



January 26, 2021

Dear Members of the University Community

As the University prepares for the start of spring semester next week, we wanted to review our Royals Safe Together Plan in general and highlight for you items of the plan that have been updated to meet the latest recommendations by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH).

As you know, the [Royals Safe Together Plan](#) is available online and has the most current information. The guiding principles of the plan remain the same and include protecting the health and well-being of the entire University community and ensuring that members of our community understand their individual role and responsibility in keeping themselves and others safe and healthy. We encourage you to review the plan as the semester begins.

Student Entry Testing Requirements

- Among the updates to the plan is the requirement that all undergraduate and graduate students returning to campus for the spring semester submit a negative COVID-19 PCR test result taken within 72 hours of arrival on campus (or positive result on or after October 31, 2020) via their [Student Health Portal](#) in order to be granted access to campus. **For the safety of our community, students cannot access campus until this result is received and verified by University personnel.** Students that tested positive at the end of the fall 2020 semester on campus (on or after October 31, 2020) do not need to upload test results.

Campus Surveillance Testing and New Quarantine Procedures

- [Campus COVID-19 PCR surveillance testing](#) will begin on Feb. 8. The University will be working with a new testing partner, [CIC Health](#). Through this new provider, individual test results will be available within 48-72 hours of sample collection with users able to learn of negative results

through an online application. Anyone testing positive will be phoned individually by a medical professional from [PWNHealth](#). As in the fall semester, please watch for an email, which will identify the testing appointment for the coming week. Surveillance testing will take place Monday and Tuesday of each week from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The University will provide weekly updates about positive test results for the SARS-CoV-2 virus on campus.

- Following recommendations of the CDC, the time required for [students in quarantine](#) has changed to 10 days. Quarantine may end after day seven if the student receives a negative COVID-19 PCR test result from a test sample collected no sooner than day five after the last possible exposure, with the date of last possible exposure being day zero, provided the student is not showing any symptoms. The University will test students in quarantine using this timeline.
- The quarantine time required for employees will also change to 10 days following current CDC recommendations. The University will not provide testing to employees in quarantine.
- Employees who test positive for COVID-19, have COVID-19 related symptoms, or are exposed to another person suspected of or testing positive for COVID-19 must remain at home and contact Human Resources at hr@scranton.edu or 570-941-7767.
- [Guidelines for contact tracing](#) were updated in October based on new CDC guidance, and housing arrangements for students requiring isolation or quarantine will remain as in the fall. Employee contact tracing procedures will also mirror the fall.

The Vaccine and Vaccination

- The [Pennsylvania Department of Health website on vaccination](#) includes the most up-to-date information available on the distribution of the vaccine across the Commonwealth.
- The University has added a section to the Royals Safe Together plan that provides [vaccine information](#) that will be updated as the semester continues and more information becomes available from the CDC and the PA DOH.
- Vaccinated individuals must adhere to the University's health and safety requirements, including the requirement to participate in surveillance testing.

Updates Related Academic Affairs

- In November, the University announced changes to its [academic calendar for the spring semester](#), which begins on Monday, Feb. 1, and ends on Friday, May 21. The University will not have a spring break; however, two days with no classes are included in the schedule on Tuesday, Mar. 9, and Wednesday, Mar. 24. The University will have an Easter break from Thursday, Apr. 1, to Monday, Apr. 5.
- In the spring semester, as in the fall, [classes will be offered in a variety of formats](#) that include face-to-face instruction as well as fully remote classes. Undergraduate, graduate and graduate clinical coursework in off-campus locations will be permitted with the cooperation and permission of external partners. Internships and community-based learning activities will continue remotely. The campus, including the library, remains closed to the general public.
- Locations on campus for [zoom rooms](#) for students have also been updated. Information regarding additional spaces will be added during the semester.
- Decisions regarding commencement have not yet been finalized.
- [Cleaning and disinfecting procedures for instructional spaces](#) enacted in the fall will continue in the spring. Social distancing will continue to be required in classrooms as well as in laboratory classes.

Athletics, Campus Events and Campus Masses

- During the spring semester, [athletic competitions](#) for winter, spring and fall sports will be held following the health and safety recommendations of the [NCAA Resocialization Guidelines](#), as well as Landmark Conference Covid-19 Game Day Policies. Spectators are not allowed at competitions, but can watch [live streams of the games](#). Updates to team schedules will be posted on the [Athletics webpage](#).
- Other in-person, [indoor campus events](#) are currently prohibited, with the exception of events that are core to the University's mission, such as liturgy and admissions. As the semester progresses, we will continue to assess the possibility of holding in-person student events. In order to encourage social distancing and to preserve campus space for mission-critical functions, in-person meetings, including committee and

departmental gatherings, are strongly discouraged throughout the spring semester.

- Rev. Hebert B. Keller, S.J., Vice President for Mission and Ministry, shared information earlier today about [Masses at the University during the spring semester](#), including special Masses and distribution of ashes for Ash Wednesday on February 17 and masses for Ascension Thursday on May 13.

Ongoing Expectations for the University Community

- As in the fall semester, [students living off-campus](#), especially in the Hill Section, are expected to follow all the health and safety protocols practiced on the University campus and the government guidelines regarding COVID-19. Gatherings at off-campus residences should be limited in size during the spring semester based on the ability to maintain social distancing and masks must be worn when gatherings include individuals who do not reside in the residence.
- As in the fall semester, [health and safety recommendations](#) regarding the requirement for the use of face masks and social distancing will continue on campus. Masks will continue to be required for individuals alone in study spaces as well.
- Members of the University community who are on campus will continue to use a [daily wellness self-screening application](#) that provides an easy way for them to review symptoms by responding to a series of simple questions as recommended by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

As in the fall semester, The Royals Safe Together Plan will continue to adapt to changing circumstances.

Sincerely,

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