



University of Idaho

TO: University of Idaho Students, Faculty and Staff
FROM: Scott Green, President
Torrey Lawrence, Provost and Executive Vice President
DATE: Jan. 4, 2021
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Testing Begins Jan. 6 in Moscow

Happy New Year! We hope you had a healthy and restful break. We are optimistic about recent medical advances that will help us in our battle with COVID-19 — but we must also prepare for the challenges that confront us now.

During the break, the pandemic continued with record case numbers throughout Idaho. As such, we begin the semester with the state in Stage 2 of the governor's plan. This means no gatherings of more than 10 people outside of classrooms, which are exempted. Note that no cases were traced back to the classroom in Fall 2020.

Students

Similar to the fall, those students returning to Moscow and attending in-person classes or living in the residence halls must clear testing protocols. COVID-19 testing for the semester begins Wednesday, Jan. 6. [Register now for testing](#) that will be available Jan. 6-8 and Jan. 11-13 at the Student Recreation Center. There are also 800 slots available for testing on Sunday, Jan. 10 for students living in residence halls or campus apartments. We encourage you to return early and test early as results must be received and processed prior to attending class in person.

Prior positive results through the university testing or previously submitted documentation eliminate your need to retest. You can provide a valid PCR test result dated Jan. 6 or later instead of testing in Moscow. If you received a positive test result or valid test outside the university's testing system, documentation should be sent to jblazzard@uidaho.edu for medical validation and clearing of your student account. If you have specific questions about requirements or testing, direct those to covid19questions@uidaho.edu.

Students living in residence halls or Greek chapters who test positive will again be cared for in Targhee Hall. Those identified as a close contact of a positive case by Idaho Public Health will be expected to quarantine. But the CDC has reduced the suggested quarantine to 10 days (from the prior 14 days). This timeframe can be shorted to seven days if a test no sooner than day five after exposure is negative. We plan to have testing available for such situations. This does not eliminate the need to wear a face covering and social distance.

Staff and Faculty

Staff and faculty in Moscow [can sign up for post-holiday testing](#) on campus Jan. 6-8 and Jan. 11-13.

Instructors will begin receiving the list of students ineligible to attend in-person classes beginning Wednesday, Jan. 13. This list will include, but is not limited to, students who have not completed their COVID-19 testing requirement.

Courses will be taught in the method indicated in the course catalog. Instructors are encouraged to accommodate students as much as possible but are not required to provide long-term COVID-19-related instructional accommodations outside of the assigned course format. Students are encouraged to attend in-person instruction when feasible to maximize student learning and engagement.

We have enjoyed flexibility in work schedules during the break between semesters. Flexible work accommodations [must again be requested](#) through Human Resources and approved by your

supervisor and appropriate dean or vice president prior to working remotely after Friday, Jan. 8.

Vandal Community

Remember, if you are symptomatic, contact covid19questions@uidaho.edu or your healthcare provider to be tested at the Gritman drive-through site, which has been relocated across the street from Gritman Medical Center.

When you log in to VandalWeb, you will again be asked to acknowledge the [Healthy Vandal Pledge](#). This includes participating in all safety protocols such as wearing face coverings, social distancing and being temperature screened at all on-campus dining facilities. You will also be prompted to update your contact information, which is used in the event of an emergency.

If you are working or learning at a location outside Moscow, check your local protocols for testing availability. Symptomatic COVID-19 testing is covered by U of I employee and student insurance policies.

Our innovative and proactive approach in Fall 2020 allowed us to remain open on the Moscow campus and finish the semester with a COVID-19 positivity rate that was far below the local, state and regional average. It takes all of us working together to again accomplish this. While we are prepared to coordinate free vaccinations with Gritman Medical Center for students and employees who want them, it could be months before we have access to vaccines for all but our most at-risk employees and students. In the interim, we know each of you will take this pandemic and related protocols seriously to help us succeed – for your education, your job and the university. We expect that COVID-19 will again challenge our campus this semester and keeping the university open with live class instruction will continue to be determined by our community's ability to manage our positive cases. Let's stay mindful and not let COVID-19 beat us. We have many opportunities to thrive this spring if we stay vigilant and committed to each other.

Keep Calm and Vandal On.

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