

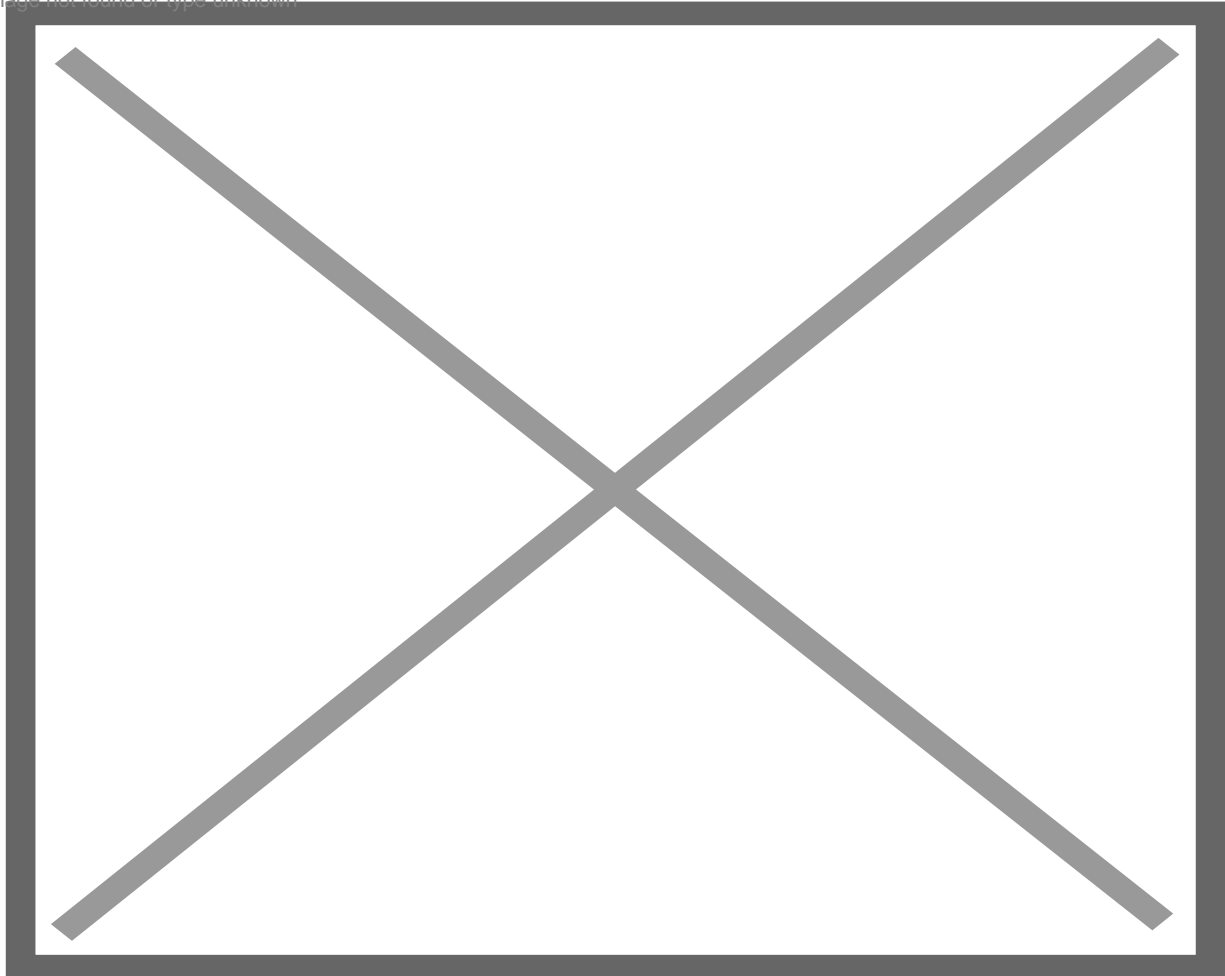
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# University of the West Indies Activates Coronavirus Response Plan

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Staff Consortium **January 30, 2020**

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**The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. By. UWI**

BARBADOS — The University of the West Indies (UWI) is closely monitoring the safety and wellbeing of its students who are currently enrolled at the Global Institute of Software Technology (GIST) in Suzhou, China.

In a release, the university disclosed that 28 students and one administrator were currently in Suzhou, during the inter-semester break. It further added that since the news of the Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak, the UWI had been closely monitoring the situation in China.

The UWI has an administrative presence and a total of 36 students enrolled in a BSc Software Engineering programme at UWI-China Institute of Information Technology (UWICIT), which

allows for two years of study at the Global Institute of Software Technology.

“The UWI is working closely with GIST and other relevant local authorities in China to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff. It is also engaging global precautionary measures as well as the positions adopted by its stakeholder governments in relation to travel advisories and screening protocols.

“The city of Suzhou is not within the epicentre of the virus. Nevertheless, the GIST campus remains closed until February 23, when the new semester is expected to begin. There is continuous on-site support on the campus. Medical and screening protocols have also been established,” the release outlined.

It went on to state that the UWI leadership was in regular contact with GIST and was receiving situation reports. Additionally, the university has held meetings with the students and communicated directly with parents and guardians and is scheduled to hold another meeting with parents and guardians of the students this Friday, January 31.

The university said it was collaborating with regional entities and agencies simultaneously, including the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), CARICOM Secretariat, Ministries of Health and Foreign Affairs, and others in the regional management and response strategy.

It has also convened a group of experts to examine the issues and help inform decision-making. The UWI held a Vice-Chancellor’s Forum this afternoon which offered analyses and perspectives about the Coronavirus.

The programme included remarks from Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, and featured UWI health experts along with CARPHA’s Executive Director, Dr. Joy St. John.