

**March 2020**

Dear SPI participants,

I wanted to update you about changes to the [2020 Summer Peacebuilding Institute](#) due to the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Eastern Mennonite University has recently announced a suspension of all on-campus events until at least April 3 ([click here](#) to see EMU's statement). It is possible that a suspension of in-person events will continue beyond that date. In addition, with the recent ban on travel from European countries for at least 30 days, we acknowledge that many people may have a difficult time even getting to SPI.

For the health of all concerned, **we will not have an in-person Summer Peacebuilding Institute this year. We are currently planning to have several of our courses online** and are working on which courses and what changes need to be made to the class timelines to accommodate an online schedule.

We hope to have a list of available online courses and any changes to the course timelines no later than Friday, March 20, 2020.

#### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?**

At the moment, we ask that you consider whether you could take a course if it is offered online (time zone and internet capability are two of the main concerns). There is no need to let us know right now. Once we send information about online courses and dates/times, you will be able to let us know if you can still be a part of online SPI 2020. In addition:

- If you have not paid your fees yet, please wait to make payment.
- If you have not booked your travel, please wait to book travel.
- If you have already paid your fees to SPI, and your course is canceled or you are unable to be a part of the online experience, we will either refund all fees to you or credit the fees towards your participation at SPI 2021. We will be in touch soon with more details about how this will occur.
- In addition, since we cannot refund the application fee, if you are unable to participate, we will give you a credit towards the application fee for SPI 2021.

I am sure you have many questions. I will try to answer emails in a timely manner. However, with the large

number of people affected by this change and the work to move courses online, I may not get to your message for a few days.

We hope that you are doing your best to remain healthy and if you have tested positive for COVID-19 that you will fully recover in due time.

Bill Goldberg, SPI Director  
(for the SPI team)



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