



University of Idaho

TO: University of Idaho Students, Faculty and Staff
FROM: Scott Green, President
Torrey Lawrence, Provost and Executive Vice President
DATE: Aug. 11, 2021
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Protocols Updated for In-Person Course Delivery

The Delta variant of COVID-19 is moving quickly through our communities. Idaho has seen a significant increase in cases in the past week, and most of the state is in the [“High transmission” category](#), according to the CDC. In collaboration with our Board of Regents and Public Health, we will implement the following safety protocols to provide as many in-person experiences as possible:

- Masks are required, effective immediately, in all university buildings.
- All classes will be offered in the modality listed in the catalog.
- All Vandals are highly encouraged to be vaccinated.
- COVID-19 tests are not required to attend class in person.

Face Covering Requirement

Following CDC guidance and after consultation with Idaho Public Health, everyone must wear a face covering when in any indoor university-sponsored event or space, regardless of vaccination status. This requirement is effective immediately. We will review this requirement every three weeks and will communicate changes.

Faculty must wear face coverings or a face shield in the classroom (but if using a shield, must maintain at least 6 feet

from any student or colleague).

Classrooms

Classroom capacity will remain at normal levels, and all classes will be delivered in the modality listed in the catalog. We ask faculty to communicate clearly with students about classroom attendance expectations.

Vaccinations

All Vandals are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated. Vaccines have proven to be safe and effective, [according to the CDC](#). [Vaccine sites](#) are readily available across the state, and the vaccination is free. U of I will host [free vaccination clinics](#) at the start of fall semester. However, unvaccinated people should start the vaccination process immediately so they are more protected for the start of fall semester.

Vaccines cannot be required by the university as the result of a governor's executive order. Therefore, it is up to us as individuals to do what is right for our fellow Vandals.

As a reminder, supervisors and instructors cannot ask the vaccination status of an employee or student for any reason. You can share your own status if you choose.

Vaccination Incentives for Students

Students who show proof of full vaccination will receive a \$50 gift card to either the VandalStore or Idaho Eats. They will also be entered into a drawing for two \$5,000 and 10 \$1,000 awards. Directions will be emailed directly to students.

Testing

Last fall, the lack of access to COVID-19 testing and labs was a constraint on the ability of institutions to respond to the pandemic, therefore, the university opened and maintained a testing facility. Access to testing is no longer a limitation, so the university will rely on testing available through the healthcare system. Starting Monday, Aug. 16, the University will **not** be providing free COVID-testing like last academic year. Any individual showing [COVID-19 symptoms](#) should stay home and contact their healthcare provider immediately. Students and

employees are welcome at the [Vandal Health Clinic](#). Testing for COVID-19 is available at several local pharmacies and health care providers.

The Delta variant is moving quickly, and [studies show](#) that those who are vaccinated and get the variant are not as likely to get extreme symptoms. This is why we are focusing on vaccinations more than on testing the entire community.

Isolation and Quarantine for Positive Cases

All positive COVID-19 tests should be reported through a [VandalCare Report](#). This will allow U of I to offer support services to those individuals. Targhee Hall remains a dedicated isolation space for those living in campus residential facilities and Greek chapter facilities who test positive. Food and other support services will be provided. Students who need to quarantine due to exposure while living on campus (either a residence hall or a Greek chapter facility) are expected to quarantine in that location. Students, faculty and staff living off-campus are expected to follow isolation and quarantine protocols from their home.

Healthy Vandal Pledge

The pledge is being revised and will be implemented soon. You will be asked to acknowledge the pledge when you access VandalWeb.

Other Safety Measures

Our new dining partner, [Chartwells](#), will make grab-and-go options available at the ISUB and from the dining hall. Hand sanitizing stations across campus will remain in place, as well as all disinfectant and cleaning supplies in classrooms and other common spaces. Every new student will receive a Vandal mask with hand sanitizer.

Events

All events must follow the mask requirements when indoors. Event planners are encouraged to plan events to allow for social distancing, when possible. Planners may encourage and provide masks in outdoor settings.

Meetings

All meetings must follow the mask requirement when indoors.
Zoom and outdoor meetings are encouraged.

Requests for Flexible Work Space

Faculty and staff may request to work from other locations. Limited exceptions will be granted through the discretionary Flexwork process. Information about [Flexwork arrangements](#) is available from HR.

Factors for Future Decisions

Many factors contribute to decisions about how we provide a quality learning experience amidst a global pandemic. These include:

- Government restrictions or directives (national, state, region and city)
- Guidance from the U of I Board of Regents
- Idaho Public Health recommendations
- Gritman Medical Center recommendations
- Isolation space utilization and capacity
- Local hospitalization rate and hospital capacity
- Positive case numbers and analysis within Latah County
- Positive case numbers and analysis within the U of I community

Additional Resources

Information about COVID-19 and U of I safety protocols will continue to be posted on the [COVID-19 website](#). Questions may be sent to covid19questions@uidaho.edu.

We will continue to monitor the increase of the Delta variant in our state and will work with our partners to determine what is best for our institution throughout the fall semester. As always, we appreciate your patience as well as your efforts to protect one another.

Keep Calm and Vandal On.

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