



University of Idaho

TO: University of Idaho Students, Faculty and Staff
FROM: Scott Green, President
DATE: May 22, 2020
SUBJECT: Planning Underway for Fall 2020, Flexibility is Key

It has been a challenging spring, to say the least. Despite all the challenges, I couldn't be prouder of the way our university responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. Everyone adapted to ensure our students succeeded. Now, without missing a beat, planning for fall is well underway. The Vandal Family never disappoints.

Much work has been done to prepare for re-opening campus this summer and for the return of students to campus in August. It is imperative we open cautiously and safely, but with in-person, in-classroom learning as the priority. We are a residential campus and providing students with the experience they expect and deserve is what will fill our classes.

Our Fall 2020 planning focuses on providing a safe environment for all to work and study. We expect social distancing requirements to be in place until a vaccine is available, so we are adapting all campus operations to follow CDC recommendations. We continue to work with Idaho Public Health and other health experts. Because the landscape continues to change rapidly, we all need to be patient and flexible. If we learned anything over the past three months, it is that flexibility is a key to success.

Safety is our top priority as we work to educate students, conduct research and provide outreach to our state. To

accomplish these goals, we will take actions to mitigate the likely return of COVID-19. A more detailed plan will be announced in coming weeks, but below are some general changes:

Safety Protocols

A key component of successfully re-opening is for our university community to embrace the use of face coverings and other personal protective devices in certain situations. This could include offices, classrooms and other campus spaces. We are partnering with Gritman Medical Center to investigate setting up our own COVID-19 testing facility. We are also researching and working to procure thermal scanners for high-traffic areas and gatherings. Use of hand sanitizer and regular cleaning will be even more important.

Classes

We plan to offer live, in-class learning experiences starting on Monday, Aug. 24. Most classes will resume as face-to-face; however, some adaptations to the course schedule are necessary to follow social distancing standards. Some class sizes may be reduced. Others may be moved to larger spaces. Certain courses will put students in a rotation between in-person and online experiences, a format called hybrid flexible — or HyFlex. As a last resort, a few classes may be offered in online formats where no other method can be used. Our ITS staff is adding technology to classrooms to adjust to this variety of formats. Colleges are working to adapt their course offerings to meet these unique safety requirements. The [Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#) remains available this summer to help any instructors with online delivery development. We expect the fall class schedule to be completed by mid-June.

Residential Experience

Housing and Residence Life, as well as Greek Chapter facilities, will reduce density to mitigate the spread of the virus. Each area is making plans to provide students with the best possible

residential experience that includes social distancing. Vandals Dining will continue to provide food in a safe, responsible way in both The HUB and through food court locations. You will see changes to some facilities and offices as we adapt to social distancing protocols, including plexiglass protection and limited seating.

Staff and faculty, if you have concerns about personal health risks associated with being on campus or at your regular work location, Human Resources will be the initial point of contact for all requests to an adjustment in work and will work with the appropriate supervisor as needed during the process.

While we have a lot to be proud of, the work is far from over. Leadership is working diligently to finalize plans for Fall 2020. You can expect regular updates throughout the summer as we learn more about the virus and adapt our strategies accordingly. A series of online discussions throughout the summer will keep you informed.

Interim Provost Torrey Lawrence will host regular discussions for faculty and staff starting Wednesday, June 3. Watch the Daily Register for details. A New Student Town Hall will be held via Zoom on Thursday, June 4. New students will receive information from Strategic Enrollment Management. Returning students and parents are encouraged to join Dean of Students Blaine Eckles on Facebook Live Monday, June 8. Other forums will be held throughout the summer.

This is a time of uncertainty in our world, but please know we are diligently planning detailed procedures and protocols to reduce the risk of infection as we return to work and class environments. The well-being of our Vandal Family is our highest priority and we want to reopen our university with that in mind. Our success hinges on our ability to be thoughtful and flexible. We are primarily a destination campus, so providing a true campus experience is key to successfully delivering on our mission and ensuring the financial stability of our great university. Most importantly, we must work together for the good of our community.

Keep Calm and Vandal On.

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