



Vice President for Student Affairs
515 Loudon Road
Loudonville, NY 12211-1462
518-783-2328
Fax 518-783-4200

April 2009 – Pandemic and Emergency Evacuation Information for students and families

Dear Siena Student and Siena Parents,

Colleges and universities around the country have been encouraged by federal, state and local authorities to have plans in place to prepare for and respond to an influenza pandemic. This is mainly in response to the national public health focus on the Avian Influenza (“Bird Flu”). Public health officials advise that although the current risk to the community from this illness is very small. If the Bird Flu virus should undergo a change in its structure, it could become a greater public health threat.

Siena College’s crisis and emergency plan include preparations and a protocol for a possible pandemic flu outbreak as well as any other public health crisis or natural disaster. The pandemic flu plan will address several levels of possible outbreak severity allowing Siena to continue to serve its students in the safest possible environment. Based on the severity of the outbreak, the College and/or the New York State Department of Health may require that the College be closed in order to reduce the spread of illness. In the event of a temporary closure, Siena College would endeavor to provide a full term of instruction as possible for the impacted semester.

Accommodations may include, among others, extension of the term and providing instruction through an alternate means, such as individualized study or distance learning. Our first priority would be assisting students with arrangements to get home. However, we ask that each student and their family do the following:

- Develop a plan to get home in case of any pandemic outbreak or other College emergency necessitating emergency closure. If public health officials tell us that the College must close, it is expected that all students will need to leave campus as expeditiously as possible. Can someone pick your student up from campus? Does your student have the ability to get home from campus (a vehicle on campus, a friend to ride with, or available funds to purchase a bus/train/plane ticket)? If you are not from the immediate area, is there a relative or friend that can take your student in until the necessary arrangements can be made for them to get home? If you are an international student, is there anyone local you can stay with until necessary arrangements can be made for you to return home?

- Please provide the College with updated emergency contact information with the Residential Life Office.
- In the case of the College closing, we do expect to continue to offer classes on-line or in alternative format. Please monitor the College website for any instruction on academics.
- Discuss how to remain healthy and how to limit the spread of germs and to prevent infection. The Centers for Disease Control (“CDC”) recommends frequent hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue and avoiding contact with those who are sick.
- The CDC recommends the annual flu vaccine as a precautionary measure. Consult your family physician on specific details about this vaccine.
- Some helpful websites to gather information on the pandemic flu are:
<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>; <https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/>;
<http://www.nyhealth.gov/>; and <http://www.albanycounty.com/>

Siena College is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students, faculty and staff. Should there be any emergency type of situation at the College, we would place information on our website, www.siena.edu/pandemicinfo, for families to be updated on the evacuation of students from campus as well as information about continuation of services until reopening. Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Maryellen Gilroy, Ed.D
Vice President for Student Affairs

Linda Richardson, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs