



University of Idaho

TO: University of Idaho Students, Faculty and Staff

FROM: Scott Green, President
Torrey Lawrence, Provost and Executive Vice President

DATE: Dec. 7, 2020

SUBJECT: Spring Classes Resume Jan. 13, Testing Required for Moscow-Based Students

As final exams get underway, we wish all the best to those taking and giving exams over the next two weeks. It has been an unusual and challenging semester, yet each of you has found a way through to help us have a successful and in-person semester — not many other universities can say that.

COVID-19 testing continues for those remaining on the Moscow campus. Wastewater testing shows an increase in concentration of the virus since Thanksgiving. We strongly encourage those living on campus to get tested. We encourage students and employees who have been exposed to be tested before traveling to see family and friends over Winter Break and again six days after you return. Last week we tested 296 people, and most were tested because of close contact or were symptomatic. Because of that, the percentage of positive results was higher at 4.73%, versus the lower rate when we are conducting asymptomatic general surveillance testing.

We are looking ahead to Spring 2021 and know that the challenges will not be any less. Cases continue to grow across the country and in our own Idaho communities. Despite this, we know each of you is committed to living and learning together in the spring and doing your part to make that possible.

We will begin testing Moscow-based students on Wednesday, Jan. 6. The campuswide testing in January will be very similar to the previous two required tests. Signup links will be available soon, so please watch your email for more information. The nurses cannot swab everyone on the same day, so there will be pre-scheduled time slots for you to sign up for the date and time that works best for you. We anticipate some days will fill up quickly, so if your schedule is more limited please watch for the link and sign up early. There will be testing Jan. 6-12 so we can have everyone swabbed before the first day of classes. Testing will continue Jan. 13-15 for those arriving late due to weather, travel or other unforeseen circumstances.

In addition to being tested in Moscow, we will also accept test results from other healthcare providers as long as the testing was conducted Jan. 6-13; however, there are limitations and restrictions as to which test types will be accepted, the information will soon be added to the U of I COVID-19 website. In the meantime, send any test results or questions about testing from other healthcare providers to covid19questions@uidaho.edu.

Residence halls open Sunday, Jan. 10. Students are encouraged to return prior to the start of classes to ensure proper time for testing. Students living in a fraternity or sorority facility should check with chapter leadership on when that facility will open.

All classes will begin on Jan. 13. Students registered for in-person classes will be expected to attend in person except where they have made arrangements with their instructors. Faculty will receive lists of students ineligible to attend in-person classes. These daily lists will include students who may be ineligible for a variety of reasons including:

- They have not completed the required COVID-19 test.
- Their results for the COVID-19 test have not yet been updated in the U of I system.
- They are required to observe a period of time in isolation or quarantine.

- Reasons unrelated to COVID-19.

Each of you will be asked to again acknowledge the [Healthy Vandal Pledge](#), which has been updated slightly but continues to outline what we expect of each other — including wearing a mask, social distancing, monitoring your health and not putting yourself in a situation that could help spread the virus.

We know this virus moves fast, and we must be agile. Please continue to monitor your email during Winter Break to keep current on any changes or updates. Except for healthcare workers and those most at risk, we have been told by Idaho Public Health that it will be months before a vaccine will be available. As more information becomes available about a vaccine, we will update you on how this will be implemented across the university and our community. We are prepared and ready to administer the vaccine as soon as we receive supplies. It is exciting and encouraging to think we may be getting closer to the end of the pandemic and returning to a more normal way of life.

Staff and faculty are encouraged to work remotely with minimal staff in offices to address walk-in traffic, with supervisor approval and where possible, through Friday, Jan. 8.

We look forward to seeing you back in offices and classes in January. Stay safe and enjoy the break.

Keep Calm and Vandal On.

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