



The University of Vermont

UVMStrong Fall 2020

Rally Together-UVMStrong!

Framework to Return to In-Person Instruction and Operations

June 15, 2020

The UVMStrong Fall 2020 Advisory Committee's planning and deliberations are guided by three principles:

1. Protect the safety and wellbeing of all members of the UVM Community
2. Preserve the quality of the academic experience
3. Provide a high-quality student experience

Members of the UVMStrong Fall 2020 Advisory Committee are:

Gary Derr, Vice President for Operations and Public Safety, Chair

Simeon Ananou, Chief Information Officer, Team Lead - Business and Institutional Continuity

Nicci Brown, Chief Communications Officer

Claire Burlingham, University Controller, Team Lead - Business and Institutional Continuity

John Collins, Deputy General Counsel

Kirk Dombrowski, Vice President for Research, Team Lead - Research and Graduate Education

Bill Falls, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, Team Lead - Faculty and Academic Affairs

Jes Kraus, Chief Human Resource Officer

Annie Stevens, Vice Provost for Student Affairs, Team Lead - Student Experience

Al Turgeon, Chief Risk and Public Safety Officer

There are over 50 faculty, staff and students on the four working groups representing a wide cross-section of the university community. Additionally, there are numerous members of the university community serving on focus groups and subcommittees to address specific topics or issues. The committee also benefited from consultation provided by UVM's experts in medicine and public health.

In the course of its work, the committee found there is nearly universal consensus that UVM should return to in-person instruction and operations in the fall. Committee members each received numerous calls and emails offering suggestions and advice on mitigation strategies and measures to address a range of issues. This included reports and articles from a range of disciplines and professional associations. Based on what it has learned the committee can say with confidence, that while this will be challenging, UVM is up for it—***Rally Together-UVMStrong!***

The following framework and strategies will be implemented to successfully return to in-person instruction and operations.

University-Wide Framework and Strategies

1. Implement a protocol for testing and contact tracing for employees and students managed through the COVID-19 Care Center.
2. Require all employees and students to wear face coverings when outside their private workspaces or residence hall rooms, and even in these private areas when in the presence of others.
3. Continue to encourage and support remote operations for faculty and staff when feasible while assuring appropriate levels of service and operations commensurate with the needs of the University.
4. Consistent with Vermont Department of Health regulations, implement daily health screening for employees. This will incorporate use of an app being developed by UVM's Enterprise Technology Services.
5. Implement routine health screening for all students. This will incorporate use of an app being developed by UVM's Enterprise Technology Services. Utilize this information in conjunction with COVID-19 testing strategies.
6. Consistent with Vermont Department of Health regulations, require COVID-19 training for all employees.
7. Implement strategies, policies, operational procedures, and business processes to address the needs of faculty and staff with underlying health issues. This will be coordinated through the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity.
8. Implement strategies and policies to address the needs of students with underlying health issues that ensures their continued enrollment, including remote course offerings. Efforts will be coordinated through Student Accessibility Services in partnership with the Colleges and Schools.
9. Develop a UVM pledge required of all students called the Green and Golden Rule. The rule is being developed by the UVM Strong Student Experience working group with input from the Student Government Association and Graduate Student Senate, as well as faculty and staff. Employees will also be encouraged to sign the pledge.
10. Develop and publicize series of consequences and sanctions for employees and students who fail to comply with UVM requirements and Vermont Department of Health regulations.
11. Transition to remote or virtual formats for large events, especially those attracting visitors from out-of-state, such as Reunion and Alumni Weekend, and Parent and Family Weekend.

12. Create a COVID-19 Care Center centrally located and appropriately staffed as a site for all employees and students.

Academic and Faculty Affairs Framework and Strategies

1. Fall 2020 Academic Calendar: Begin fall semester as scheduled with the first day of classes on Monday, August 31. In-person instruction for the semester will end at the close of business on Tuesday, November 24. The last week of instruction (Monday, November 30 – Friday, December 4) and the final exam period (Monday, December 7 – Friday, December 11) will be remote.
2. Develop a classroom space management plan assuring the required physical distancing by doing the following:
 - a. Identify faculty preferences for mode of instruction for the fall. Require approval from chairs/deans of modes identified by faculty members. Modes must be consistent with course learning goals and pedagogy and in consideration of the goal to have as many in-person courses as possible. Modes include online, remote, mixed delivery (students attend in-person once a week and participate via live stream on the other days), and in-person.
 - b. Identify and modify as necessary non-classroom spaces for larger enrollment courses. Example spaces include Ira Allen Chapel, Mansfield Dining Room, and conference spaces at local hotels.
 - c. Move remaining in-person classes to larger spaces. Spaces will be made available by moving some courses to remote instruction.
 - d. Move all courses enrolling 150 or more students that cannot be accommodated in classrooms to remote instruction.
 - e. Provide appropriate accommodations to faculty with health-related issues, coordinated through the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity.
 - f. Assign faculty to a mixed delivery mode when it is not possible to move a course into a sufficiently large space. A mixed delivery mode will require a space with a capacity of half the course enrollment for Tuesday/Thursday courses and a third of the course enrollment for Monday/Wednesday/Friday courses.
 - g. Add time slots to the current course meeting pattern if it is not possible to reassign courses to larger classrooms for either mixed or in-person delivery.
 - h. Add streaming video and recording equipment to selected high-use classrooms for mixed delivery.
 - i. Create video streaming “pods” (no student seating) for faculty to live-stream remote lectures.
3. Support high quality on-line/remote/mixed delivery instruction.
 - a. Continue to partner with the Center for Teaching and Learning to create workshops for each mode of delivery.
 - b. Create a cadre of “classroom producers” trained on video streaming hardware to assist faculty in course delivery.
 - c. Create quiet spaces for students to participate in remote course delivery.

Research and Graduate Education Framework and Strategies

1. Develop a system of risk metrics that allows for raising and lowering research activity while avoiding the complete shutdown of research activities.
2. Produce a series of mentoring activities and guidance documents to minimize the impact of the shutdown on early-career faculty moving through the tenure and promotion process.
3. Review research administration functions and establish protocols and guidelines to build flexibility into operational procedures, particularly as they relate to remote operations.
4. Clarify the systems put in place to open and close labs during the past two months and codify them to allow for smoother internal operation.

Student Experience Framework and Strategies

1. Develop a UVM pledge required of all students called the Green and Golden Rule. The rule is being developed by the UVMStrong Student Experience working group with input from the Student Government Association and Graduate Student Senate, as well as faculty and staff. Employees will also be encouraged to sign the pledge.
2. Reduce residence hall density by identifying off-campus locations to house students.
3. Implement an extended move-in process for residential students.
4. Identify quarantine and isolation space for up to 50 students.
5. Require COVID-19 training for all students.
6. Work with Sodexo Food Services to provide flexible options for order and delivery/pick up or reservations; explore expanded locations for grab and go options. Explore with Sodexo alternative locations to supplement current dining facilities and options.

Business and Institutional Framework and Strategies

1. Conduct all on-campus meetings remotely where possible in order to reduce the need for cleaning and sanitizing. This will also allow for repurposing of meeting rooms to employee workspaces to address needs for physical distancing.
2. Acquire a rolling two-month supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) and a six-month supply of cleaning and sanitization supplies to be managed and distributed through a central warehouse.
3. Provide a “Return to In-Person” work health and safety kit to employees containing COVID-19 supplies such as hand sanitizer, facial coverings, stylus, etc.

4. Provide a “Return to In-Person” work health and safety kit to students containing COVID-19 supplies such as hand sanitizer, facial coverings, etc.
5. Provide a “Return to In-Person” technology kit for faculty with tools such as a keyboard cover, stylus and personal headset.
6. Require employees to clean and sanitize their own personal workspace, common areas, kitchenettes, break rooms, copier rooms, reception areas, etc. using UVM-issued supplies with appropriate training provided by the Health and Safety Committee.
7. Close all buildings at 10 p.m. or earlier to allow for overnight cleaning and sanitization.
8. Request third-shift custodial staff to volunteer to change to first and second shifts to help address the expected increase in the amount of cleaning and disinfection to be performed throughout the day.
9. Hire contractual custodial crew to perform third shift cleaning and disinfecting of areas and buildings that have a legitimate reason to remain open late in the evening.
10. Hire professional crews to clean and disinfect residence hall private bathrooms.
11. Implement a comprehensive classroom technology upgrade strategy to better support remote instruction.
12. Create technology-enhanced meeting spaces to reduce the need to congregate in one physical location.
13. UVM-Managed Retail Operations
 - a. Develop a health and safety plan consistent with Vermont Department of Health guidelines for retail operations.
 - b. Require UVM-operated retail food venues to provide a grab-and-go service.
 - c. Temporarily close the lounge area of Henderson’s Café.
14. Parking and Transportation
 - a. Discontinue shuttle services during the day, and only provide transportation to individuals who need accommodations.
 - b. Provide shuttle services in the evening (4 p.m. to midnight).
 - c. Maintain limited shuttle service to and from the athletic campus to accommodate UVM employees.
 - d. Install plexiglass shields on shuttle buses to protect the drivers; require all passengers to wear facial coverings.
 - e. Sanitize shuttle buses frequently.

15. Create a central receiving point for all mail, packages and goods (including UPS and FedEx). Areas with a loading dock may seek exemption from this recommendation in order to reduce the number of non-UVM individuals in buildings.
16. Travel
 - a. Suspend all university-sponsored travel (domestic and international) except for special circumstances which will undergo a rigorous review process.
 - b. Continue to require prior travel authorization for any domestic and international travel that is approved following appeal and rigorous review.
17. Establish and communicate safety guidelines that tenants, visitors, affiliates and visiting teams would be expected to follow while at UVM.

Communications Framework and Strategies

1. Schedule a series of Microsoft Teams Live meetings with key constituencies over the summer, specifically: current students and families, incoming students and families, faculty, and staff.
2. Issue a weekly newsletter to update all members of the UVM community on plans for Fall 2020.
3. Develop and implement a communications campaign designed to inform, encourage and sustain employee and student commitment to, and compliance with, health and safety guidance and regulations.

Health and Safety Framework and Strategies

1. Develop COVID-19 health and safety risk metrics and associated response strategies that can be implemented as the COVID-19 situation changes.
2. Develop a web-based employee and student COVID-19 guide to assist in their personal preparedness and response.
3. Maintain awareness of Centers for Disease Control, Vermont Department of Health, and Vermont Governor directives and recommend associated university responses.
4. Maintain awareness of COVID-19 U.S., regional (greater northeast and Canada) and Vermont situations and track and report potential impacts.