

July 20, 2021

Subj: Fall Outlook and Policy Updates

Dear Faculty and Staff Colleagues,

We hope this finds you enjoying the summer. We write to share some important updates as we look forward to a full resumption of campus activities for the fall semester. We continue to count on your partnership and support, and to be inspired by your resilience, innovation, and dedication.

Outlook for the fall

We realize there are many questions during this transitional time, so we thought it might be helpful to provide an overview of what to expect this fall, followed by more detailed descriptions of relevant policies.

We are, of course, continuing to closely monitor conditions in our region as well as nationally and globally, especially with regard to the emergence of variants and the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines. The health, safety, and well-being of every member of this community, as well as that of our neighbors in the region, remains our highest priority. As we have done on many occasions throughout the last 16 months, we will adjust our plans if circumstances warrant, keeping you fully apprised.

As we look to the fall, we anticipate the following:

- Classes will be taught in person.
- As previously announced, in consultation with your manager, remote work arrangements made in response to the pandemic will conclude by August 2.
- Consistent with the prevailing public health protocols, most University facilities, including classrooms, teaching and research laboratories, libraries, common spaces, and administrative spaces, will operate at full capacity.
- Campus housing will operate at normal occupancy.
- Dining halls and campus retail dining outlets will operate at normal capacity.
- Spectators will be permitted to attend athletic competitions on campus. All guests are encouraged to be vaccinated, and any other necessary protocols will be communicated directly by Athletics as restrictions may vary by sport/venue.
- In-person student activities will take place without the COVID restrictions that were in effect last year.
- Conferences and events that include visitors will be permitted.
- At this time, masking is optional on campus for those who are fully vaccinated.

Faculty and staff vaccination requirement

Notre Dame's ability to resume full operations depends in large measure on the vaccination of members of our community. As you know, a high rate of vaccination is critical in the local, national, and global fight against COVID-19. Our goal is to have as many members of this community vaccinated as possible this fall.

- We are pleased to report that we have made tremendous progress on faculty and staff vaccination rates. On May 20, 62% of faculty and staff had either provided proof of vaccination or received an exemption. Today, 88% of faculty and staff have done so (82% are fully vaccinated).
- While we can all be proud of this progress, there is still work to do. As a reminder, **employees must receive their final dose of one of the vaccines approved by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) or the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) by no later than August 2, 2021.** This is a University requirement.
- If you have not yet uploaded your vaccination documentation, information on how to do so can be found on the [COVID-19 website](#). **The process for uploading documentation has been streamlined** to include fewer required fields and to give you more options. If you need assistance with uploading or have other questions about providing vaccination verification, please contact Human Resources at askhr@nd.edu or 574-631-5900.
- Faculty and staff may **apply for an exemption from the vaccination requirement** for medical or religious reasons, or other strongly held beliefs. The deadline for filing a [request for an exemption](#) has been extended from July 15 to August 2, 2021. Those granted an exemption **must** participate in weekly surveillance testing and continue to mask indoors while on campus.
- For employees who fail to either upload confirmation of vaccination or apply for an exemption by August 2, **non-compliance with the vaccination requirement will be considered in annual performance reviews and in setting merit increases.** The relevant vice president or dean will be notified of those who are non-compliant, and these employees will be required to participate in weekly surveillance testing and to wear masks indoors.

Masking

- For those who are fully vaccinated, at this time masking is optional on campus, whether indoors or outdoors.
- As noted above, employees who have not provided the University with proof of vaccination, including those who have been granted an exemption, are expected to continue to mask indoors.
- Visitors who are unvaccinated are expected to mask while on campus.
- Please respect the choices of students, faculty, staff and visitors who are masked, and avoid making assumptions.

Surveillance testing

- **Weekly surveillance testing will be required of all faculty and staff who have not provided proof of vaccination beginning the week of August 16. Failure to participate in surveillance testing will be considered in annual performance reviews and merit increases.** These employees will receive additional information about the testing requirement after August 2.
- We expect to have some capacity at the University Testing Center to offer surveillance testing on a voluntary basis to those who are fully vaccinated. More information will be provided in the weeks ahead.
- The University Testing Center is now located in McCourtney Hall, Room 120F. You'll find hours of operation and more information [here](#).

Diagnostic testing

Diagnostic testing for those who are showing symptoms of COVID-19 or who have been exposed to someone who has tested positive is available at the Notre Dame Wellness Center for faculty and staff. Contact the Wellness Center at 574-631-0050 to schedule a diagnostic test, or you can seek care from your primary care provider.

Effective August 21, 2021:

Visitors

- Visitors are welcome on campus, subject to any public health protocols in effect at the time of their visit.
- University academic, administrative, and residential buildings will once again be accessible to visitors, subject to restrictions specific to particular buildings (e.g., residential buildings require admission by a resident).
- Visitors who are not vaccinated are expected to wear masks while on campus. University hosts should communicate this expectation to their visitors.

Travel

- University-related domestic travel may resume without the need for special pre-approvals.
- Until further notice, due to the high incidence of COVID-19 infections and uneven access to vaccines around the world, University-related international travel must be approved in advance by a vice president or dean.
- All international travel must be registered at <https://ndi-tr.nd.edu/>.
- University study abroad programs have been carefully vetted; students and faculty confirmed for participation in these programs are approved for travel but should still register their travel at <https://ndi-tr.nd.edu/>.
- Notre Dame International, University Health Services, and the Wellness Center remain as resources for those approved for international travel.

Gatherings

- The COVID-related restrictions on gatherings and events – including meetings, conferences, and performances – are lifted. This means that event venues can once again be utilized, with gathering size to be determined by venue and nature of the event and subject to public health protocols in effect at the time of the event.
- Visitors who are not vaccinated will be expected to mask when attending gatherings on campus. Organizers of events should convey this expectation to attendees.
- The Vice President of University Enterprises and Events is authorized to impose any restrictions on gatherings, including reducing the number of permitted attendees, that might be deemed necessary to protect the health of the campus community or guests.

After the disruption of the last 16 months, resuming more of our normal activities is both a relief and a challenge. Without doubt, we will once again need to be flexible as we adapt to evolving circumstances. As we continue our preparations for the fall semester, let's treat one another with kindness, patience, and grace. As always, we are deeply grateful for all you do in service to our wonderful University.

The Tuesday letter is back! (But we are not promising one every week this year. ☺)

Yours in Notre Dame,

Marie Lynn Miranda, Provost
Shannon Cullinan, Executive Vice President