

FALL 2021 GUIDELINES & COVID-19 RISK MITIGATION PLAN



Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

We are excited with plans for a full, in-person WNE experience for the fall 2021 semester. Our goal is to provide vibrant and rewarding curricular and co-curricular experiences, while continuing key strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on our campus.

COVID-19 vaccination remains the most effective way to control the pandemic and keep our community safe. Fortunately, we are anticipating a high vaccination rate across campus. Our Fall 2021 plan provides a multi-layered approach that supports WNE's vaccination Requirement to ensure a safe semester ahead for all.

It is important to become familiar with and follow campus protocol and public health recommendations on which our guidance is based.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic is fluid, we will continue to monitor public health guidance, as well as conditions on campus and the region, including immunity levels, transmission rates and breakthrough cases; and adjust our plans as needed, based on the latest local, state, and federal health and safety recommendations that impact our university.

COVID-19 VACCINATION

- Vaccination is our primary prevention strategy that protects you and your family and friends from COVID-19 and the consequences of infection.
- As noted in our **Vaccination Policy** FAQ, WNE's vaccination requirement for all faculty, staff and students is a critical aspect of achieving full, on-campus activity this fall.
- If you haven't done so already, please submit your Proof of Vaccination (in pdf or jpeg format) by August 23 to **covidvac@wne.edu** as soon as possible OR follow the exemption request process outlined on the WNE web page: **COVID-19 Exemption Request Protocol**.
- Students are subject to administrative withdrawal if not in compliance with the vaccination policy and residential students will not be issued a key.

International Students:

- Students returning from abroad who cannot secure a vaccination prior to their return to campus must notify the Office of International Students in advance to be issued a temporary waiver. They must also notify Health Services in advance by contacting **covidvac@wne.edu** or **413-782-1211**.
- Health Services will assist students obtain access to and schedule vaccination. Until such time as the vaccination process is completed, students are considered unvaccinated and must meet all unvaccinated travel and quarantine requirements outlined in this protocol.

TESTING

A responsive testing infrastructure is essential to our success in stopping the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Health Services will support three primary approaches to testing: entry, routine screening/monitoring, and diagnostic testing.

Arrival (Entry Testing)

- All unvaccinated students, faculty and staff must (1) receive an approved exemption or a partially vaccinated waiver and (2) produce a negative COVID-19 PCR test obtained no later than 72 hours of arrival/returning to campus activity.
- Vaccinated students, faculty and staff are exempt from entry testing provided they have submitted proof of their COVID-19 vaccination.
- Health Services will be available for early arrival and general move-in days to conduct entry PCR tests. However, students receiving same-day testing must quarantine in designated housing until their test results are available.
- All faculty, staff, and students must meet these COVID-19 clearance requirements to be on campus or move into residential housing. Students who do not meet the above requirements will not be permitted to move onto campus or attend in-person classes, and may be subject to administrative actions.
- Days/Location: Please refer to this **calendar** for the entry testing schedule and locations.

Screening (Surveillance) Testing

- All exempted/unvaccinated faculty, staff, and students are also expected to participate in weekly surveillance testing conducted at Health Services or to provide Health Services the result of their negative PCR test on a weekly basis.
- Fully vaccinated community members will not be required to participate in routine weekly surveillance testing at this time. However, based on levels of herd immunity achieved, changes in breakthrough infection or community transmission levels, and/or updates in local, state or CDC recommendations, pooled testing of a portion of vaccinated community members may be implemented for everyone's protection.
- Surveillance Testing Schedule:
 - Every Monday beginning August 30, 2021, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (with the exception of some Holidays). Appointments preferred but not required.
 - Or some Wednesdays by appointments only (see Testing Calendar).
- Unvaccinated individuals will receive an email from Health Services communicating their testing requirements. If faculty, staff, or students feel they are in the surveillance testing cycle in error, reach out directly to **Health Services** at **413-782-1211**.
- Compliance with required screening testing will be tracked. Supervisor/divisional leaders will make final determinations of administrative actions for faculty, staff, or students not adhering to surveillance testing requirements. Non-compliance may be subject to escalating disciplinary actions, including:
 - **First No-Show Offense**—Health Services will issue a first warning notice to the faculty, staff, or students reminding them of their responsibility in keeping the campus safe.
 - **Second No-Show Offense**—Health Services will issue a second warning, in addition to a \$50.00 fine.
 - **Third and Final No Show Offense**—Health services will issue a FINAL warning. A \$100.00 fine and notices will be sent to their respective divisional leader, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, or Human Resources.

Diagnostic Testing

- Health Services will use rapid viral screening tests to quickly identify positive cases for diagnostic purposes, which will be confirmed by a lab conducted PCR test.

Examples of diagnostic testing include:

- Testing persons with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status.
- Testing persons because of contact tracing efforts
 - Testing persons who indicate that they were exposed to someone with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19

Exit Testing

- Exit testing is available for those faculty, staff, or students who may need or want to be tested prior to returning home for the Holiday breaks.
- Appointments required, call Health Services at 413-782-1211
 - November 22 and November 23
 - Week of December 13, 2021

FACE COVERINGS

- As of August 9, 2021, face coverings are required in public indoor spaces, including classrooms and the fitness center, regardless of vaccination status, until further notice. This is a temporary additional precaution during the Delta Variant surge. Face coverings must cover one's mouth, nose, and chin. You are encouraged to refer to the full policy, which can be found at **WNE Mask Policy**.
- To facilitate/enhance communication in classrooms, instructors may opt to use a University-issued face shield with an attached droplet guard (available from their Dean's Office) so that students can see the instructor's facial expressions and lip movement. Only face shields with an attached droplet guard are permitted to be used in place of a face mask when lecturing/presenting in physical classrooms.
- In accordance with CDC guidelines, masking is always required for any visit to Health & Counseling Services.

EXPOSURE AND CONTACT TRACING

Exposure is defined as having close contact within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over 24 hours. As WNE resumes full campus activity and in-person learning, contact tracing is an effective strategy to identify and isolate cases to reduce further transmission.

- Health Services will conduct contact tracing for all COVID-19 illnesses and exposures.
- All faculty, staff, and students must contact Health Services if they are notified they have been exposed to COVID-19, are feeling ill, or are aware of at-risk behavior.
- Faculty, staff, and students are expected to answer questions posed by Health Services to the best of their ability so that contact tracing and data collection efforts can be productive and meaningful.

- Health Services will report all data as required to local health officials and partner with them in community tracing steps as warranted.
- Close contacts are only informed that they may have been exposed to a patient with the infection to protect patient privacy. They are not told the identity of the patient who may have exposed them.

Contact tracing helps protect you, your friends, and the entire Golden Bear community by:

- Letting people know they may have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Helping people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 get tested.
- Directing people to isolate if they have symptoms of COVID-19 and quarantine if they have been exposed.
- Providing contacts with education, information, and support to understand their risk. In addition to what they should do to separate themselves from others who are not exposed, contacts are given guidance on how to monitor themselves for illness, and the possibility that they could spread the infection to others even if they do not feel ill.

For more information on contact tracing, please visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/principles-contact-tracing.html

ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE CARE

Residential space has been designated for use by students who test positive for COVID-19 to provide a safe private or semiprivate space to promote a return to wellness and decrease the spread.

Isolation: The number of individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are currently living in the designated on-campus isolation housing, or at home, as required for the mandated 10-day isolation period or until recovered.

Quarantine: Individuals who have been identified as a contact of someone who has tested positive. These individuals have been tested and are currently quarantined in their on- or off-campus residence awaiting the results.

- This space will be available for both resident and commuter students at no charge. Students in this space will be assessed daily as needed by our healthcare providers.
- Students in this space will be delivered three meals per day and will be well cared for both mentally and physically.
- Health Services will be available by phone to students and employees when the office is physically closed (evening, weekends, and holidays).
- The Western New England University Facilities Management Department staff will clean and disinfect campus areas that have been visited by a person who tested positive for COVID-19, as well as isolation areas following the release of a COVID-19 patient back to the general campus.
- All individuals placed in isolation or quarantine housing may not have guests. This restriction includes any Western New England affiliated individual, excluding Health Services staff and their designees.

This table summarizes testing, quarantine or isolation requirements in case of suspected COVID-19 exposure for vaccinated or unvaccinated individuals.

| Exposure and Illness Protocol | | |
|---|---|--|
| | Vaccinated | Unvaccinated |
| Notification of Health Services | Yes | Yes |
| Asymptomatic | | |
| Testing Required | Yes, test at 3-5 days after exposure and wear a mask for 14 days in all public settings or until they receive a negative test result. | Yes, arrange with Health Services. |
| Quarantine Requirements | No | Yes—full ten days. |
| Class and Academic Accommodations | No | Yes, students will need accommodations during the period of quarantine. |
| Housing Changes | No | Yes, students will need to move into designated housing. |
| Symptomatic | | |
| Testing Required | Yes | Yes |
| Isolation Requirements | Yes, full ten days AND 24 hours with no fever and other COVID-19 symptoms are improving. | Yes, full ten days AND 24 hours with no fever and other COVID-19 symptoms are improving. |
| Class and Academic Accommodations | Yes | Yes |
| Housing Changes Note: Student’s housing will need to be assessed to determine current living situations. In some cases, students may shelter/isolate themselves in place. | Yes | Yes |

CLASS ACCOMMODATIONS

Unvaccinated students who test positive for COVID-19 or any student with active symptoms regardless of their vaccination status will work with faculty, support staff, and members of Student Accessibility Services to ensure course work can be completed.

ATHLETICS SAFETY STANDARDS

The University's Anthony S. Caprio Alumni Healthful Living Center is a facility that supports recreational sporting activity, wellness related activity and competitive sports activity.

All students, faculty, staff and guests, including prospective students, visiting teams' and independent consultants are expected follow all COVID-19 safety standards implemented at WNE, when using the facility. This includes:

- Following the WNE Mask Policy when in effect. www1.wne.edu/coronavirus/mask-policy.cfm
- Practicing good hand hygiene
- Practicing good cough etiquette
- Clean equipment after use
- Avoid close contacts when feasible
- Refrain from using the facility when ill or experiencing signs and symptoms of COVID-19

Competitive Sports

Western New England University is a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III. The University supports 20 NCAA-sponsored varsity sports, and will follow the COVID-19 guidelines outlined by the NCAA, published August 4, 2021. Exception being where the guidelines published by the Commonwealth Coast Conference (CCC) are more stringent, local guidelines prevail.

NCAA: ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/ssi/COVID/SSI_ResocializationFall2021.pdf

CCC: www.cccathletics.com

ASSESSING AND REPORTING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

All faculty, staff, and students who are symptomatic with signs and symptoms of COVID-19, no matter how mild, are expected to notify Health Services by calling 413-782-1211 so that arrangements can be made for assessment and clearance.

Faculty, staff, and students should NOT report to work, class, and other on-campus activities until being cleared by Health Services. This policy applies to all vaccinated and unvaccinated faculty, staff, and students. Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

CAMPUS VISITOR/GUEST POLICY

Western New England University is committed to maintaining a safe work and learning environment. The University maintains the following principles and guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic which every member of our community—faculty, staff, and students – is responsible for knowing.

All guests coming to campus whether it be for an event, tour, or remaining overnight, must register with the University and attest that the guest is vaccinated and/or not exhibiting any symptoms that could be related to COVID-19 and will abide by all safety standards, including wearing a mask in indoor settings.

All individuals placed in isolation or quarantine housing may not have guests. This includes any Western New England affiliated individual, excluding Health Services staff and their designees.

All community members diagnosed with COVID-19 at an off-campus health care facility, or experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, such as coughing, fever, and/or loss of taste or smell, will immediately report this information to Western New England University Health Services at 413-782-1211 and follow whatever guidelines Health Services requires, including reporting to Health Services for testing and examination.

In addition, the University will continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and may revise safety protocols as needed.

Registration & Attestation Process

Registration may be completed via Connect 2U account or www.wne.edu/community-standards

Definitions

Guest: A guest is any person who is not a student at the University.

COVID-19 Vaccination:

People are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

If you don't meet these requirements, you are NOT fully vaccinated. Keep taking all safety precautions until you are fully vaccinated.

Failure to Comply

Faculty, Staff or Students who do not adhere to the above expectations may be subject to administrative or disciplinary action.

For students only, action may include: monetary fines and/or sanctions as outlined in the Student Handbook.

PERSONAL HYGIENE, CLEANING, AND OTHER PROTECTIVE MEASURES

In addition to all of the above risk mitigation behaviors, we urge everyone to be vigilant about maintaining a high standard of personal hygiene and avoiding close contact. Everyone should wash their hands frequently and thoroughly and avoid contact with objects and surfaces that spread the virus.

Physical distancing is the practice of increasing the space between individuals and decreasing the frequency of contact to reduce the risk of spreading disease (ideally to maintain at least six feet between all individuals, even those who are asymptomatic). We encouraged keeping safe physical distancing when possible especially in those with increased risk of severe disease.

Figure 1 COVID-19 Testing Schedule



Legend: **Green**— entry testing dates, **Orange**— surveillance testing no appointment required, **Purple**— surveillance by appointment only, **Red**— University closed

DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

- Available in Health Services Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.
- Appointment required; call ahead 413-782-1211

Entry Testing (Days in GREEN)

Will be available on August 11, 18, 25, 27, 28 at the following locations and times:

- **August 11, 2021**
–Time: 8:00-10:00 a.m.
–Location: First Floor Campus Center
- **August 18, 2021**
–Time: 8:00-11:00 a.m.
–Location: First Floor Campus Center
- **August 25 and 27, 2021**
–Times: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
–Location: Sleith Hall Parking Lot
- **August 28, 2021**
–Times: 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
–Location: Sleith Hall Parking Lot

Surveillance Testing (Days in Orange)

All exempted/unvaccinated faculty, staff, and students are required to participate in the weekly surveillance testing program.

- Offered in Health Services every Monday from 8:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. (except for Monday, September 6 and Monday, October 11 due to a holiday schedule).
- Appointments preferred, but not required
–Call Health Services 413-782-1211
- EXCEPTION: Monday, September 6 and Monday, October 11 when it will move to Wednesday due to the holiday schedule.

Testing Make Up Days (Days in Purple)

- Offered in Health Services every Wednesday from 8:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.
- Appointments required
–Call Health Services at 413-782-1211

EXCEPTION: Wednesday, September 8 and Wednesday, October 13 when makeup days will be moved to Thursdays due to the University's holiday schedule. In addition, Wednesday, November 24 will be moved to Tuesday, November 23 in advance of the Thanksgiving recess.

Routine surveillance testing will be suspended effective December 10, with the last day of classes.

For the latest information, visit the WNE COVID-19 Information page at wne.edu/coronavirus.

HEALTH SERVICES

Center for Sciences and Pharmacy Room 235
1215 Wilbraham Rd. Springfield, MA 01119

Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

413-782-1211

413-519-4055 (After Hours for urgent medical concerns)

healthservices@wne.edu

wne.edu/health-services

