share with others?

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