Presidential Message for International Students Regarding COVID-19

Dear Fellow Union Members,

I write to you in hopes of assuring you that we are here for you and we hear you, while addressing some of the concerns you have raised through our various channels. NTUSU has been in constant communication with the University Senior Management to ensure your needs and concerns are raised.

Staying in Singapore
Some of you have been asking: Can I go back to my country? As a student who studied overseas, I understand first-hand the challenges of being away from family and loved ones. Through our conversation with various offices, we have confirmed that Hall accommodation will continue to be made available to you, while canteens and supermarkets will also remain open during this period (Ref: President's Office Advisory on Additional Physical Distancing Measures). As fellow students, we seek your support as these measures are in place due to the current COVID-19 situation in Singapore – the objective being to minimise social interactions as much as possible.

Should you strongly wish to return home, we understand that the University will still assist in the application process to return to your home country. On the same note, I hope to seek your patience noting that these are governmental guidelines and that the Immigration Checkpoint Authority (ICA) may be strict on approving travel outbound of Singapore, especially social in nature with the intention to return in the near future. Do take note that it is possible for the border controls to remain in place and students might not make it back to Singapore in time for the next semester. Such students may expect LOAs to be taken and/or their academic candidature extended as a result (Ref: President's Office Deferring Overseas Travel and Suspension of Semester 1 AY20/21 Overseas Exchange). You are part of our NTU Community, and we want to ensure you and your families are safe too.

Health and Safety
We also understand that you are concerned about your own health and safety during this period. NTUSU notes that international students may head down to Pioneer Community Centre or Nanyang Community Centre with your Student Pass to collect reusable masks distributed by the Government. We advise you to check [Sincerely,%20Bryan%20Michael%20Chiew%20President%2029th%20NTU%20Students%20Union]https://maskgowhere.sg for more details. NTUSU is prepared and well poised to support and provide guidance for you during this period.

Financial Assistance
Should you face financial challenges, we encourage you to reach out to your Pastoral Care Managers or Associate Chairs of the respective schools to seek assistance. Students who still face difficulties after doing so are advised to write to NTUSU and we will look into the matter. However, while we do not foresee hall fees to be adjusted, we will try to help you to our best abilities. This is an unprecedented situation for all of us including the University, and I seek your understanding and cooperation in this matter by avoiding comparisons as we now find ourselves in a new norm. Let us ensure that those who genuinely require financial support are prioritised and supported.

Study Plans
Students who wish to apply for special term during their stay in hall may approach their pastoral care manager to discuss their study plan and/or request to apply for special term. Details on special term can be found on the NTU website. Alternatively, students may also seek employment opportunities on CareerAxis NTU or external opportunities that allow them to telecommute and gain valuable industry experience.

Regular Updates
We expect impeding changes to come and we hope you can continue to be understanding and adaptable. Given the evolving nature of the situation, NTUSU seeks your understanding and cooperation, while we keep students posted should there be further updates.

For most up-to-date information specifically pertaining to international students, follow NTUSU’s Student Integration Committee’s Instagram page @ntusu.sic.

For latest updates for the student body, you are advised to follow and subscribe to our main communication channels:
- Telegram [t.me/ntusu](@ntusu)
- Facebook (@ntusu)
- Instagram (@ntu.su)

As students, NTUSU understands the challenges and concerns posed by the situation. We would like to assure you that we will assist to resolve your concerns to the best of our abilities. Should you have further questions regarding the changes, please send your queries to su-feedback@e.ntu.edu.sg. It is a trying time with many changes amidst, especially being away from home. Therefore, having a strong support system is important during this period – reach out to your friends online or speak to counsellors from NTU University Wellbeing Centre at UWCstudents@ntu.edu.sg or 6790 4462. We are all here to support you.

It is a difficult period for all of us, but we will rise stronger from this. Let's pull together, stay positive, safe, healthy and most importantly, united.

Sincerely,
Bryan Michael Chiew

President
29th NTU Students' Union