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Welcome Back Panthers, January 26, 2021

University of Northern Iowa

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Welcome Back Panthers

Dear Panther Community,

We're glad you are back! As we begin the spring semester, please remember the importance of wearing masks, remaining physically distanced, getting tested as needed, and filling out the Panther Health survey. Our combined efforts in following these public health guidelines offer the best chance for another successful on-campus semester. It's vital these guidelines are followed off-campus, too. For those who have not picked up their five free masks, they are still available at the UNI Bookstore by showing your UNI ID.

Like last semester, campus information about COVID-19 is regularly posted to UNI's [Forward Together site](#), which also includes a [public dashboard](#) that is updated weekly. A [steering committee](#) helping oversee UNI's response to the pandemic distributes these campus email updates twice weekly

Vaccine Updates

Black Hawk County - which will oversee and administer COVID-19 vaccines for the county, including those given at UNI - [has begun providing updates](#) on how many individuals have received the vaccine. So far, about 2,000 people have been fully vaccinated (received both doses) in a county of about 131,000 people. Even as more people receive vaccines - Iowa is expected to begin vaccinating a broader group that includes those aged 65 and up starting next week. According to the Blackhawk County Health Department, collaborations are occurring "with MercyOne, UnityPoint, People's Community Clinic, and independent health care providers to begin the process of offering community members 65 and older appointments for the COVID-19 vaccine. Initial appointments will be scheduled on a very limited basis and specific scheduling instructions will be released in the coming days. Appointments will not be available by calling individual providers or on a walk-in basis."

As supplies become available the Student Health Clinic will distribute the vaccine to students, faculty and staff based on the guidance from the Iowa Department of Public Health. Future communications will be sent to you as information is available. The Student Health Clinic is ready and prepared to distribute the vaccine once it is available.

Even after being vaccinated, it's important that we all continue to wear masks, wash our hands and remain physically distanced. It's currently unknown whether those who have been vaccinated can still spread the virus.

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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