

June 25, 2020

To all students,

Extension of the request to refrain from extracurricular activities

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has had a severe impact on the studies and private lives of Kyoto University students, with many struggling to adapt to online classes, many assailed by financial worries due to a decrease in income from part-time work, and many feeling isolated and lonely as they struggle to form new friendships under the current conditions. Kyoto University has been making every effort to continue its activities, provide our students with the high standard of education that they deserve, and support them as much as possible through efforts such as the Emergency Student Support Plan (see the announcement of May 20 for details).

As detailed in the notice titled “Refraining from extracurricular activities and temporary suspension of the use of facilities” (issued on March 31), for the past three months, the university has requested all students not to engage in any extracurricular activities on or off campus, including the activities of university clubs or circles (official and unofficial). We fully appreciate that extracurricular activities are an important part of many students’ lives, providing them with opportunities to develop friendships, broaden their horizons, and enrich their lives in a multitude of ways. The university generally strives to support such activities as much as possible. It is regrettable, therefore, that in the current extraordinary circumstances, we must continue to request all students to refrain from engaging in any extracurricular activities.

There are two main reasons that we must take these measures. The first is that, in the current situation, in which the coronavirus continues to spread, the university is obligated to make all possible efforts to protect the health of our students. It is reported that young, healthy people who are infected with the virus are more likely to be asymptomatic, and may therefore transmit the virus to others without being aware of it. Extracurricular activities are often associated with the factors that have come to be known as the “3 Cs”—Closed spaces, Crowded places, and Close-contact. These are factors which increase the risk of infection and result in a high probability of spreading the novel coronavirus.

The second reason for these measures is that, although extracurricular activities have an educational, as well as social and recreational significance, in times such as these, the university must prioritize regular classes over extracurricular activities. Currently, most classes are being provided online. Unlike a high school, the university has students from many different prefectures, and the resumption

of face-to-face classes for all courses would make it necessary for those students to come to Kyoto to attend the university. That would result in numerous instances of people being closely gathered together in the confined areas of the university's campuses—increasing the risk of viral infection. In view of this, we must be very cautious about the implementation of face-to-face classes, and even more so with regards to extracurricular activities.

We understand that many students are eagerly looking forward to the resumption of extracurricular activities, and we also understand that many students are very frustrated with the fact that these restrictions continue, even though other restrictions in society at large are gradually being eased. The university will carefully consider when it is possible to ease the restrictions on extracurricular activities, while keeping our awareness of our students' opinions and feelings in mind. For the time being, however, for the reasons described above, we must strongly request all students to continue to refrain from engaging in extracurricular activities. We hope that all of our students will understand the necessity of these measures, act wisely, and take appropriate precautions during this difficult time.

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