

**Q&A Faculty Teams Live – Opening, Academic, and Research Updates and Reminders  
January 21, 2021**

**Questions about Health and Safety**

**A recent article in Inside Higher Education referenced a connection between in-person instruction with increased virus load in communities. Is there any conversation about starting the semester online so as to limit spread from incoming students?**

The university's plan to open the spring semester with four instructional modalities remains unchanged. We have confidence in our health and safety protocols and will respond as necessary if the situation changes. Many universities across the country did not establish the same rigorous protocols that UVM did during the fall semester, which may have contributed to the findings referenced in the article.

**How does Governor's Scott multi-household gathering limitations affect students getting together on campus? Does the two person limit in the limitation apply to them?**

Consistent with the [guidance](#) from the state of Vermont, UVM has defined a household as one residence hall room, or in suite-style residential halls one residential suite, one apartment, or one single-family house.

**We're hearing frequently not to travel, avoid social gatherings, and wear masks. Yet our basketball and hockey teams are traveling out of state without quarantine, playing in close contact, and with basketball, no masks are required when in play. How is this consistent with the message we are being told as faculty and staff?**

The health and safety plan developed to support the limited resumption of athletics was developed in collaboration with medical and state officials. The student athletes and athletics staff are under more strict health and safety protocols than the rest of the campus community.

**Is there data on the use of the heated tents around campus? Is use monitored and what are the allowed hours of use?**

Use is not monitored and there is no mechanism in place to measure their use. They will be available 8am-10pm daily. When reserved for event programming, the information will be posted outside the tent the day of to let users know of the change to times.

**How many air changes per hour occur in the tents?**

The heaters are pushing 100% outside air into the tent at all times. The air is always being forced out through the tent openings.

**Is there any update on vaccinations? Will vaccination be coordinated for faculty and staff through UVM?**

UVM is in touch with the Vermont Department of Health regarding the vaccine. At this time, vaccinations will be handled by UVMMC and the Vermont Department of Health and not through UVM.

**Can you say anything about planning for potential temporary "shelter in place" pivots if there is a mandate from the governor to close?**

The university has developed a comprehensive health and safety strategy and there are a series of actions UVM can take before a return to remote operations would be necessary. While we are not anticipating the need to pivot, contingency planning is critical to ensuring the health and safety of our community and the continuity of instruction.

### **Questions about Testing and Results**

**Has testing been expanded to at-home students who are residing locally?**

Yes, off-campus undergraduate testing requirements have been expanded. You can find the most current information on these requirements [here](#) under "Who Needs to Test?"

**Will you be reporting cases daily?**

Consistent with guidance from the state of Vermont, UVM reports cases weekly. Reporting results daily is difficult since results can arrive within an 18- to 48-hour window.

### **Questions about Research**

Covid-19 guidelines for research can be found [here](#).

**I have an active NSF training grant that involves taking students for lab research experiences in Japan over the summer. How should I proceed?**

International travel remains subject to a range of requirements from the US Government and other national governments. Vaccine progress and overall risk COVID-19 levels also are likely to influence accessibility of the campus to from outside the US over the next 6-12 months. This is likely true for US researchers and faculty seeking access to non-US institutions as well. Given the fluidity of the situation, please contact the OVPR office well in advance of any possible research related travel outside the US, either for yourself, your students, or your guests. OVPR will work closely with the Provost's Office to ensure that UVM and US/non-US regulations are addressed and help determine as far in advance as possible whether such travel will be allowed.

### **Questions about Academics, Instruction, and Instructional Technology**

**Will the study spaces be silent like in the library or will students be able to speak in electronic platforms like Teams and Zoom in the study spaces?**

In response to student feedback, students will be able to participate in remote classes and speak quietly while they are in the spaces. All students will be asked to use headphones in the study spaces to help reduce the overall noise level.

**Can UVM license the assignments and grade apps within Teams for faculty use?**

At this time, the University does not have these particular Teams tools available in order to avoid overlap in similar platform functionality between Teams and Blackboard. While some faculty may prefer one platform over another, avoiding these kinds of overlaps creates a more consistent learning experience for students and helps reduce “platform fatigue.”

**What should I do if a CTL event is full?**

Reach out to CTL if one of their events is full. They may be able to increase capacity or schedule another session.

**Other Questions**

**Are there any plans to honor our graduating students other than videos? Perhaps social-distancing events in late May?**

We are considering various options for Commencement 2021, but at this time it is too early to discuss or confirm any plans.

**Is there data on how many students will have at home status?**

The counts on graduate and non-degree students are not yet complete. Approximately 13% of our undergraduate students have elected the at-home option as of 1.21.21.