

The State University of New York
Student Assembly
Report on the
Status of COVID-19

March 2020



SUNYSA

**For regularly updated
information on
COVID-19 and how it
impacts SUNY,
please head to**

www.sunysa.org/covid-19

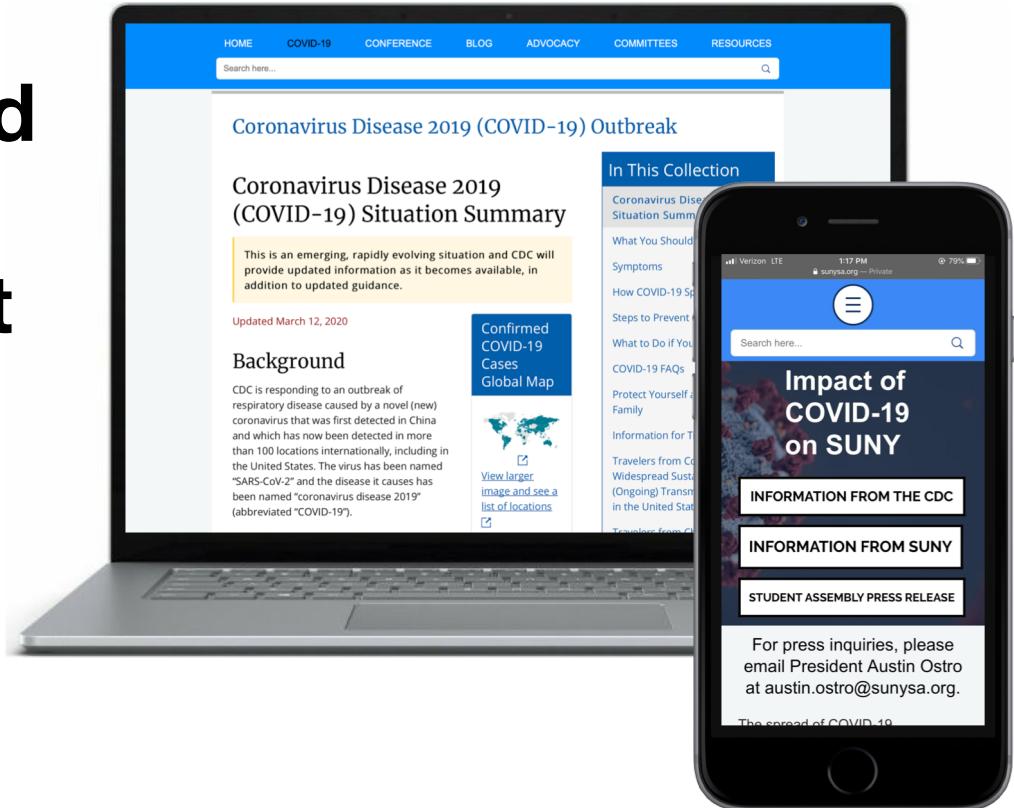
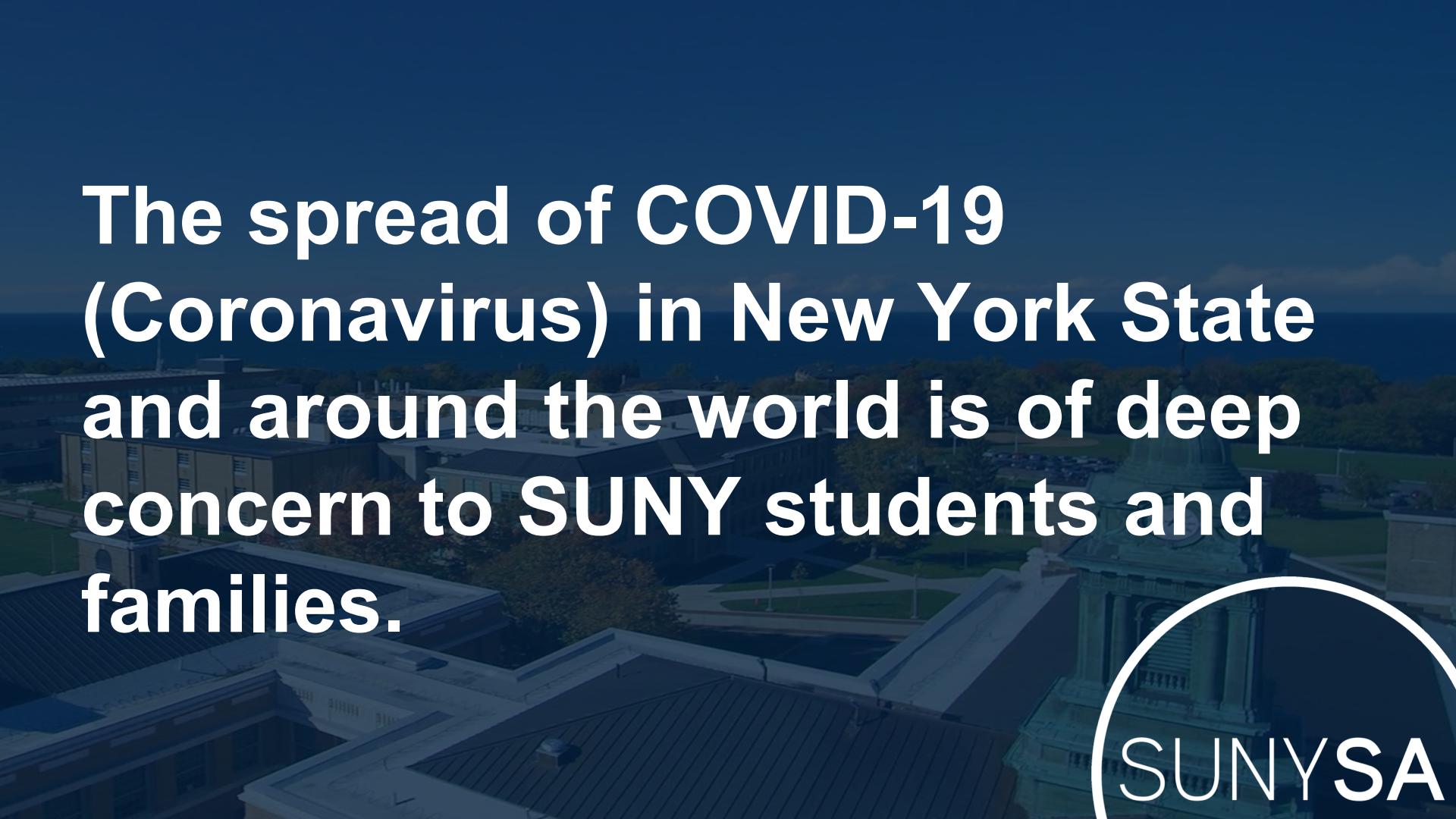


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A dark blue-tinted aerial photograph of a SUNY campus, showing several large buildings, green lawns, and parking areas. A white circular logo is positioned in the bottom right corner.

The spread of COVID-19
(Coronavirus) in New York State
and around the world is of deep
concern to SUNY students and
families.

SUNYSA

TIME

LINE



On Wednesday, March 4, 2020, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that the SUNY and CUNY study abroad programs in China, Italy, Japan, Iran, and South Korea have been suspended effective immediately in response to concerns over novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The decision was made based on recommendations from the New York State Department of Health (DOH).

TIME

LINE



On Wednesday, March 11, 2020, the Governor announced SUNY and CUNY will transition to remote instruction, beginning March 19th, for the remainder of the Spring semester. All campuses will develop plans catered to the campus and curriculum-specific needs while reducing density in the campus environment to help slow possibility for exposures to novel coronavirus.

SUNY and CUNY Move to Distance Learning

March 11, 3:55 p.m. The State University of New York and City University of New York systems will move to distance learning for the rest of the semester, the state's governor, Andrew Cuomo, has announced.

"This will help us reduce density and reduce the spread of this virus," the governor [said in a statement](#) on Twitter.

A statement from the governor's office later clarified that the two public university systems will "implement plans to maximize distance learning and reduce in-person classes, beginning March 19, for the remainder of the spring semester in light of the evolving novel coronavirus situation in New York. All campuses will develop plans catered to the campus and curriculum-specific needs while reducing density in the campus environment to help slow possibility for exposures to novel coronavirus. Distance learning and other options will be developed by campuses."

Hundreds of thousands of students will be affected.

[VISIT SITE](#)

POLITICO

POLITICO NEW YORK

SUNY, CUNY to move to "distance-learning" for remainder of semester

2:28 PM, Mar 11, 2020



BUFFALO, N.Y. (WKBW) — Governor Andrew Cuomo has announced that SUNY and CUNY schools will transition to a "distance-learning model" for the remainder of the semester, due to COVID-19, beginning March 19.



An aerial view of the SUNY Polytechnic Institute campus | Wikimedia

SUNY, CUNY halting in-person classes to mitigate coronavirus threat

By NICK NIEDZWIADK and MADINA TOURÉ | 03/11/2020 03:35 PM EDT

The screenshot shows the header of The New York Times with the sub-navigation "The Coronavirus Outbreak" and "LIVE Latest Updates Maps". Below the header, a large headline reads "Coronavirus Case Total Climbs in New York". A sub-headline states "Organizers of the St. Patrick's Day Parade decided to reschedule the Manhattan event." At the bottom of the visible area, there are social sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Email, and publication details: "Published March 11, 2020 Updated March 12, 2020, 10:15 a.m. ET".

Click on an image to read the corresponding article.

The Governor's announcements brought comfort to many concerned New Yorkers, but simultaneously sparked a number of questions from students and their families regarding the future of their education.

Some of the country's most prominent news sources, including The New York Times and Politico, turned to the Student Assembly to quote in their articles as the representative voice of SUNY students.

Official Student Assembly Press Release

SUNY Student Assembly Response to Governor Cuomo's Announcement on SUNY Move to Distance Learning

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE- March 11, 2020

Contact: Austin Ostro (518)-605-2369, Austin.ostro@sunysa.org

"Guaranteeing the health and safety of the State University of New York's students, faculty and staff is rightfully Governor Cuomo's priority. We appreciate the Governor's announcement that SUNY campuses will move to a distance learning model for the remainder of the spring semester.

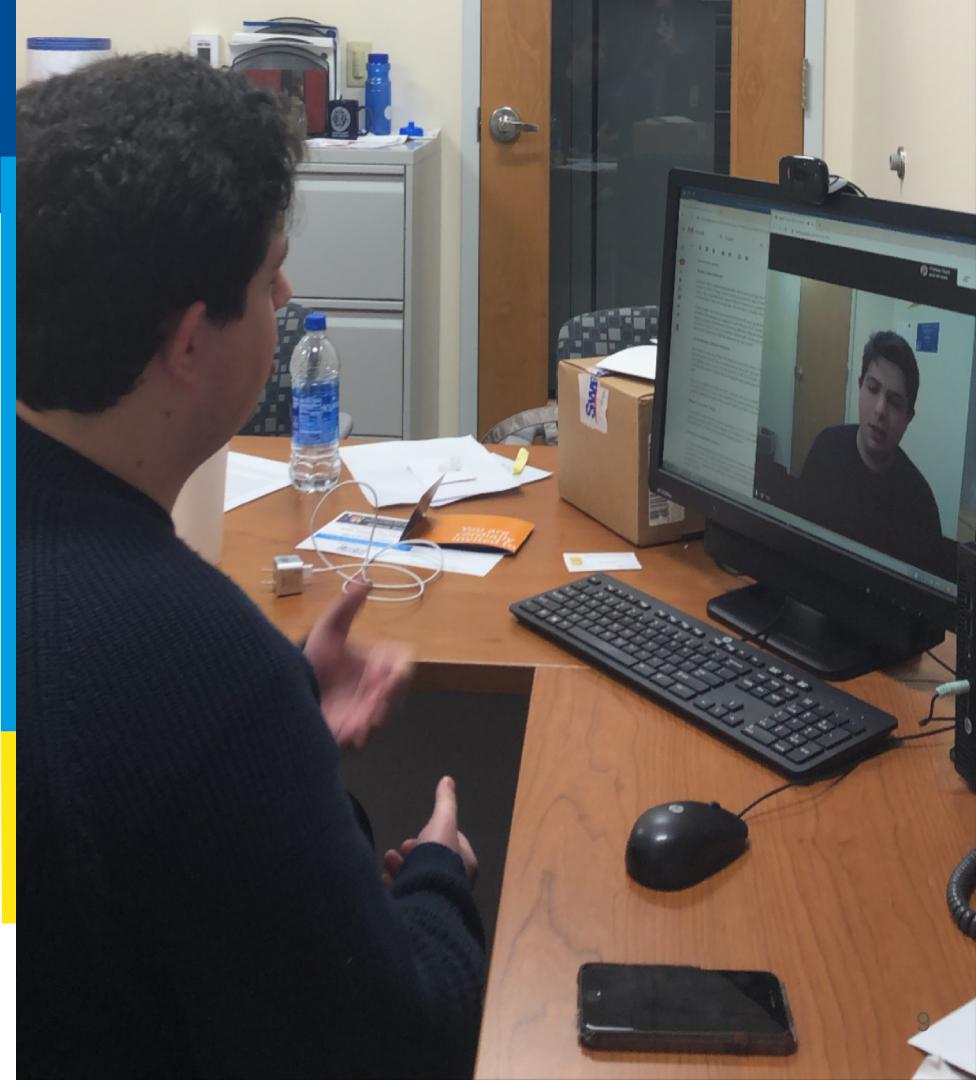
Continuing SUNY's tradition of inclusive and accessible academic excellence is as important as ever. The SUNY Student Assembly looks forward to working with Chancellor Johnson and her team to ensure that students have all the resources and support that they need as we make this transition."

About the SUNY Student Assembly

The Student Assembly of the State University of New York (SUNY SA) is the recognized student government organization representing the nearly 600,000 students of the State University of New York. Comprised of student leaders elected by their peers from across SUNY's 64 campuses, SUNY SA is committed to empowering students throughout the state, and ensuring the representation of its members on the state and national level, as well as throughout the SUNY system.

Town Halls

In an effort to increase accessibility of information to students, President Austin Ostro began a series of virtual town halls on the impact of COVID-19 on SUNY campuses. The first was held on Friday, March 6, and had 35 attendees. The second on Wednesday, March 11, and had 75 attendees.





From these town halls, the Student Assembly compiled a list of students' most frequently asked questions, provided here with all the answers you need.

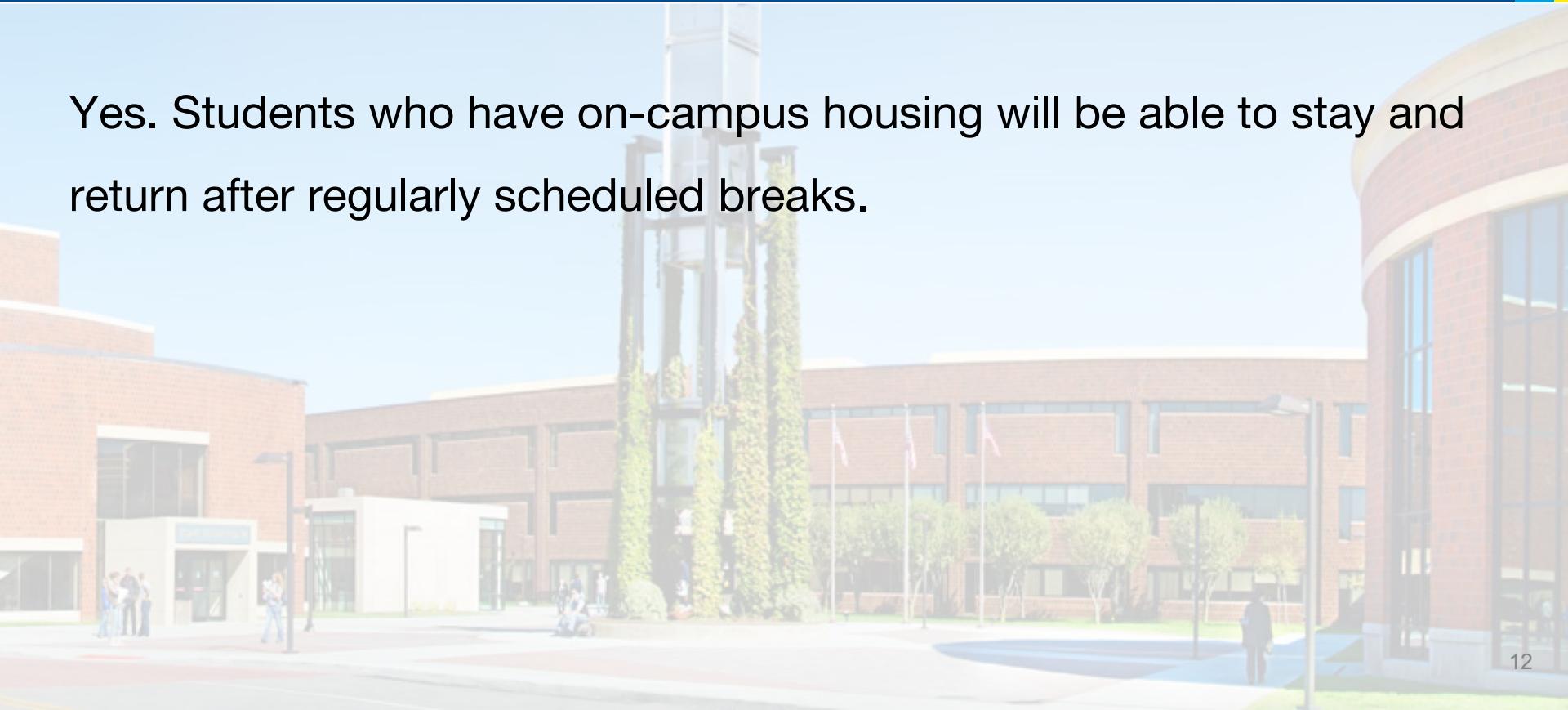
A large, ivy-covered brick building with a prominent clock tower, likely a college campus building.

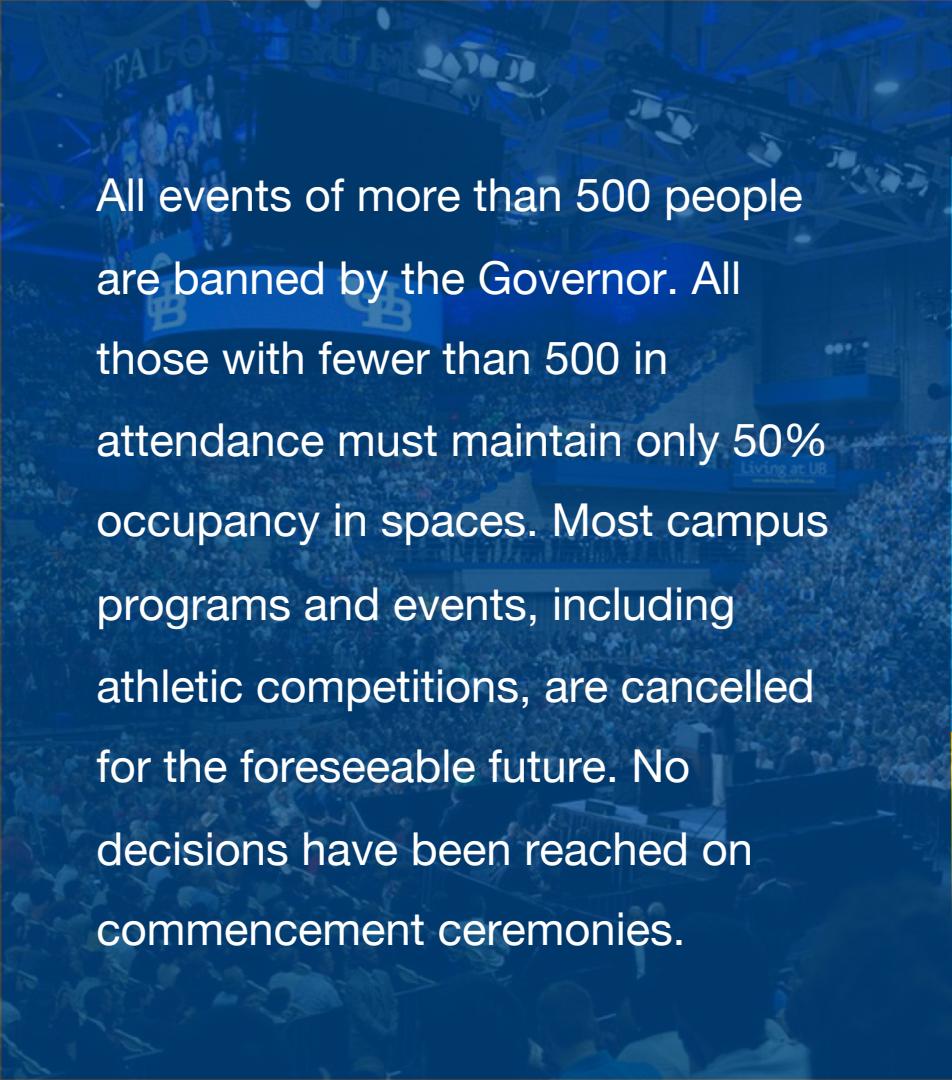
Are colleges closed?

No- campuses will remain open through the semester. This is includes dorms, food services and instructional space.

Can students still live on campus?

Yes. Students who have on-campus housing will be able to stay and return after regularly scheduled breaks.





All events of more than 500 people are banned by the Governor. All those with fewer than 500 in attendance must maintain only 50% occupancy in spaces. Most campus programs and events, including athletic competitions, are cancelled for the foreseeable future. No decisions have been reached on commencement ceremonies.

What is going to happen to graduation ceremonies, concerts, athletic events, etc.?

Will SUNY refund students? If so, to what extent?

SUNY is exploring limited refunds for housing and meal plans for students who choose to continue their semesters through remote instruction. More information should come soon.

Can students still study abroad?

All SUNY organized study abroad programs are cancelled for the semester. All SUNY students studying abroad have been advised to return home. Students participating in study abroad programs hosted by foreign institutions are subject to provisions set by their host institutions.





How do these new policies impact international students?

The Department of State and ICE have waived visa restrictions that require international students to enroll mostly in courses that meet in person. The legal status of international students should not be affected by recent developments. Housing options as well will be protected.

Will students still be able to graduate on time with these new academic changes?

Students should be able to complete all courses that they are currently enrolled in. No student's academic timeline should be pushed back.

How will Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's policies impact community colleges?

A large, modern building with a glass pyramid entrance, likely a SUNY community college.

Governor Cuomo's orders do apply to SUNY community colleges. All community colleges will be moving to offer remote instruction by March 19th.

How will SUNY accommodate students with disabilities?

Students with disabilities should contact their campus disability office to arrange any necessary accommodations associated with the transition to remote instruction.

“

We are SUNY.
We are New York.

We have overcome a lot
and we will overcome this.

We, here at the Student Assembly, are here to support
you as we move through this difficult period.

”

-President Austin Ostro on March 11th town hall



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Questions?

Contact: President Austin Ostro

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www.sunysa.org

Instagram: @sunysa

Twitter: @sunysa

Facebook: SUNY SA - The SUNY
Student Assembly