



# University of Idaho

**TO:** University of Idaho Students, Faculty and Staff  
**FROM:** Scott Green, President  
Torrey Lawrence, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President  
**DATE:** Nov. 16, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** After Thanksgiving Classes Online/Remote Only; Staff Work from Home if Possible

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An incredible amount of work and deep commitment to our success brings us to Thanksgiving Break. Each of you has given of yourselves, putting the university first. We have had our noses swabbed multiple times. Many have spent time in quarantine while others have endured a positive diagnosis and, in some cases, some pretty miserable symptoms of COVID-19.

Our weekly testing shows an increase over the prior week both from those living on campus and off, a trend that is consistent with what is happening across the state and region. We conducted 1,756 tests and found a positivity rate of 3.76%. This includes the last general surveillance group as well as many symptomatic and close contact tests from our U of I community. We have 32 students in isolation with five leaving today. We recommend that students traveling home for Thanksgiving, particularly those that will visit high-risk family members such as grandparents, get tested before leaving campus to protect your families. [Testing is available by appointment](#) on Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 18-19, at the Student Recreation Center. People who are symptomatic should email [covid19questions@uidaho.edu](mailto:covid19questions@uidaho.edu) to get a referral for the Martin Wellness Center drive-through testing site.

Since we will be testing primarily symptomatic students and employees and not doing surveillance testing for the remainder of the calendar year, we expect our positivity rate to go up over the next few weeks. U of I has conducted over 20,500 tests since August. After Thanksgiving, we will continue to operate the U of I COVID-19 lab in partnership with Gritman Medical Center not only to help our Vandal community but also to help the greater community by handling additional testing for other entities.

On Friday, [Gov. Brad Little moved the state back to Stage 2](#), with modifications. This has no impact on our in-person delivery for this week. If you have a scheduled event impacted by this change, you should have already received notification.

After a much-deserved break next week, we will transition to online/remote course delivery for the remainder of the semester. We will be back in person for the start of the Spring 2021 semester on Wednesday, Jan. 13.

## **Students**

All classes will be held online/remote starting Monday, Nov. 30, and will remain online/remote for the remainder of the Fall 2020 semester. If you travel during the break, we strongly encourage you to not return to the Moscow campus until January. We also recognize that some of you will return for a variety of reasons. If you do return, you should again be tested for COVID-19 no earlier than six days after arriving back to town. We will provide instructions for testing the two weeks following Thanksgiving Break when you return. The Moscow campus will remain open through Dec. 18 — although you will see a reduction of in-person staffing and a reduction in hours of operation of some offices and buildings. Support services will be available and should begin with a phone call to the office or unit. [Limited dining options](#) will be available on the Moscow campus beginning Nov. 30.

Absent further notice, U of I Coeur d'Alene, U of I Boise and U of I Idaho Falls facilities will be available for students to

access Wi-Fi and classroom/study space through Dec. 18.

Building hours may be reduced, so call ahead.

## **Faculty**

Continue to work with your students to ensure they are getting the support they need to engage in online/remote delivery.

Classrooms will be available for continued course delivery.

Office hours should be moved to online-only. If you have active research and need to be in your regular work space, you may continue to do work from that space. If you can work remotely Nov. 23 through Jan. 8, you should do so.

## **Staff**

Staff statewide will return to a work-from-home status anywhere it is feasible from Nov. 23 to Jan. 8. All offices should remain open and able to accommodate walk-in traffic, but supervisors may consider strategies for rotating staff on site (A-B schedules or other strategies.) No additional paperwork is required to work from home during this time, but all supervisors should communicate with employees about plans for their unit.

All employees concerned about a potential exposure or feeling symptomatic may contact [covid19questions@uidaho.edu](mailto:covid19questions@uidaho.edu) to schedule a testing appointment.

## **Spring Semester**

Details about COVID-19 testing in January are still being determined. While we want you to enjoy the break and get some rest, please also check your university email regularly for any updates. All Moscow-based students must be tested before participating in in-person classes. Those living in Housing and Residence Life will also be tested even if you are not taking part in in-person classes. Random general surveillance testing will resume in January and continue through the spring. This action proved invaluable this fall and was, without a doubt, a key factor in keeping our community healthier.

We have proven we can live and learn together in person. But that doesn't mean we can let our guard down. The statistics of

the past week show that COVID-19 is still a threat and we must be diligent in our efforts. Take the guidance of the Healthy Vandal Pledge with you as you travel, gather with family and enjoy the holidays. Your healthy actions away from the university are just as important as those taken in the classrooms or on campus. We wish our entire Vandal Family a joyous and restful Thanksgiving and holiday season.

Keep Calm and Vandal On.

*Scott Green*

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