Fall Reopening Info for Employees - Safe Face-to-Face Plus Online Options

The summer semester is now underway, and our attention is focused on preparing for the best possible return to campus. We are looking forward to the fall semester when students will return and bring life back to our quiet college!

As we balance the safety needs of our employees and students in light of campus reopening, we want to provide you with the latest information related to Fall.

What will the course schedule look like?

We have established a team of instructional leaders and faculty to review and recommend options for the fall schedule. We determined there is no "one size fits all" approach. Our goal is to balance people's desire for a return to normalcy with our ability to minimize risk and maximize instructional time. Our immediate task at hand is to ensure physical distancing this fall. To that end, we are reviewing class enrollments, determining reduced capacities for each classroom, and analyzing larger spaces on campus that can be adapted for instructional use.

Many classes will be offered face-to-face on campus with safety precautions in place. Some classes may adopt a synchronous online (live video conference) approach, where half of the students will attend virtually. Others may choose a hybrid delivery with half of the class meeting on one day and the other half meeting on a different day, and with a heavy online component. We are also exploring additional online offerings. The information provided in the class schedule under the course notes will provide important information regarding the delivery format.

In short, multiple schedule options will be available for students with varying levels of comfort and health risk.

What can you expect this fall?

You can expect safe face-to-face plus online options! Classrooms are being reconfigured to provide increased distance between students and employees. Student support services will be available through various options (face-to-face, online, email, phone) to accommodate the needs of our students. We will continue to explore ways to use technology to more effectively serve our students.

All students and employees are encouraged to wear face coverings. Some activities may require face masks when physical distancing cannot be maintained. This may include advising appointments, proctored exams, and some classes.

You can also expect a continuation of the more rigorous cleaning and disinfecting that we have been doing since the start of the pandemic. Additional cleaning staff will be available during the day to assist with heavy use areas and restrooms. You will see some new signage promoting our safety initiatives as well as clearly marked entrances and exits on all buildings, and signage for high-traffic pathways through buildings. We are also working on obtaining additional hand sanitizer and environmentally safe wipes for students to use as they enter the classrooms.
What if you are at increased risk from COVID-19?

According to the CDC, based on currently available information and clinical expertise, older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. For more detailed information on those who may be at a higher risk, review the CDC guidance. Employees with health conditions that place them at an increased risk may be eligible for reasonable accommodations, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), unless providing such accommodations would place undue hardship on the College.

Additional information including how to submit a request for an accommodation, resources, etc., will be sent in a separate email from Human Resources.

Without question, our highest priority is ensuring the safety of our campus. We will be prepared and will have the flexibility to make any necessary changes as the situation evolves. Your resilience this past semester shows that we are more than capable of withstanding many challenges. Although the pandemic has forced all of us to adapt, the skills we have learned this past semester will serve us well going forward.

Fully restoring campus operations involves patience, careful consideration, and deliberate implementation. This will require the cooperation of each of us to adhere to new expectations for the health of our community.

We’ve missed everyone and will be thrilled to see both students and employees returning safely to their classrooms, offices, and work settings. Go Vikings!