Welcome back, Golden Bears!

As we head into the spring semester, a reminder to all that despite the current conditions associated with the pandemic, WNE’s focus remains on its mission: the education and development of the campus community. **We will continue maintaining as close to normal operations as possible, while at the same time, balancing health and safety risks of our campus community.** Your support is vital to the success of both of these endeavors.

WNE’s guiding principles throughout the pandemic have been to maintain the health and safety of the entire Golden Bear community and to base our decisions on federal, state, and local guidance. As of right now, the guidance we have received indicates that the Omicron variant can be transmitted easily. However, all reports thus far have indicated that the severity of this variant are low.

The following policies have been updated to reflect the current dynamic conditions associated with the pandemic. Each approach has been carefully reviewed for its benefit to assist the campus community in achieving its mission. Modifications have been made as necessary to balance risks to the health and safety of the campus community.

**Quarantine and Isolation Policy Updates**

Consistent with recent CDC guidance, WNE will implement a [Modified Isolation and Quarantine Program](https://www1.wne.edu/coronavirus/doc/Spring-2022-COVID-Testing-Program-FINAL.pdf) for the winter term and spring semester. To help the campus community navigate these new requirements, we have created a one-page [WNE Isolation and Quarantine Requirement Checklist](https://www1.wne.edu/coronavirus/doc/Spring-2022-COVID-Testing-Program-FINAL.pdf) that guides you through each step of the process.

**Entry Testing Updates**

There have been many questions surrounding the entry testing requirements for the Spring 2022 Semester—our most profound gratitude for all your patience during this rapidly changing environment.


Here are the significant points you need to know:

**Faculty and Staff**

- All faculty and staff that have been on campus throughout the winter break can come in for entry/surveillance testing the week of January 17, 2022. Health Services' hours for testing can be found in the [Spring 2022 Testing Calendar](https://www1.wne.edu/coronavirus/doc/Spring-2022-COVID-Testing-Program-FINAL.pdf).
- Testing is walk-in, and no appointment is needed.
• **Faculty or staff arriving on campus on January 24, 2022**, ideally should have their entry testing done before being on campus and no later than 72 hours before their arrival.
  o If pre-testing is not possible, please come to surveillance testing in Health Services on Monday, January 24, 2022, or the day you return to campus.

**Law Students**
• Please follow the directions sent out by Dean Setty on Friday, January 14, 2022.

**Residential Students**
• We recognize that accessing PCR testing can be a challenge right now, and we are here to help.
• To assist in troubleshooting various situations, we've created a short one-page [Entry Testing Troubleshooting Guide](#).
• Call Health Services at 413-782-1211 or email Healthservices@wne.edu if you have questions or concerns not covered in the [Entry Testing Troubleshooting Guide](#).
• All testing must be completed before your move in date, or immediately upon arrival.

**Commuter Students**
• Commuter students are encouraged to take advantage of the testing capability at WNE Health Services to meet their entry testing requirements.
• Testing dates have been added and weekend hours are available, please review the [Spring 2022 Testing Calendar](#) for the most up to date schedule.
• No appointment is necessary.
• All testing must be completed and submitted to WNE by January 22, 2022.

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**Faculty, staff, or students with documented previous COVID-19 illness over the winter break or in the last 90 days MUST notify Health Services to make sure we have that illness on file and provide you with the proper guidance on testing requirements. COVID-19 illness within the last 90-days may cause a positive PCR test which would require you to isolate unnecessarily.**

**Mask Policy Update**
Tight-fitting 3-ply masks, double masking, or N95 or KN95 masks are strongly recommended. [Mask Policy Spring 2022](#).

The [CDC mask recommendation](#)’s indicate that single-layer cloth masks may not provide adequate protection against the Omicron variant. Avoid the use of loose-fitting knit materials, cloth masks, or single-layer items such as bandanas or neck gaiters.

**Guests in Residential Housing**
To protect our community members and mitigate the risk of COVID, Western New England
University will be temporarily limiting access to our residential facilities. Non-WNE guests will be restricted from the halls effective Monday, January 24, 2022. This restriction will remain in effect for the first four weeks of the semester. We will continue to assess case counts and level of risk and may reduce this timeframe should risk assessments indicate it is safe to do so.

Please note these restrictions do not apply to non-WNE guests who are assisting with student moves to and from campus.

**Spectators at Competitive Sporting Events**
Western New England University is excited to welcome spectators to our winter contests on campus. At this time, as we monitor COVID-19, we will be limiting capacity of our on-campus venues to 25%. Pre-registration will be required for all spectators. No spectators will be allowed into the Caprio Alumni Healthful Living Center unless pre-registered.

Team members will work with their respective head coach to register/submit their registered guests. Western New England University students, faculty, staff, and alumni can register through UTix on Mondays for weekday games and Fridays for weekend games while space is available. All spectators will be required to wear masks at all times while indoors.

Tickets will be sold at the door after proof of registration is validated. For guests unable to attend, all games will be live-streamed for remote viewing.

**Upcoming Booster Clinics**
Friday is Booster day at WNE! Upcoming booster clinics are:
- January 21, 2022: J&J Janssen Clinic
- January 28, 2022: Pfizer Clinic
- February 4, 2022: Moderna Clinic

All clinics are from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., and scheduling is easy! Use the link below to self-schedule your appointment.


Please review our Spring 2022 COVID FAQs for answers to other questions you might have.

If you have questions or concerns about this weekly update, contact Health Services at Healthservices@wne.edu or 413-782-1211.

Respectfully,

Basil A. Stewart
Vice President for Finance and Administration
Chair, Emergency Management Response Team (EMRT)

Kathleen M. Noone
Director, Center for Health & Wellness