

**From:** LCOM Office of the Dean <[COMOfficeOfTheDean@med.uvm.edu](mailto:COMOfficeOfTheDean@med.uvm.edu)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 23, 2020 8:36 AM  
**To:** Gilwee, Vicki M <[vicki.gilwee@med.uvm.edu](mailto:vicki.gilwee@med.uvm.edu)>  
**Subject:** On Behalf of Deans Page and Jensen and Mr. Gagnon - COVID-19 Update to LCOM Community

Dear LCOM Colleagues:

We are disseminating the attached communication again this morning, because we first sent it out this past Friday afternoon and we want to be certain that everyone receives it. The evolving COVID-19 pandemic necessitates that we get this information to you at this time. We seek to address and synthesize the University's latest guidance on campus operations during the months of December and January. We also provide some very specific guidance for the coming week.

The information provided is relevant to the entire LCOM community including students/trainees, postdocs, staff and faculty. Note that the attached communication addresses a **variety of important administration, education and research topics**.

We are shifting to **Level 4 research restrictions**. **This transition must be completed by Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> at 5PM. Please note that undergraduates will therefore not be allowed to return to LCOM facilities, including laboratories, after 5PM, November 24<sup>th</sup>.** This restriction is anticipated to likely continue for the duration of the December and January break period. Please see the attached communication for additional restrictions and necessary details. Approved activities for Level 4 can be reviewed [here](#). Information on the current activity level, activity level rationale and context around the decision process can viewed [here](#).

Thank you for all that you are doing to support the health and safety of our community.

Richard L. Page, M.D.  
Dean

Gordon L. Jensen, M.D., Ph.D.  
Senior Associate Dean for Research

Eric Gagnon, M.Ed., M.S.S.  
Director of Facilities Administration and Projects

November 20, 2020

Dear LCOM Community Members,

We write to address and synthesize the university's latest guidance on campus operations during the months of December and January. We also have some very specific guidance for the coming week.

While a majority of the campus will shift to a remote status during this extended break between the fall and spring semesters, the LCOM will remain open to **reduced** in-person operations. We strongly encourage LCOM programs to reduce on-campus activities to minimal levels that permit the continuity of operations as summarized below.

**ADMINISTRATION:** On-campus personnel staffing should remain at the minimal level required to maintain the continuity of operations. We strongly encourage programs to function remotely during this period to reduce the number of employees on campus. Employee accountability will continue to be monitored via the university's Health Check-In [site](#).

#### **EDUCATION:**

##### *Non-Medical Students*

On-campus coursework will continue through November 24, 2020 and transition to remote learning through December 11, 2020. Effective at 5PM on November 24<sup>th</sup>, under the safety measures of [Research Activity Level 4](#), **undergraduate research activities will no longer be authorized**. Undergraduate student swipe access to the MEDPLEX will also cease at this time. We do not anticipate the Research Activity Level will be downgraded in the near term. However, we will continue to collect Student Access Request forms from faculty or staff sponsors in the event Research Activity Levels are downgraded at a future date. Dr. Chris Berger, Associate Dean for Undergraduate and Graduate Student Education & Postdoctoral Training, has provided detailed instructions on this process to all existing LCOM faculty research mentors.

##### *Medical Students*

- First and second year (foundations level) coursework will transition to remote learning on November 23, 2020 and continue through December 18, 2020. At this time, we intend to resume on-campus coursework for the spring semester on January 19, 2021
- Third year (clerkship level) on-campus coursework will continue through December 18, 2020 and resume January 4, 2021.
- Fourth year (advanced integration level) on-campus coursework will continue through December 25, 2020 and resume January 4, 2021.

**RESEARCH:** At 5PM on Tuesday, November 24, the university will move to Research Activity Level 4 (orange). This represents a more restrictive level of research activity, and applies to all UVM research spaces/facilities and activities. Approved activities can

be reviewed [here](#). Information on the current activity level, activity level rationale and context around the decision process can viewed [here](#).

**Key level 4 guideline implications:**

- No in-person meetings are allowed
- **Undergraduate research activities are not permitted and access to the MEDPLEX ceases.**
- Dry research activities must transition to remote/off-campus unless an exceptional condition exists.
- Clinical research restrictions following UVMHC information systems issues are still in place. The only clinical trials that are allowed at this time are essential treatment trials. In clinical setting, PPE protocols must align with institutional requirements; Socially distant, non-contact in-person can continue; no more than one researcher & one participant per interaction/room; where remote data collection is possible, it should be used. Restrictions on clinical research activities may be extended or resumed at any point based upon progression of the COVID-19 pandemic and related UVM, UVMHN, and Vermont Department of Health guidelines. Questions may be directed to Kim Luebbers, Assistant Dean for Clinical Research Administration and Gordon Jensen, Senior Associate Dean for Research and Director of Research for the UVMN.

Pandemic conditions are evolving rapidly. Our team will be meeting several times each week to consider additional changes/restrictions on research activities. Please continue to monitor these announcements and begin to plan, where appropriate, for the likelihood of more restrictive conditions in the future.

**Reminders:**

Simple, evidence-based principles for public health remain in place and can control this pandemic. These are especially important as you plan for the holidays:

**Six-Foot Spaces** - Are people staying at least 6 feet away from each other?

**Masks on Faces** – Are people wearing face masks when they cannot keep a 6-foot distance?

**Uncrowded Places** – Is there enough space to spread out? Is it outside or is there good airflow (open windows or doors)?

For up-to-date information and guidance, the Vermont Department of Health has further improved its [dashboard](#) and [weekly summaries](#) that cover many current topics.

If you haven't gotten your flu shot yet, it's not too late! See the [Vaccine Finder](#) if you still need one.

Success for our campus community is based on a strategy that provides for weekly PCR tests for asymptomatic individuals. This is mandatory for all students (including Larner medical and graduate students residing in the area) and optional for all faculty

and staff. I strongly encourage all faculty and staff on campus to take advantage of this ongoing opportunity. We do this weekly: it takes under five minutes and is painless. You can sign up through the [CoVerified](#) program or app.