



YFS STATEMENT ON COVID-19

March 6, 2020

Viruses are common in Canada, including on Canadian campuses, and can be treated. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses with symptoms similar to the flu or common cold. Since the Coronavirus, or COVID-19 was reported at the start of 2020, it has affected tens of thousands of people, and many are taking precautions in response.

Over the past few months, COVID-19 has resulted in widespread fear throughout the media, in government and at the university following the World Health Organization's announcement of a global health emergency. This fear has manifested in rumours and barbed commentary, and sinophobic actions against many within our community.

Pairing negative stereotypes, racism and xenophobia with Chinese, East Asian and South-East Asian individuals does not protect anyone from this virus. Following proper public health procedures and monitoring the situation carefully via trusted news sources does. All that these Anti-Sino racist attacks accomplish is further marginalizing and causing harm to a specific section of our community, thus making our campus an unsafe space to be.

Rather than giving into mass hysteria, it is essential that we protect our public health infrastructure by advocating for policies and practices that do not racialize diseases, but look toward science that can help us mitigate the risk of harm and infection. Anti-Racist work and paid sick days are essential to ensuring that those who are not well can safely recover, so: don't be racist, wash your hands, and support paid sick days.

Many students, staff, and faculty who are being attacked for their ethnic and racial roots are themselves worried about their family members and friends and should be supported, not ostracized. It is up to us to support members of our campus community, and to confront our prejudices by doing research rather than weaponizing our fears and ignorance against marginalized communities. Part of decolonial and anti-racist work today must include rejecting attitudes like these, resulting from our government's colonial practices.

If you are in need of support or a safer space, please utilize the YFS Wellness Centre, open 10AM to 4PM, Monday to Friday in Room 341, Second Student Centre.



If you would like to access University or community resources, please see below, or visit us to inquire further:

Office of Student Community Relations (OSCR)
Office W128, Bennett Centre for Student Services
Phone: 416-736-5231
Email: oscr@yorku.ca

Centre for Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion
2070 Victor Philip Dahdaleh Building
Phone: 416-736-5682
Email: rights@yorku.ca

Student Counselling & Development
N110 Bennett Centre for Student Services
Phone: 416-736-5297

Good 2 Talk (FREE)- 24/7/365
Phone: 1-866-925-5454
Or connect through 2-1-1

The World Health Organization (WHO) and Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have identified some tips to reduce your risk of coming in contact with, or spreading infection.

- Clean your hands thoroughly and often using soap and warm water, or alcohol-based hand wash solution, rubbing for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with tissue that you dispose of, or into a flexed elbow.
- Stay home if you are not feeling well.
- Clean and disinfect commonly used objects and surfaces.