



Office of the President
(505) 922-4087


United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
P.O. Box 10146 • Albuquerque, NM 87184
9169 Coors Blvd., NW • Albuquerque, NM 87120

MAR 12 2020

Memorandum

To: Students, Staff, Faculty and Board of Regents

From: Dr. Sherry Allison, President 

Subject: SIPI- COVID-19

As you are well aware, the COVID-19 outbreak has now been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization, and due to several confirmed cases here in NM, Governor Lujan-Grisham has declared a Public Health Emergency for the State of New Mexico. At this point in time, and until further notice from my office, classes will remain in session and all operations of the college will continue with some adjustments.

The SIPI Leadership Team and our Emergency Response Team, have been meeting and are working to develop our next steps forward, including plans/protocol (but not inclusive) for classes, travel, responses, etc... As plans are finalized, we will share with the SIPI community. I sincerely appreciate the input of staff who are working on the development of these plans. This is an extremely fluid situation and we must respond in a smart, organized and caring manner. The wellbeing and safety of our SIPI Community members is at the forefront of our decision making. Please note the following:

1. **CLASSES:** We have approximately five weeks left in school. Classes will continue; however, we are in the process of working on alternate plans.
2. **COMMUNICATION:** The President's Office will serve as the official point of communication for SIPI. As plans are finalized, the President's office will disseminate all official notifications regarding any matter on the operations of SIPI. I will authorized what will be posted on SIPI's official Facebook and our webpage.
3. **TRAVEL:** Until further notice, all SIPI sponsored (this includes grant funded) travel is suspended for staff and students.
4. **EVENTS:** Small group (less than 30) meetings of students, faculty, and staff can take place on campus; however, large gatherings will be cancelled. We are still in conversation regarding our 2020 Commencement (scheduled for April 17, 2020), this decision will be made very soon and conveyed to you.

5. **STAFF TOUR OF DUTY:** Staff will continue to work as specified in approved tour of duty, unless changes are requested and officially approved.

In conclusion, as we address this public health emergency, we will approach this in an organized, respectful and considerate manner. As a friendly reminder, we all need to wash our hands frequently, cover our sneezes/coughs (allergy season is upon us), maintain social distance and do our very best to assist one another. Let me assure you both the BIE and SIPI Leadership are taking the necessary steps during these stressful and concerning times to ensure your safety and wellbeing.

This is intended as advice and not a directive--please take care in planning your personal travel and plans. We care about your safety and wellbeing. If you have any questions, please contact either Monte Monteith, Val Montoya, Dr. Cometsevah or myself. We will send updates on a regular basis to the campus community.

Thank you.