



TO: University of Idaho Students

FROM: Blaine Eckles, Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

DATE: August 11, 2020

SUBJECT: Join Me for a Town Hall to Help Prepare for Fall at U of I

As you prepare to return to the University of Idaho for the Fall 2020 semester, I want to share some important information to assist you in being successful. While you have likely already read the information provided by President Green in his [July 16 communication](#) to the university community, here are some additional updates.

You are invited to participate in a Student and Parent and Family Town Hall from 6-7 p.m. Pacific time Thursday, Aug. 13. This session will provide an overview of institutional plans for Fall 2020 and allow for questions via a Q&A panel during the event. Zoom capabilities are limited and thus, if registration capacity is reached, this recording will be placed on the [COVID-19 webpage](#) for future viewing.

[Register in advance](#) for the webinar.

Please [submit any questions](#) in advance.

Testing for COVID-19 on the Moscow Campus

Testing for COVID-19 is underway, and required, on the Moscow campus. Time slots are available for first-come, first-served sign-up by students and university employees through the [online scheduling program](#), which also includes a short questionnaire.

The following dates are available:

- Aug. 10-12: Students, Faculty and Staff
- **Aug. 13-14 and 17-21: Students Only**
- Aug. 24-26: Students, Faculty and Staff

Please *bring a photo ID* to your testing appointment.

If you live on campus (in a chapter facility or the residence halls) and test positive you will be isolated in a facility away from healthy students and monitored by Idaho Public Health. If you live off campus, you are expected to isolate in your own residence should your test come back positive.

Students are not to return to in-class instruction until cleared by Public Health or a physician.

Students who attend classes at U of I locations other than Moscow should contact their local healthcare provider for testing options. While not required for non-Moscow campus students, it is encouraged, if possible, in your area.

Students on the Student Health Insurance Program (SHIP) will be covered for COVID-19 testing. For additional health insurance questions, please contact the [Student Health Insurance office](#).

Questions on COVID-19 testing can be directed to:

covid19questions@uidaho.edu.

Fall 2020 Information To Get You Started

Here are some important links for you to check out as you prepare to return to campus:

- [Vandal Welcome](#): This site is geared toward students new to the university this fall, which outlines orientation schedules and additional information for first year students.
- [Fraternity and Sorority Life Recruitment](#): This will provide additional information on recruitment and individual chapter COVID-19 plans.
- [Housing and Residence Life](#): Students moving in will be able to do so over a period of five days, starting Wednesday, Aug. 19.
 - Students must [reserve a time](#) to move into the residence halls.
- [The Hub](#): You will learn information on the steps that Vandals Dining has engaged in to provide a great residential dining experience for students in the Wallace Residence Center as well as the ISUB Food Court.
- The [Healthy Vandal Pledge](#) allows all members of the campus community, including students and employees, to acknowledge steps that can be taken to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
- [U of I COVID-19 Webpage](#): This site will provide you answers to many frequently asked questions about institutional plans regarding COVID-19, in addition to all university-wide communications and videos. There is a section specifically for students, so check it out.
- Check out the [Vandals Have It Covered](#) video that student leaders created to help educate the Vandal Family. You can

also create a video and enter it into a competition to earn a gift card to the VandalStore. Keep reading for additional information on how to participate.

Staff and faculty have been working hard over the past few months to create as safe of a learning environment as possible. It is important that you understand that, as a student, you play a significant role in determining whether the university will remain open for the fall semester or not. If you care about the university and want to continue in-class instruction, you must take appropriate safety steps to protect yourself and others. Follow the safety guidelines that have been outlined in this communication and encourage your friends to do the same.

Healthy Vandals Campaign

To help prepare and educate you on ways to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the university has established the Healthy Vandals Campaign. This campaign underscores the different efforts the institution is taking to create as safe and successful fall semester as possible. We know the best way to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 is by doing five simple things:

1. Wearing a face covering;
2. Maintaining social distancing whenever feasible (and when you can't, wear a face covering);
3. Washing your hands frequently with soap and water, or using hand sanitizer;
4. Cleaning and disinfecting regularly;
5. Remaining home and isolated from others when you are not feeling well and seeking out medical guidance for next steps.

Win a Gift Certificate to the VandalStore!

Help promote Healthy Vandals. Submit an original short video or image by Friday, **Aug. 21**, and be entered to win a gift card to the VandalStore! Winning submissions will be used to create the next Healthy Vandals video to help spread the message that we all have a role to play in normalizing face coverings, social distancing, staying home when sick and practicing basic hygiene strategies. Share how you incorporate these prevention strategies into your everyday life to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 on and off campus.

[Details and submission form](#) can be found online.

The On-Campus Experience

Face coverings are required in all university buildings. This is true for the classroom experience, the Library, Campus Recreation, residence halls and all other buildings. I recommend you come to the university with at least ***two face coverings***. While we will be providing each of you with a cloth face cover, having additional coverings will allow you to regularly wash them. It's always good to have more than one available!

Hand sanitizer stations are located in multiple locations in our buildings, in addition to daily cleaning of all buildings and classroom space. I encourage you to bring hand sanitizer with you that you can take and use wherever you may be on campus. Using hand sanitizer whenever feasible, as well as washing hands regularly and wearing face coverings when around others, are [proven ways](#) in which you can be protected and protect others from COVID-19.

Classroom Experience

Many classes will be in-person. In most cases, classes will have an in-person maximum of 50 percent classroom capacity. We have moved some classes into larger event space locations (such as the International Ballroom in the Pitman Center) and each class has been set up for increased spacing between students and instructors. Face coverings **are required during the entire class session and any student not wearing one will have to leave and engage in courses online.**

Schedule Change After Thanksgiving

Once arriving on campus, you should remain in Moscow until Thanksgiving break. By remaining in the area and not traveling, you help to create a “bubble” whereby we all may be successful.

The university will end in-person class delivery on Friday, Nov. 20. Classes will resume using online/remote delivery exclusively on Monday, Nov. 30. Fall semester final exams will be given online/remotely.

You are strongly encouraged to remain away from the university after Thanksgiving break until the start of Spring 2021. If returning to campus ensures the best academic outcomes, you may do so. If you reside in a fraternity or sorority chapter facility you will receive guidance from the organization about post-Thanksgiving living options. Winter Commencement is canceled.

The Holiday [Break Bus](#) program will continue this year, assisting students traveling to/from campus during the Fall Break and Spring Break. It will operate at reduced seating capacity and is a

great, affordable way to get students from the Moscow campus to Southern and Southeastern Idaho, and over to Portland.

[Space can be reserved online.](#)

It is our intent to test you for COVID-19 again in January 2021 when returning for the Spring semester. Additional information about Spring 2021 testing will be communicated to you later in the fall semester.

Reporting Positive COVID-19 Cases

If an individual on campus contracts COVID-19, we want to hear about it. Let us know by filing a [VandalCARE report](#).

COVID-19 Information and COVID-19 Questions

For more information on what the university is doing in response to COVID-19, please visit the [U of I Coronavirus website](#) and review the FAQs. You can also email any questions you may have about our COVID-19 plans to: covid19questions@uidaho.edu.

Student Technology

A modern computing device is essential for completing online course components and finishing the semester while we are online-only after Fall Break. ITS provides recommended specifications for personally owned devices. ITS also has a limited number of devices available for checkout to students through the [Student Technology Center](#).

Coping During Stressful Times

These are challenging and stressful times for many. Please know that you have access to outstanding mental health services through the [Counseling and Testing Center](#).

You are not alone. If you are worried about yourself or someone else and are unsure of what to do, please let us know by filing a [VandalCARE report](#).

It is our collective responsibility to look out for one another and do our part to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. I look forward to seeing many of you on campus in a few short weeks. Until then, my best to you and as always,

Go Vandals!

Blaine Eckles

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