

**Q&A Faculty Teams Live – Contact Tracing, Quarantine, and Isolation; Burlington’s  
COVID-19 Regulations and Enforcement; Instruction/Technology Updates  
August 13, 2020**

**Questions about students and enforcement**

**How are Greek houses being distanced, and how are you providing for isolation and quarantines as necessary there?**

The following are the guidelines that our fraternity and sorority chapters are following, many of these are established by their own National Organizations:

- Facilities under capacity, rooms measured to meet CDC requirements to meet social distancing guidelines (one facility does have a quad in order to make a small double a single, and allow for an isolation space)
- Limited occupancy to chapter members only or only members living in the chapter house
- Common area usage limited to meet social distancing 6ft apart and masks
- Protocols in place for members with symptoms/positive test results
- Cleaning protocols for common areas and bathrooms
- Kitchen protocols for preparing meals – for those with chefs, food will be prepackaged, those without have a cleaning protocol and plan

If a student needs to be isolated or quarantined they will have the option of doing that in their own room (many have set aside isolation spaces) or work with Student Health Services to find another location in the local area.

**How do we monitor the students outside the classroom?**

The UVM Mapping Group receives weekly reports from the Burlington Police Department of Calls for Services and Violations. We review the list to identify any UVM student involved. The Code of Student Conduct holds students accountable for off-campus behavior. Depending on the severity of the violation and the student's conduct history, the Center for Student Conduct's response will range from a letter of warning to a formal conduct hearing.

**I appreciate the outreach that is happening to educate students, but the time it takes to go back and forth with students who aren't complying sounds like it could take a while...during which time they could continue their unsafe behavior and potential spreading. How do you strike a balance between empathy/working with students vs. also making sure to cut the behavior off quickly?**

The Office of Student and Community Relations acts on communications from neighbors of addresses of concern in a timely manner and we have gotten good results. For example, of the 25 addresses where tenants received letters and landlords were contacted there were only 2 with repeat incidents, there were 4 letters of apology, 3 house meetings among tenants, and 7 landlord interventions. If any addresses get City violations, that data is shared with UVM weekly and the students go through a Center for Student Conduct process.

**There has been a lot of discussion of “disciplining” students who don’t comply with behavioral expectations. How is the university going to keep Black students safe? Students, faculty, staff, and community members have called on UVM to begin defunding UVM**

**Police Services. Why hasn't the administration agreed to reduce policing on campus? Why do administrators think we need police who carry guns and tasers patrolling dorms and other parts of campus? Why do administrators believe these police are not harmful to BIPOC students?**

The university is committed to enforcing policies fairly and consistently across the diversity of identities within our community – especially those who identify as BiPOC.

We do require the support of our police services. They need to be equipped as a police department for the protection of our students, faculty and staff when criminal behavior occurs on our campus and within the surrounding area. Our UVM Campus Police are trained to serve the campus population. The Chief of Police Tim Bilodeau is aware of the importance of maintaining good relations with students and to problem solve with them without the use of force in order to avoid conflicts from escalating or spiraling out of control.

All UVM Police Officers get first responder training for sexual assault investigations, giving them appropriate and best practice strategies for getting initial information prior to investigator's extensive follow-up.

- Our police staff have trauma informed investigation training, bias training, Title IX and Clery Act Training, and de-escalation training.
- The UVM Police Staff are intimately connected with identifying persons in crisis incidents and connecting individuals with appropriate services. It is part of their daily process and culture to triage those incidents of personal and community harm.
- The UVM Police are close and daily partners with the UVM CARE team for UVM students at risk, with our Bias Incident Response Team and with our Title IX staff and UVM/BFD Rescue partners, as well as the Women's and Gender Equity Center and the UVM Counseling Center. These partnerships and internal communications are the real basis for offering and providing a caring response by our officers.

**Questions about health and safety**

**Can I require students in my in-person classes (labs) to inform me if they have tested positive or are experiencing symptoms or have violated quarantine or isolation requirements? In lab courses it is inevitable that there will be closer than 6-ft interactions over the 2-4 hour lab period, so ensuring that students are testing COVID-negative and not showing up should they test positive or not feel well is essential.**

No. You cannot require students to inform you they have tested positive, are experiencing symptoms or have violated quarantine or isolation. Students health information is protected by FERPA.

**Is "close contact" only interpreted as being closer than six feet for fifteen minutes or more? Does that meet the CDC guidelines?**

Here is the CDC definition of a close contact: “For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2

days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.”

We are closely monitoring changes to CDC and Vermont Department of Health guidelines, who are responsive to any definitive new evidence around the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

**For contact tracing, if a student tests positive in a course, it sounds like other students in the course will not be considered a "close contact" give seating is over 6' apart. Can you comment on if room ventilation and length of being in a room together is considered as part of that determination of "close contacts" who would then need to also isolate?**

We are following the CDC and Vermont Department of Health recommendations for contact tracing and neither room ventilation nor length of time in a room together greater than 6 feet apart are currently considered during contact tracing.

**Will there be an app for contact tracing?**

No. We investigated several different contact tracing apps and ultimately decided to not use one. Contact tracing apps are meant to augment manual contact tracing and participation in this app would be voluntary. With the launching of numerous new apps this semester and the widespread concern over privacy issues related to the contact tracing apps, it was felt adding a contact tracing app would not result in much benefit.

**If a student in an in-person course tests positive, will the course immediately move online so that the students can self-isolate?**

No. Isolation is only for individuals who have tested positive. The results of contact tracing will determine whether class members need to quarantine. Only those individuals who have been within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes during their infectious period will be asked to quarantine.

**Will faculty be informed if a student in their in-person or mixed class fails to quarantine, tests positive, or has a violation of mask or distancing guidelines?**

Consistent with our current disciplinary policy, faculty will not be notified of disciplinary actions. Faculty will be notified of positive tests if the contact tracing results indicate close contact with the student who tested positive.

**Will there be contact tracing when faculty or staff gets sick?**

If a faculty or staff member contracts COVID-19, the Vermont Department of Health will engage in contact tracing in all cases of a positive COVID-19 test result.

### **Questions about instruction**

**I'm scheduled to teach "in-person". If a student in my class tests positive, and hence quarantined, how would content be delivered to them?**

Remember, if a student tests positive they are in isolation for 10 days, not quarantine. We recommend that you offer flexibility for these instances where possible, and emphasize that the student should contact you to make arrangements to discuss missed work. Students, especially those who are asymptomatic in quarantine, should be expected to continue their academic work.

**Will there be guidelines for what happens when faculty becomes too sick to teach?**

Colleges/schools should have plans in place to support instructional continuity in the event of medical issues that arise during any semester. As part of our preparations for the Fall 2020 semester, the University and United Academics are discussing the impact on faculty from University decisions.

**If classes meet outside (and at a 6' distance), can students remove masks?**

No. Per the Green and Gold Promise, students must wear masks in public spaces even if 6-foot distancing is possible.

**When the weather permits, can we take our class outside to meet if we follow 6-ft guidelines with masks?**

Guidelines for outdoor instruction are in development.

**When will new syllabus templates be available?**

The new syllabus template is available [here](#) on the CTL website.

**Questions about LiveSafe**

**Can you talk a bit about LiveSafe? Do faculty do it too?**

The LiveSafe app was created as a result of the Virginia Tech shootings with the belief that if people had an easier avenue to share concerns, tragedies like that could have been prevented. The app puts safety information and resources including but not limited to mental health, the student CARE form, sexual assault and discrimination all into one location. Many campuses have moved to or are moving towards a more modern safety resource such as LiveSafe. Our student body has been requesting this app to enhance safety across campus. Our blue light system is 20+ years old, only has fixed points and is not always reliable. The app includes numerous other benefits such as the SafeWalk feature. We encourage all UVM affiliates to download the app and review it to see the resources available within it. The employee version of the app includes safety resources specific to employees.

**I am concerned that the LiveSafe app could be used as a "snitch vector", with the option for students to inform on each other (or students on faculty or faculty on colleagues). Is this a component of what this app will be offering/allowing? If so, it troubles me greatly that we would all have to be constantly aware that we are being "watched", and be in fear of being reported/photographed and outed for scratching your face inside a mask or something like that. Is there a component of the LiveSafe app that allows for this? I have not gotten a straight answer.**

While it is possible to use LiveSafe to report COVID violations, that is not its intended purpose. LiveSafe will be in use long after the pandemic has subsided, and we don't want the campus community to associate it with COVID. LiveSafe's purpose is to put safety information and resources in one easily accessible area and to direct users to the appropriate resource to create a safer campus. We have been mindful about the language we use in the app to not promote profiling. Our responders are trained to ask the right questions to understand if the concern is one that needs follow-up or not. Smartphones already have the capability to take pictures and videos.

The LiveSafe app has these similar capabilities and allows a user to text or report anonymously. While we recognize some people may not use it how it is intended, the safety benefits the app will bring to the campus outweigh this, and our responders are trained on how to handle reports (such as someone scratching their face inside a mask).

### **Questions about instructional technology**

**As an additional clarification, most classes should use Meetings instead of Live Events. Meetings can have up to 300 participants right now, and that will grow to 1,000 in the next few weeks. (When teaching a large class remotely (100+ students), should we be creating a Teams Meeting or a Teams Live Event for each live class session? Can ETS provide a Knowledge Base listing that describes the differences between these options and when to use each one?)**

Most classes should use Meetings instead of Live Events. Live Events are meant for webinar style events with less video/audio interaction between presenter and attendees. Meetings are fully interactive events more like a classroom.

**I'm not clear about the "integration between Bb and Teams." To me, it seems that Teams is being populated with our class lists --which is awesome--but that does not seem to speak to a specific integration with Bb, only with Banner. I wonder if this could be clarified?**

Teams are being created for every class in Blackboard, and membership in those Teams is being automatically maintained to mirror Blackboard enrollment. Courses that are merged in Blackboard will have both a merged and non-merged Team created, so faculty can decide which Team would better meet their needs. So, in addition to Banner information, Blackboard information such as those merged courses and information about TAs is incorporated into the Teams that are created.

**It is wonderful that MSTeams is being updated with new features, but once the semester starts, I am most concerned about the stability and reliability of MSTeams if it is to be used as a mission-critical application for course delivery this fall. For example: the MSTeams app started crashing on iOS devices yesterday - this would be catastrophic during the semester for those of us relying on multiple screens or pen-based screens for our teaching.**

Microsoft Teams is an enterprise level collaboration platform. We have an enterprise support agreement with Microsoft to escalate critical support cases. The problem with iOS devices last week appears to be partially linked to the large number of classes that we synced from Blackboard to Teams, and the fact that those Teams were not enabled by default. This problem should have been resolved over the weekend. Providing a reliable platform is critical for all of us, and you'll have the full support of ETS working to provide the best possible experience with Teams.

**I've lots of questions about the Blackboard-Teams integration (sounds great!) What's the most-efficient way to pose such questions: to CTL, to (in my case) CAS IT support, Tech Team?**

Many of your questions may be answered in the IT Knowledgebase (<https://www.uvm.edu/it/kb>) and that would be a good place to start. If you don't find an answer there, or on the CTL website

(<https://www.uvm.edu/ctl>) , direct your questions to the Team Team ([techteam@uvm.edu](mailto:techteam@uvm.edu)) and they will help you make the connections you need.

**Will the classroom tours of the new technology include tours of the pods for those of us teaching in REMT modality?**

Yes, the classroom tours include visits to a pod as well as to classrooms used for in-person instruction. The technology available in a pod is the same as that available in many of the classrooms.

**Questions about testing**

**For the faculty testing, will faculty have choice of when during the week to get tested?**

Routine testing will be conducted in the Davis Student Center on the lower level in the Burack Game Room. The hours of testing will be Monday to Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Employees will schedule their own appointment using the CoVerified application which is also available in a web version. Information on the CoVerified app and how to download and install it will be available shortly. You should plan on 30 minutes for testing.

**How is quarantine and testing prior to arrival at UVM being tracked, recorded, and enforced?**

Pre-arrival quarantining that takes place off campus is not tracked. Consistent with the State of Vermont Department of Health guidelines, individuals are responsible for identifying and complying with the quarantine requirements that apply to them. The results of pre-arrival Vault tests will be sent to UVM's Student Health Services.

**In a population with a low prevalence there will be false positive tests who will go to isolation; will students in isolation be re-tested and at what frequency?**

If the student does not have symptoms, they need to isolate for 10 days from the date the test was collected. If the student is symptomatic, they need to isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the day their symptoms start and need to have an improvement in symptoms and be fever-free of any fever-reducing medication for 24 hours. This may change as times are adjusted based on symptoms. Consistent with CDC and VDH guidance they will not be retested for 90 days.

**What COVID\_19 test are you using? Antigen, PCR, etc.? Because of the false negatives and reliability of the PCR testing, how do you handle the false negatives?**

Both the pre-arrival and on campus testing are PCR tests. The pre-arrival test (a RT-qPCR test) is very sensitive for the presence of SARS-CoV-2, with 98% of tests providing either a positive or a negative result, and only 2% of tests providing an inconclusive result. The test can detect fewer than 10 copies of viral genes per milliliter of saliva, and can detect the presence of virus in the saliva within 2 days of infection and up to 28 days after infection. Across all known gene sequences of SARS-CoV-2, the test detects the ones in the genes of interest ~100% of the time, making it highly sensitive and specific for those genes.

Currently, the false positive and false negative rates for this specific test cannot be calculated, because the lab and Vault do not receive data on what happens to patients after they receive a test. We do not know if patients with a negative test go on to develop symptoms and

subsequently receive a positive test result (false negative) or if an uninfected patient with a positive result then goes on to have another test that's negative (false positive). However, emerging data about false negative rates of saliva-based COVID tests are showing that the false negative rate for saliva-based tests may be closer to 10%, which is significantly lower than those of nasopharyngeal swab-based tests, which are in the 25-35% range.

**Why is UVM asking everyone to come into the Davis Center building for routine testing? Why not use tents outside to help prevent the Davis Center becoming a transmission hub? Direct observation can be done outside.**

The system for asymptomatic testing meets all of the State of Vermont health and safety requirements.

### **Other questions**

**What are you assuming about air circulation in the classrooms -- given that I'm going to be in a classroom back to back with students coming and going.**

Like many college campuses, UVM buildings have different means of ventilation, generally based on the era in which they were built. Some older UVM buildings utilize air infiltration and open windows for air ventilation, while newer buildings generally have state-of-the-art HVAC systems. Physical Plant staff will make every reasonable effort to ensure that all UVM building ventilation systems are appropriately maintained and working at maximum efficiency as designed.

The University is using a layered approach to reduce risk, including mandatory use of face coverings in the classrooms, 6 foot distancing in classrooms, as well as ensuring HVAC systems are working correctly and opening windows where appropriate.

**How are you addressing recent research that 6' apart with masks is not enough indoors for the duration of a class?**

We are observing all CDC and Vermont Department of Health recommendations and guidelines.

**Why is UVM asking all faculty and staff to come to the Davis Center to pick up their issued masks? Why not mail them to faculty and staff mailboxes through campus mail to reduce risk of transmission?**

The system for mask distribution meets all of the State of Vermont health and safety requirements.

**Is there a plan in the works for what the criteria or threshold will be to continue to have students here at UVM vs continue remotely?**

The UVMStrong group will monitor a number of variables and provide guidance on what activities are permitted under what conditions. There is no single variable that will determine a change in campus operations.

**Why did UVM not make an action plan to address Mayor Weinberger's concerns, rather than sending a reply saying that we're doing a good job already?**

The University has a re-opening plan that exceeds the guidelines set out by Governor Scott for Institutions of Higher Education. You can access the plan here: <https://www.uvm.edu/newsstories/news/uvm-safe-and-healthy-return-campus-plan>. Information demonstrating the implementation of the plan can be found throughout the [Fall 2020 Return to Campus website](#).

**Why is the UVM covid 19 response effort so centered on PR and communication and a top-down approach? Why isn't there more of a bottom up approach with wider deliberative participation of a larger variety of public health, medical, and teaching professionals?**

The university's COVID-19 response has been developed by the UVMStrong Advisory Committee established last April, and four Working Groups comprised of more than 50 faculty, staff, and students, including members of the Faculty Senate Executive Council. Communication is essential to a successful response.

**I would like to know why the cases counter on UVM's cover page is updated only weekly. My question stems from the fact that UVM is not following the latest testing recommendations regarding frequency, meaning testing students every two days. So disclosing the number of cases only weekly is disingenuous towards the community, because they would not be able to respond to a sudden increase and make decisions to keep themselves and their families safe. Could this counter be updated daily? Until yesterday, there was only 1 case, today there are 6.**

UVM has the most aggressive testing in the state, and one of the most aggressive testing protocols in the entire country. Recommendations on testing frequency and reporting recommendations vary. We are in regular contact with the Vermont Department of Health and they have expressed a desire for all Vermont colleges to report numbers over the same frequency. To support this effort we are currently reporting weekly and will review this as the semester progresses.