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Spring Semester Update - Faculty/Staff, January 20, 2021

University of Northern Iowa

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University of Northern Iowa

Vaccine Update

Spring Semester Update - Faculty/Staff

Dear UNI staff members,

Thank you for all you do to provide a safe and effective learning environment for our campus community. This message contains important information on the spring semester, including crucial steps we all need to take to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and possible variants as we return to classes. Our actions together will help keep our learning and living environments safe.

Testing

UNI is continuing to follow [guidance](#) from the Iowa Department of Public Health to test symptomatic individuals or those who have been exposed to COVID-19. If you are having symptoms of COVID-19, or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, call the Student Health Clinic COVID-19 hotline at 319-273-2100 between 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday to talk to a nurse to be assessed for a test. Individuals seeking a test can also utilize the [Test Iowa](#) location on campus, which offers a broader set of criteria to qualify for a test, or their private health care provider.

There are plenty of tests and appointments available at the Student Health Clinic and [UNI Test Iowa](#).

Face Coverings, Physical Distancing, Hand Washing

We must remain vigilant in order to protect each other and our campus community. All employees who are able will continue to be required to wear face coverings while in campus buildings. Face coverings are also required in outdoor settings when physical distancing of six feet or more cannot be maintained. Face coverings are not required while: (1) actively eating or drinking and six feet physical distancing is maintained; or (2) alone in a private office. Employees who require an accommodation should contact [Human Resources](#) regarding health issues, or their supervisor if work conditions limit the use of a mask.

In December, [all employees were provided up to five free face coverings](#). These items are still available for employee pickup at the UNI Bookstore. A UNI ID must be provided at the time of pickup.

Physical distancing is also required even when wearing face coverings. This protects both yourself and the people around you. UNI has been regularly assessing workspaces to help individuals maintain physical distancing and physically separating employees from each other and from students and guests, when possible.

Don't forget to frequently [wash your hands](#). Hand sanitizer stations have been placed around campus, including an additional 200 stations placed during the winter operations period.

Why is the Panther Health Survey important?

This semester we're continuing to ask everyone to complete the [Panther Health survey](#) every day they are coming to campus. Remember the [Panther Health survey](#) isn't just for reporting your symptoms or COVID-19 test results. By completing it each day, you will receive tailored guidance based on your individual responses, can be connected to relevant campus support services, and will be supporting on campus contact tracing and disinfection efforts.

Stay home if you're sick. Seriously, stay home and call the Student Health Clinic COVID-19 hotline at 319-273-2100 between 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday to get tested or visit [UNI Test Iowa](#).

Vaccine

The Student Health Clinic is ready and prepared to distribute the vaccine based on the guidance from the Iowa Department of Public Health as supplies become available for students, faculty and staff. UNI is beginning to administer the vaccine within Phase 1A for initial supplies of COVID-19 Vaccine. [Phase 1B](#) vaccines may be administered next as Winter progresses. Future communications regarding all phases will be sent to you as information is available.

Academic Calendar

UNI modified the spring 2021 calendar to minimize the risks of COVID-19 and ensure we could safely hold in-person classes. This included replacing spring break with an extended winter break. This modified calendar, along with other health and safety enhancements will enable us to successfully start the spring semester with the majority of our classes meeting on campus.

In-Person Classes

For the spring semester, we currently plan to continue with primarily face-to-face instruction. Students have consistently asked for in-person classes and UNI is unique among state schools in being able to safely offer this learning experience. The current breakdown for Spring 2021 classes is as follows:

- 72% In-person
- 8% Hybrid
- 18% Online semester based
- 2% Online or guided independent study

Safeguarding Our Mental Health

UNI services are available for faculty and staff dealing with **stress, mental health, and grief**. The CDC also offers **useful tips**.

If you have a question, please visit forwardtogether.uni.edu or email it to **forwardtogether@uni.edu**. Thanks for all that you do to keep yourself, your family and the Panther community safe.

Stay Well,

John Vallentine, Associate Provost for Faculty
Joseph Rayzor, Director of Risk Management, Environmental Health and Safety