

Campus Connection

A Student Affairs Newsletter for Parents

FALL 2009

VOLUME 11

ISSUE 1

All Future Issues Will Be Online at www.sa.ucsb.edu/parentnewsletter

H1N1 Flu Virus Important Update from Student Health

September 28, 2009

Dear Gaucho Parents:

I am writing to update you on the steps UC Santa Barbara has taken to prepare the campus for the possible impact of the H1N1 flu virus (also known as "swine flu").

The H1N1 pandemic flu is now widespread throughout the world. Fortunately, the vast majority of cases continue to be mild and, at this point, the H1N1 virus appears no more virulent or severe than most cases of seasonal flu. However, people under fifty, particularly children and young adults, appear to be more at risk for contracting this strain of flu since they have not yet had contact with a similar type of virus and lack immunity.

Cases of H1N1 have already appeared on most college campuses and, since May, we have seen multiple cases of H1N1 flu at UCSB. While the number of cases here has declined significantly during August, we expect to see increased numbers this fall, consistent with what is happening in communities and colleges throughout the U.S. We strongly encourage all members of the UCSB community to take the standard precautions recommended during the flu season and to play an active role in our public health prevention efforts.

For many years, UCSB has had emergency plans in place to address wide-ranging campus issues and health concerns. We have adapted these preparedness efforts in order to respond to the H1N1 pandemic. Our emergency response teams receive regular input from the Santa Barbara Public Health Department (SBCPHD) and include members from Student Health, Environmental Health and Safety, Student Affairs, the Academic Senate, Human Resources, Public Affairs, and many other departments. We will continue to meet regularly and on an as-needed basis as this pandemic progresses.

Classes and Activities

Classes and other activities at UCSB will proceed as scheduled this quarter. The emergency response team will monitor the campus situation, working with the SBCPHD, and will make recommendations regarding changes in, or cancellations of, campus activities depending on the nature of any flu outbreak. Faculty and staff are being counseled to adopt more liberal policies regarding possible increased absenteeism this fall. The chancellor, with guidance from the university physician and the director of the SBCPHD, will make any decisions regarding the cancellation of classes. Any such decision will be communicated broadly to faculty, students, and staff through email and other methods.

Public Health Precautions

The following guidelines for good health are being communicated to your student in a variety of ways (e.g., posters, flyers, electronic screens, Web sites, and email):

- Avoid, as much as possible, contact with ill persons
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve/elbow when you cough or sneeze; avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Discard used tissues in the trash
- Do not share food, drink, or utensils
- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently and thoroughly—particularly after you cough or sneeze—or use an alcohol-based hand gel

As this is not a gastrointestinal viral infection, intensive cleaning of food facilities (beyond normal cleaning) is not necessary.

Treatment and Response

The great majority of students who contract this virus will not need to seek medical treatment. Students who are ill with the flu should remain at home (or in their room) for twenty-four hours after they are free from fever (less than 100.0 degrees without medication that would lower temperature). A mild, lingering cough may occur. Barring any other flu symptoms, this cough should not prevent students from returning to class. As of this writing, we are planning to allow students who are ill with the flu to remain in campus housing with instructions to self-isolate. Healthy students are encouraged to maintain a distance of six feet from ill roommates/students. Dining Services will arrange take-out food and delivery for self-isolated students who live in residence halls. Flu kits containing over-the-counter medications, tissues, hand sanitizer, a reusable thermometer, and a mask (for use only when an ill student is temporarily unable to keep apart from others) will be available for purchase (\$8.00) through Student Health (please see our Web site for details) and at the front desks of UCSB residence halls.

If there has been contact with someone who has the flu, onset of the virus can take up to three days. If students experience any flu symptoms within this time period, they are encouraged to stay home to limit the spread of the virus. If they have a chronic medical condition such as diabetes, cancer, chronic asthma, heart or lung problems, or a weakened immune system, they should consult with Student Health to see if antiviral medication is needed.

Medication and Vaccinations

Generally, Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) is prescribed for individuals with the flu who are either hospitalized, have a chronic medical condition (as listed above), or have a suppressed immune system. Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) for influenza is useful only to reduce symptoms and decrease

recovery time by about twenty-four hours if started within the first two days of illness.

The following vaccinations are expected to be available during fall 2009:

- **Seasonal Flu Vaccine:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend seasonal flu vaccinations for all students. This year, students with Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) coverage are entitled to a seasonal flu shot at no cost. In addition, courtesy of the Student Fee Advisory Committee, there will be one thousand doses of this vaccine available to non-SHIP students without charge on a first-come, first-served basis. Please consult the Student Health Web site listed below for the dates and times of flu shot clinics this fall.
- **H1N1 Vaccine:** Recent recommendations from the CDC have placed individuals under age twenty-four in the top priority group for receiving the H1N1 vaccine. More information will be available in the coming weeks regarding how and when this vaccine will be given. Please check the Student Health Web site for updates.

More information on the H1N1 flu is available on the following Web sites:

- Centers for Disease Control—www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm
- Santa Barbara County Public Health Department—www.sbcphd.org/
- UCSB Student Health Service—www.sa.ucsb.edu/studenthealth

Students who have questions may contact the advice nurse at UCSB Student Health at 805-893-7129. Parents are encouraged to call the SBCPHD at 888-SBCoFlu (888-722-6358) for general information regarding H1N1 flu in Santa Barbara and/or to contact D'Anna Sandor, assistant to the director of Student Health, at ucsbflu@sa.ucsb.edu for appropriate triage of specific questions regarding H1N1 flu at UCSB.

We intend to do our best this fall to promote widespread, preventive health measures and a vigorous immunization campaign on campus. We greatly appreciate your support and urge you encourage your son or daughter to practice good hygiene and socially responsible behavior and to become immunized as soon as possible. Although we can't eliminate the spread of this virus, our collective efforts can significantly diminish its reach and overall impact.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Downing, M.D.
University Physician and Director
Student Health Service

Impact of Budget Reductions on Student Services

FEW PEOPLE are unaware of the dire economic straits that the State of California is experiencing. The state's financial crisis has had serious impacts on the University of California, the Santa Barbara campus, and our own Division of Student Affairs. The UC system received a substantial cut in its state funding last year and is seeing an even larger cut this year. The reduction translates into a \$45 million funding loss for UCSB alone in 2009-2010.

A funding cut of this magnitude on the heels of a significant loss in 2008-2009 is resulting in some dramatic action from UC President Mark Yudof as he attempts to bring the university's spending in line with this year's resources. Several of the more visible strategies relate to staffing. The Office of the President has assessed all currently employed faculty and staff a reduction in salary. Staff members will also see a decrease in work time based on a percentage scale. These salary reduction and furlough programs took effect on September 1, 2009, and will extend at least through August 31, 2010. The furlough program means that almost the entire University of California non-academic staff is now working on a part-time basis.

The salary reductions and the accompanying furloughs represent an initial effort by the university to reduce the budgetary shortfall for this fiscal year; however, these actions are able to address only a fraction of the funding loss. As noted above, even after these mitigations, the UC Santa Barbara campus is receiving a budget reduction of \$45 million.

Looking to trim expenses, the Santa Barbara campus offered a "voluntary separation option" (VSO) to its employees with an official separation date of October 31, 2009. The VSO carries a modest monetary incentive that is intended to encourage some portion of the staff to leave the university voluntarily and thereby help decrease the size of the workforce, payroll, and payroll expenses.

UCSB's Division of Student Affairs has responded to last year's and this year's budget reductions by imposing a freeze on creating new staff positions and refilling vacated positions. But in the face of such massive funding losses, forced lay-offs beyond the part-time furloughs and the hiring freeze may be necessary. Additionally, reductions to the operating budgets of the division's departments, such as Student Health, Campus Learning Assistance Services, the Registrar's Office, the MultiCultural Center, and the Office of Student Life, will impact not just staff and payroll costs but also supplies and other expenses, resulting in fewer programs and services available to students and more charges for the services that are offered.

What exactly should you and your student expect this fall as the academic year begins? In the Division of Student Affairs, there will be reduced hours of service in many, if not most, offices—that is, shortened workdays—as well as full closures of departments on certain days of the week. Many offices may not open until 10:00 AM and may close at 3:00 or 4:00 PM or during the noon hour. Since there will be fewer staff members working overall, as well as at any given time, there will likely be longer wait periods for some services, the elimination of some services and programs, and fewer out-of-class amenities for students and their families.

Despite the budget crisis and significant funding reductions, we want parents and students to be assured that we care deeply about our students and the campus environment in which they live and learn and that we remain committed to providing a high-quality educational and co-curricular experience for all undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at UCSB. The professionals who work in student affairs are creative, resourceful, and dedicated and have already spent many hours discussing and planning for this budget reduction. We are attempting to minimize the negative impact on students and families while maintaining the exceptional educational experience for which UCSB has become known.

One outcome of the budget reduction needs to be highlighted here. Future issues of the *Campus Connection* will no longer be mailed to the parents of students but will be posted on the Division of Student Affairs' Web site at www.sa.ucsb.edu/parentnewsletter. Past issues are already posted at this address, and future, bi-annual issues will be available in late March 2010 and then again in early December.

A Spanish translation of this issue will be posted at www.sa.ucsb.edu/parentnewsletter

La traducción en español estará disponible en www.sa.ucsb.edu/parentnewsletter.

UCSBriefs

The **UCSB Reads** program has selected *Enrique's Journey* by Sonia Nazario for winter 2010. Join your son or daughter in reading this gripping and moving story.

Parents' and Family Weekend will be held November 6-8, 2009. Information about this event is available at www.ia.ucsb.edu/pfw.

Commencement 2010 dates have been set for Saturday, June 6, 2010 (College of Creative Studies), and Saturday, June 12, and Sunday, June 13, 2010. Information regarding the ceremonies is available on the UCSB Commencement Web site at www.ia.ucsb.edu/commencement.

The **student and parent liaison** is a main point of contact on campus when your student experiences a crisis or problem, or when you have a question about how best to help or support your student. You may contact UCSB's student and parent liaison by calling 805-893-4521 or emailing linda.nurra@sa.ucsb.edu.

Campus Connection

Campus Connection is published by the University of California, Santa Barbara, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, to provide news and resources to the parents and families of UCSB undergraduates.

The University of California, Santa Barbara and the Division of Student Affairs recognize the diversity of our society and the many important people who have become "parents" to our students; these include stepmothers, stepdads, uncles, aunts, grandparents, siblings, friends and others who play a significant and supportive role in the lives and successes of UCSB undergraduates.

Editor: Candace Stevenson
Copy Editor: Debbie Fleming
Contributors: Elizabeth Downing, Allyn Fleming
Design: Brenda Bernu Reheem

Office of the Vice Chancellor—Student Affairs
University of California
Santa Barbara, CA 93106-2036

If you need this document in an alternative format, please call (805) 893-4521.
www.sa.ucsb.edu/parentnewsletter

Campus Connection is printed on recycled paper.