



# UNIVERSITY OF CHARLESTON

## FALL 2021

### RETURN TO CAMPUS PLAN

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The University of Charleston (UC) has developed this plan for Fall 2021 campus-based activities. Following a successful 2020-21 academic year, we are building upon our experiences and the current status of the novel coronavirus.

Two guiding principles underly this plan: (1) ensure the health and safety of everyone in the University community (students, faculty, staff, visitors), and (2) enable students to continue to progress toward their academic, career, and professional goals.

Our plan is based on recent guidelines and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), American College Health Association (ACHA), and the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WV HEPC), and consultation with external subject matter experts including those from the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department (KCHD), WV HEPC, and the West Virginia Inter Agency Task Force.

While this plan represents our best thinking at the current time, we recognize that the prevailing conditions may change, and that circumstances beyond our control may cause UC to modify these plans or deviate from them. We will continue to work closely with local and state officials and monitor national and global events to make modifications to this plan as appropriate.



## FALL 2021 RETURN TO CAMPUS PLAN

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## Return to Campus Schedule

UC's Fall 2021 semester classes will begin Monday August 23, 2021.

UC serves three broad groups of students: distance learners who engage in online instruction (with the exception of some in-person residency experiences in select programs), non-residential students who attend classes on the Beckley campus, and both residential and non-residential students who attend classes on the Charleston campus.

Beckley campus students will begin arriving on campus with the start of Fall 2021 classes, on or after August 23, 2021, depending on their course schedules.

Charleston campus students will begin arriving on campus in stages. For example, some student athletes and students in certain academic programs may be instructed to arrive at different times in August 2021. Residential students will be notified about arrival times by the Office of Residence Life.

Before arriving on the Beckley or Charleston campus all students who have not already done so must participate in training that describes UC's health and safety practices. Students with active cases of the COVID-19 virus may not come to campus until their isolation period has ended as instructed by their local health department and physician, and as approved by the University's Virtual Command Center. Students who have been in recent contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, and who are themselves symptomatic and/or who have not been vaccinated, may not come to campus until their quarantine period has ended as instructed by their local health department and physician, and as approved by the University Virtual Command Center. Accommodations will be made for such students to begin their classes online.

## Vaccines

All students attending classes in Beckley or Charleston must be COVID-19 vaccinated prior to the start of the Fall 2021 semester. Vaccine clinics will be available on both campuses prior to the start of the Fall 2021 semester for any student who has not yet been COVID-19 vaccinated. If possible, students are strongly encouraged to complete their vaccinations prior to coming to campus. Vaccine availability in the United States can be accessed at [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) and through local health departments. Students who are fully vaccinated:

- Do NOT have to participate in COVID-19 testing prior to the start of the Fall semester
- Do NOT have to participate in weekly COVID-19 surveillance testing
- Do NOT have to wear a mask or face covering on campus or when participating in a UC activity, though anyone wishing to is free and encouraged to do so
- Do NOT need to quarantine if they are asymptomatic and have been in high-risk contact with someone known to have COVID-19

Students will submit proof of vaccine that includes their name, type of vaccine, and vaccination dates by completing the COVID Vaccination Reporting form and uploading a copy of their VAMS certificate by



logging into their MyUC account and clicking on Housing and Meal Plans on the left side of the screen. All students (residential and commuter) have access to this form.

Students may apply for a medical exemption for any required vaccine, including the COVID-19 vaccine, by completing the form available on the UC [Immunization Policy webpage](#) and returning it to Vice President and Dean of Students Virginia Moore. Exemption requests must be submitted at least one week before the student's scheduled move-in date, or one week before the start of the Fall semester, whichever is earliest. Any student who receives an exemption and is not COVID-19 vaccinated must do the following:

- Complete a COVID-19 liability waiver
- Participate in COVID-19 testing prior to the start of the Fall semester
- Participate in weekly COVID-19 surveillance testing throughout the semester
- Quarantine if they have been in high-risk contact with someone known to have COVID-19 as instructed by the local health department and the UC Virtual Command Center

Any student who chooses not to be vaccinated and does not have an approved medical exemption may not participate in campus activities including but not limited to in-seat classes, athletics, and residence life. Such students may transition to online learning. Please see the next section on Student Requests to Engage Remotely for the Fall 2021 Semester. Any new student who no longer wishes to attend UC due to the vaccine requirement will have their deposit refunded.

All employees are strongly encouraged to be COVID-19 vaccinated. Vaccine clinics will be available on both campuses prior to the start of the Fall 2021 semester for any employee who has not yet been COVID-19 vaccinated. Vaccine availability in the United States can be accessed at [Vaccines.gov](#) and through local health departments. Any employee who is not vaccinated must do the following:

- Participate in COVID-19 testing prior to the start of the Fall semester
- Participate in weekly COVID-19 surveillance testing throughout the semester
- Wear a mask or face covering at all times when inside any campus building
- Quarantine if they have been in high-risk contact with someone known to have COVID-19 as instructed by the local health department and the UC Virtual Command Center

Employees will submit proof of vaccine that includes their name, type of vaccine, and vaccination dates by submitting their VAMS certificate to the [COVID-19@ucwv.edu](mailto:COVID-19@ucwv.edu) email address. Employee vaccine protocols go into effect June 21, 2021.

Students and employees should receive all prescribed doses of a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved vaccine. If an individual has received all required doses of a different vaccine authorized by the World Health Organization (W.H.O.), they will not need to be revaccinated with a FDA approved vaccine. If an individual has not received all doses of a different vaccine authorized by the W.H.O., or they have received a vaccine not authorized by the W.H.O., they will need to be vaccinated with an FDA approved vaccine prior to the start of the Fall 2021 semester.



### **Student Requests to Engage Remotely for the Fall 2021 Semester**

Undergraduate students scheduled to attend classes on the Beckley or Charleston campus who for health and safety reasons are unable to come to a UC campus for the entire semester may apply to engage remotely. Such students should complete the form accessed via this URL: <https://tinyurl.com/UCremotelearning>. Students will receive notification whether their request is approved, and if so, they will also receive an update of the financial implications of the change in status. Program directors and advisors will be notified of which students need to have their schedule reviewed for changes, and faculty members will be notified of students who will be accessing their course sections via Flex Connect 100% remotely.

Students residing on campus are expected to physically attend in-seat courses unless directed to participate remotely due to illness, quarantine, or the need to manage classroom occupancy in accordance with CDC social distancing guidelines.

International students who are not physically on campus will need to be enrolled 100% in online course sections for immigration status purposes.

### **COVID-19 Testing**

All Beckley and Charleston campus-based employees and students who are not vaccinated at the start of the Fall 2021 semester will be tested for COVID-19. All non-vaccinated employees and students must participate in UC's weekly random COVID-19 surveillance testing. Such individuals will be notified when required to do so by the UC Virtual Command Center.

Anyone who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, even if they have been vaccinated, should seek medical attention, and be tested for COVID-19 if prescribed. Anyone testing positive should report their test results to [COVID-19@ucwv.edu](mailto:COVID-19@ucwv.edu). They should not come to campus until authorized to do so by their local health department and the University's Virtual Command Center.

In the event a Beckley or Charleston employee or student tests positive for COVID-19 they will be required to follow the University's *Isolation and Quarantine Policy*. This policy can be found under University Resources accessed on UC's [Coronavirus website](#). UC's Virtual Command Center will work with the local health department in accordance with all regulatory guidance and applicable laws to ensure that contact tracing occurs if a Beckley or Charleston campus employee or student tests positive for COVID-19. The CDC defines contact tracing as part of the process of supporting patients and warning contacts of exposure in order to stop chains of transmission. Through the contact tracing process others who may have come into contact with the person who tested positive are identified, notified, and informed of any actions that may be required.

### **Health Screening**

All employees and students are required to perform a daily health check via the LiveSafe app. All UC community members must take responsibility for monitoring their daily health for their own benefit and the



safety of their fellow UC community members. Everyone will need to follow the template for health monitoring plus any specific screening questionnaires required by the Athletics Department or health science academic programs involving patient care. Everyone should take their temperature before leaving home or their residence hall each day as part of the daily health screening.

### **Fall 2021 Academic Calendar**

Unless otherwise noted, the Fall 2021 semester will begin August 23, 2021. In-seat classes will not be held the following days: September 6 – Labor of Love Day; October 8 – Fall Break; November 22-26 – Thanksgiving Break. Individual programs may share other specifics. Final exams will end December 10, 2021, and commencement is scheduled for Saturday December 11, 2021. At this time the commencement ceremony format will be in-person. For more details, please consult the Fall 2021 Academic Calendar [here](#).

### **Campus-based Instruction and Course Delivery**

Classroom spaces are configured to ensure three (3) feet of distance between occupants. UC will supplement in-seat instruction with online, synchronous delivery of classes. Using our Flex Connect model, all in-seat class sessions will be live streamed for synchronous online participation and recorded for asynchronous online learning. These options will enable students who are unable to attend a class due to illness or other considerations approved by faculty to continue participating in their classes. To the extent possible, classes will become paperless and contact-free. At the discretion of the instructor, in-class testing will be permitted.

Laboratory and simulation experiences will be managed to the extent possible so that occupants are able to maintain three (3) or more feet of distance. Students eligible to participate in clinical rotations, internships and other types of community placements will be provided with detailed information by program directors about the personal protective equipment (PPE) they will need to safely participate in the experience at a particular site.

Faculty and other employees who have not been vaccinated must always wear a face mask or covering in classrooms, as well as in all indoor public spaces on campus. Vaccinated instructors may use face shields or other coverings at their discretion. Non-vaccinated students with an approved exemption are encouraged to wear face masks or face coverings in classrooms as well as public indoor spaces on campus.

The Academic Success Center will work with students who are at increased health risk on appropriate accommodations.

Students must have a personal laptop or desktop computer at their disposal. This will facilitate flexibility in transitioning to online instruction and participation should the need arise. The Office of Information Technology will provide a list of the minimum specifications for computers and program directors will provide a list of any specialized computer capabilities required for their respective programs. This information will be shared with students along with additional details about social distancing and cleaning protocols in classrooms.



### **Prevention and PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)**

All employees and students will be provided with documentation and training on COVID-19 related health and safety practices. All employees and students will receive and are expected to complete the training prior to the start of the Fall 2021 semester. Following Centers for Disease Control and other appropriate guidance, topics to be covered will include:

- Knowing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- Vaccinations
- Daily self-checks
- What to do if you are sick
- Myth-busting messages
- Respiratory and hand hygiene
- Face covering
- Physical distancing/social connections

Hand hygiene supplies will be readily available throughout campus with trashcans readily available to dispose of potentially contaminated items.

Face masks or coverings must always be worn indoors by non-vaccinated employees with the exception of while in individual offices with no visitors. Non-vaccinated students are also encouraged to wear face masks or coverings when indoors.

Gloves, gowns, and other personal protective equipment necessary for labs and health care program training and for custodial, dining, and maintenance services will be provided.

### **Physical Distancing**

To the extent possible, everyone should maintain three (3) feet social distancing, particularly indoors. Meetings should be conducted electronically when possible and practical. If an indoor in-person meeting is preferred, requests should be made to the appropriate Director, Dean, Vice President, or Executive Vice President for approval.

As described in the “Campus-based Instruction and Course Delivery” section, learning spaces have been configured and managed to allow for three (3) feet distances. In addition, the following measures will be taken in other areas of campus to avoid congestion and large gatherings:

- Maximum occupancy of campus locations will be posted to the extent possible.
- Conference and meeting rooms have been arranged to maintain appropriate three (3) feet physical distancing and will have wipes and hand sanitizer.
- The Library, Academic Success Center (ASC) and the Center for Career Development (CCD) will utilize a variety of health and safety initiatives, including wiping tables after each use, limiting common area use to small groups, online tutoring and virtual career advising sessions.

- Where possible, hallway doors will be opened to maximize traffic flow space and minimize the need to touch handles.
- Gatherings, particularly indoors, will be monitored to not exceed maximum number of participants.
- Residence halls move-ins will be coordinated by the Office of Residence Life. Physical distancing is required, and face coverings will be required for anyone who is not vaccinated during move-in. A maximum of two adult family members can enter residence halls with students during move-in.

### **Cleaning**

Hand hygiene supplies are available in all campus buildings and common areas. All common areas will be cleaned daily. Surfaces frequently touched by multiple people, such as door handles, bathroom surfaces, and handrails, will be cleaned with soap and water or another detergent at least daily when facilities are in use. Supplies will be available so that certain high-use surfaces and objects in public spaces, such as recreation equipment, telephones, common printers and copiers, and point of sale keypads, can be cleaned and disinfected before each use. If you notice that sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer, or other supplies have been depleted, please request additional supplies through the Facilities Work Orders link on the MyUC portal or contact the Facilities Office at 304-357-4871 and they will be replenished. While cleaning alone does not kill germs, it reduces the number of germs on a surface. Wipes will be available in all classrooms. Faculty and students are strongly encouraged to wipe the surface areas of their desks, chairs, podiums, etc. upon classroom arrival.

### **Student Life**

The Office of Student Life will coordinate activities that comply with physical distancing guidelines. A mix of in-person and technology-based platforms will be used. Student based campus organizations will receive further guidance on student organization meeting and programming guidelines from the Director of Student Involvement.

Intramural sports activities will also be managed to comply with physical distancing guidelines and athletics best practices. Supplies will be available so that equipment and surfaces can be cleaned and disinfected before each use, and that hand hygiene can be practiced before and after activities.

### **Travel**

Travel for UC business or activities may be authorized for admissions, recruiting, athletic, and professional development purposes. Only those fully vaccinated will be approved for University travel. Students with a medical exemption wishing to travel must seek approval from the Virtual Command Center. All travel must be authorized by a Vice President or Executive Vice President.





### **Visitors on Campus**

Admissions and recruiting visits are welcomed and should be arranged by appointment. Information on attendance at athletic events can be found in the Athletics section of this plan. Residence Hall guest policies and procedures are described in the section on Housing. Other visitors may come to campus for approved UC business or activities. Approval must be sought from a University Vice President or Executive Vice President; please contact the appropriate EVP or VP in your area.

All approved guests should arrive at an entrance designated by their host where they will be met by their host or designee. The Campus Safety and Security Office can assist with prior scheduling. Visitors must complete a daily health check survey and be encouraged to wear a mask or face covering indoors if they have not been vaccinated. The survey can be accessed under Helpful Links on the [Coronavirus website](#). Completed surveys should be sent electronically to the Virtual Command Center at [COVID-19@ucwv.edu](mailto:COVID-19@ucwv.edu) by the campus host.

### **Athletics**

The Athletic Department will communicate with student athletes separately on measures being taken to ensure their health and safety.

UC and the Mountain East Conference are planning for all athletic teams to compete during traditional season times throughout the academic year. Schedules will be released as they become available. At this time, we anticipate visitors will be welcomed at all UC athletic competitions. For indoor events, masks or face coverings will be recommended for anyone who has not been COVID-19 vaccinated. Additional attendance policies for competitive athletic events may be impacted by campus, city, county and state conditions and guidelines. As many competitive events as possible will be broadcast for live virtual viewing.

Athletic-related questions can be directed to Vice President and Athletic Director Dr. Bren Stevens at [brenstevens@ucwv.edu](mailto:brenstevens@ucwv.edu).

### **Housing**

This section pertains only to students living in Charleston campus residence halls.

All residence halls have been cleaned and prepared for student arrival. Training on public health measures and signs/symptoms of COVID-19 will be provided for all live-in professionals, including residence directors, residence assistants, security personnel, and others in similar roles. Residential students will receive specific instructions on cleaning, PPE, and other supplies to bring with them to campus.

Many students will have single rooms. Others may share a room. Students in shared rooms will be selected based on their involvement in the same activities (e.g., participate on the same athletic team, enrolled in many of the same classes, clinical rotation location). Public spaces will be arranged to maintain physical/social distancing and will be cleaned daily. Hand sanitizer will be widely available in common areas and rooms.



Students have access to free laundry machines in each residence hall. In order to minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air, dirty laundry items should not be shaken. Items should be washed as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Clean and disinfect hampers or other carts for transporting laundry.

Any students who are symptomatic of COVID-19 and awaiting test results will be required to quarantine while they await test results as will their roommate if they have not been COVID-19 vaccinated (i.e., they have an approved COVID-19 vaccine exemption). Any students who are COVID-19 positive will be isolated, either in a dedicated isolation space that has private rooms and are physically separated from other residential rooms, in place, or at home, depending on the individual and campus circumstances at the time. Any student in campus isolation or quarantine will receive telehealth monitoring, meal deliveries, and appropriate supplies.

Residential students may have guests in their rooms and lounge areas. Residence hall visitation has returned to the University Visitation Policy that can be found in the UC Student Handbook. Outside visitors are also permitted. The host student must have each outside visitor complete the daily health check survey as well as the Residence Hall Guest Registration Form and request that unvaccinated guests wear a mask or face covering when they are inside any UC building including residence halls. It is the host student's responsibility to ensure that their guest(s) do not introduce health and safety risks into our community. The daily health check survey can be accessed under Helpful Links on the [Coronavirus website](#) and the Residence Hall Guest Registration Form can be requested at [reslife@ucwv.edu](mailto:reslife@ucwv.edu). Completed daily health check surveys should be sent electronically to the Virtual Command Center at [COVID-19@ucwv.edu](mailto:COVID-19@ucwv.edu). Student who fail to complete the above mentioned requirements may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Food Services**

UC's three dining facilities will provide students, faculty and staff with take-away meal service and sit-down dining at adjusted seating capacity in accordance with state and local health official guidance. Seating will be arranged to provide three (3) or more feet of distance between diners. Diners should be prepared to show their LiveSafe daily health check status upon entrance or when requesting service. Hours of service may be modified to accommodate service needs and ensure proper distancing. All diners are encouraged to wash their hands prior to entry and to use hand sanitizer stationed at facility entrances and exits.

Food service workers will maintain three (3) feet of distance between themselves and diners to the extent possible. UC will be offering grab and go food options at specific campus locations. Food delivery services will be provided for those in campus isolation or quarantine.

### **Transportation Services**

UC operates select buses and vans primarily for athletics use. To the extent possible, passengers should maintain three (3) feet distancing when in vehicles. Students with medical exemptions or employees who have not been vaccinated must wear face coverings when in University vehicles. Transportation will be



provided for students who are ill and require medical care. Please direct transportation requests to [COVID-19@ucwv.edu](mailto:COVID-19@ucwv.edu).

Students may also use the free KRT (Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority) bus service. Students are encouraged to use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting buses, and wear face masks/coverings when entering, on board, and exiting vehicles. To the extent possible students should avoid contact with or sitting near the driver and other passengers.

### **Health Care Services**

Employees and students must inform UC if they are feeling ill and/or exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. They should do so through the LiveSafe app using the Daily Health Check or Report a Concern feature. Emails can also be sent to [COVID-19@ucwv.edu](mailto:COVID-19@ucwv.edu).

In the event that a health situation warrants COVID-19-related intervention, it will be referred to UC's Virtual Command Center. The Virtual Command Center will function as a point of contact for students, faculty, and staff for any COVID-19 questions, and to direct services that are needed for students that are in isolation or quarantine, including health care provider connections for testing, diagnosis, and treatment, contact tracing, and counseling services.

Employees and students are encouraged to use in-person or telehealth services if they are not feeling well or if their temperature is above 100.4°F. The University is partnering with the Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC) for COVID-19 related telemedicine, urgent care, emergency care, hospitalization, and other services. A link to CAMC's coronavirus resource page can be found in the "Resources" section of this plan. CAMC Emergency services at Memorial Hospital are less than one mile from campus at 3200 MacCorkle Ave SE, Charleston, WV 25304. A MedExpress Urgent Care facility is located three (3) miles from campus at 5430 MacCorkle Ave SE, Charleston, WV 25304, telephone 304-925-3627.

UC offers student counseling services through the Office of Student Life. Students can learn more about counseling services and make appointments by emailing [uc-counseling@ucwv.edu](mailto:uc-counseling@ucwv.edu). Employees may access the Employee Assistance Program for counseling services provided through Process Strategies by calling 304-941-1599 or by contacting the University's Human Resources Office. Additional resources for employees and students include substance use disorder services (1-844-HELP4WV), suicide prevention lines (1-800-273-8255), Veteran's crisis lines (1-800-273-8255 and Press 1 to talk to someone) and social services help like utilities, shelter and food (WV 211—just dial 211 from any phone).

### **Communication**

This plan has been communicated to all UC employees and students via email and is posted on the UC Coronavirus [website](#). Virtual Town Hall meetings for employees, and for students and families, will be held the week of June 21, 2021, one week prior to the start of the Fall 2021 semester, and two weeks after the



start of the Fall 2021 semester. Date, time, and access information for all Virtual Town Hall meetings will be distributed via email.

UC will provide regular update, reminder, and myth-rumor busting communications throughout the semester including:

- Weekly email communications to students from the Office of Student Life
- Weekly email communications to faculty from the Provost Office
- Periodic email communications to employees from the Business Office
- Periodic email communications to the UC community from the President

Signage using Centers for Disease Control and appropriate city, county, and state guidelines and materials have been posted throughout campus.

### **Emergency Operations**

UC has an Emergency Response Plan and a Pandemic Response Plan. Both have been updated and will be part of the documentation and training provided to all employees and students.

The Pandemic Response Plan includes information on the following:

- Shifting to distance learning and telework processes
- Plans for housing students who cannot leave campus
- Plans for quarantining exposed or isolating positive-tested students
- Plans for campus closure

UC maintains close ties with the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department and has emergency contact plans in place to reach them after hours and if needed to report an outbreak.

### **Partner and Third-Party Interactions**

All third parties (e.g., partners, vendors) will be informed by the responsible UC office that unvaccinated visitors are encouraged to wear face masks or coverings when indoors on campus. Cash or other paper financial transactions will be eliminated as much as practical.



## Resources

American College Health Association, [COVID-19 Resources](#)

American College Health Association, [American College Health Association Recommends COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements for All On-Campus College Students in Fall 2021](#)

Centers for Disease Control, [COVID-19](#)

Centers for Disease Control, [Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

Centers for Disease Control, [People at Increased Risk](#)

Centers for Disease Control, [Colleges, Universities, and Higher Learning](#)

Centers for Disease Control, [When You've Been Fully Vaccinated](#)

Centers for Disease Control, [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States](#)

Charleston Area Medical Center, [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Chronicle of Higher Education, [Here's a List of Colleges That Will Require Students or Employees to Be Vaccinated Against Covid-19](#)

Kanawha-Charleston Health Department, [Homepage](#)

Vaccines.gov, [Find COVID-19 Vaccines Near You](#)

West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, [West Virginia Higher Education COVID-19 Updates](#)

West Virginia Office of the Governor, [Homepage](#)

West Virginia Department of Health & Human Resources, [Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)

## Additional Information

More information can be found on the University's [Coronavirus webpage](#), including helpful links and a full list of [campus offices and resources](#).

For additional information please contact:

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