The University of Oregon (UO) fully activated its Incident Management Team (IMT) on February 28, 2020, to monitor and respond to an outbreak of a respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus. The virus has been named “SARS-CoV-2” and the disease it causes has been named “coronavirus disease 2019” (abbreviated “COVID-19”).

University of Oregon - Incident Management Team

The IMT is a group of trained individuals from across campus who are tasked with managing the logistical, fiscal, planning, operational, safety, and campus issues related to any and all incidents/emergencies, including infectious disease outbreaks and pandemic. In addition, the IMT manages all phases of an incident (e.g., response, mitigation, continuity, and recovery).

The UO follows the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS is the emergency management structure and framework established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for emergency response. Using ICS at the UO allows the members of the IMT to coordinate across both academic and administrative units and departments, all schools and colleges, and the Eugene campus and satellite campuses through a common organizational structure. The hierarchical ICS system and chains of communication adapt to rapidly evolving incidents like COVID-19.

Part of the ICS protocol is to establish objectives for managing a particular situation or incident. For COVID-19, the UO IMT the current objectives are:

1. Protect the health of all students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University of Oregon from the potential health impacts of COVID-19.
2. Develop risk mitigation strategies to reduce the impact of potential illness on campus through the update of elements of the existing Pandemic Plan.
3. Keep the campus informed of new developments, OHA and CDC guidance, and action the university is taking to prepare.
4. Monitor and evaluate supply chain to ensure that critical supplies and equipment can be sourced to maintain enterprise essential functions.
5. Develop agile strategies and direct action to minimize the disruption to our students, faculty, and staff through effective communication, engagement, academic planning, research, and service.
6. Identify opportunities to inspire our students, faculty and staff to actively engage in and accelerate the university’s recovery and strengthen our mission.
7. Assess the financial impacts of the COVID-19 illness, develop financial scenarios and mitigation strategies to aid in the continuity and recovery efforts, while protecting the long-term financial stability of the university.

About the UO IMT structure:

The IMT is made up of over 50 people from many departments across campus. Typically, the UO IMT is comprised of two groups: 1) Emergency Operations Center team, made up of the individuals who serve in distinct leadership roles and 2) Operational field teams, consisting of individuals who will be deployed on campus or remotely to take action in support of the goals for the overall response. Components of the IMT structure are determined by the Incident Commander based on the size, type, and complexity of the incident.
As of this update, the IMT is now entering modes or phases related to (a) continuity and engagement, and (b) recovery. These phases or modes will utilize a more standard project management approach for activities as opposed to the traditional ICS structure used for the response mode. While the activities that formed the response phase were coordinated by operation section chief and deputy chiefs, the activities of the newer phases are coordinated through assigned project managers, who are part of the planning section within the IMT.

Key Activation Dates for the UO IMT:

- January 28, 2020, the IMT was partially activated for COVID-19 response. That team focused on issues around international travel and situational monitoring.
- February 27, 2020, the full IMT was activated and expanded beyond our normal structure to include over 150 people, some of whom are standing members of the IMT and others who have been added to lend their operational expertise to this particular response. This expanded team is working around the clock on preparedness, mitigation and response to the outbreak.
- March 27, 2020, the IMT has added two new sections within the architecture to address ongoing continuity and recovery issues.

Current IMT Structure as of March 27, 2020:

- President’s Policy Group
- IMT Command:
  - Incident Commander, Chief Resilience Office- AVP
  - Deputy Incident Commander, AVP for Research
- IMT/UO Communication
  - VP for Communications
- Planning Section Chief
  - Safety and Risk Services Director of Operations
- Logistics Section Chief
  - University Chief Procurement Officer
- Finance Section Chief
  - University Controller
- Safety Officer
  - Director of Environmental Health & Safety
- Liaison Officers
  - Chief of Staff to President
  - Chief of Staff to Provost
  - Chiefs of Staff for Vice Presidents
  - Senior Director of Community Relations
COVID-19 Incident Management Team Summary

• Operations Section: (1) Section Chief (2) Deputy Section Chief
  ◦ OPS – Research Continuity
  ◦ OPS – Information Technology
  ◦ OPS – Human Resources
  ◦ OPS – Medical & Health Center
  ◦ OPS – Housing Quarantine & Mitigation Plan
  ◦ OPS – Facilities
  ◦ OPS – Travel
  ◦ OPS – Athletics Events
  ◦ OPS – Events
  ◦ OPS – Satellite Campuses
  ◦ OPS – Security

• Continuity and Engagement Section Chief
  ◦ C&E – Academic Continuity Group
  ◦ C&E – Undergraduate Education and Student Success Group
  ◦ C&E – Student Enrollment Group
  ◦ C&E – Student Life Group*
  ◦ C&E – Equity and Inclusion Group*
  ◦ C&E – Global Engagement Group*
  ◦ C&E – Advancement Group*

• Recovery Section Chief*
  ◦ RS – Financial Group*
  ◦ RS – Research Group*
  ◦ RS – Human Resources Group*
  ◦ RS – Others (TBD)

• Local, State-wide and National Connection:
  ◦ Local public health authorities (Eugene, Portland and Charleston)
  ◦ Oregon Health Authority and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  ◦ Oregon State-wide Higher Education COVID-19 Virtual Coordination Center
  ◦ National Disaster Resilient Universities (DRU) Network
  ◦ Other federal agencies and professional associations

IMTs use a set of well-developed core plans that provide the foundation for the team to address multiple complex and evolving situations. At UO, these plans include the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and, in the case of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Pandemic Plan (an annex to the EOP). The plans allow for flexible proactive and active postures in matters unforeseen and/or not covered by the elements of the plans.

* currently under development