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COVID-19 Student Communication, August 29, 2022

University of Northern Iowa

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Welcome to the fall semester!

We're delighted that you're here, excited for the possibilities this academic year holds and hopeful that you'll feel like home here on our beautiful campus. All of us are here to help you succeed. **We want to take a quick moment in this email to provide you with helpful information on how to stay healthy and focus on your mental well-being.**

If you are experiencing COVID-like symptoms you can schedule a rapid test with the [Student Health Clinic](#) by calling the COVID-19 hotline (319) 273-2100. The SHC continues to provide vaccine clinics, testing and appointments for students and will file a claim with your health insurance for the service. Additionally, free saliva test kits are available for students, faculty and staff in the lobby of the SHC. You will receive an email notification approximately 48-72 hours after dropping off your saliva test kit.

COVID-related protocol for student absence will differ in the coming academic year from the previous two years. Specifically, the Panther Health Survey was discontinued at the end of the spring semester and the Office of the Dean of Students no longer sends letters regarding students who have experienced COVID-related illness or exposure. The Student Health Clinic encourages students to make mature, informed decisions about their course attendance. When a student needs to consider missing an individual class or day of classes because they are too sick to attend, the student should consider their absence in alignment with attendance expectations outlined in their course syllabus. Frequently faculty have expectations for attendance and communication about missed coursework in their syllabus. In these circumstances the student should take the lead in communicating directly with their faculty member.

Students can take advantage of Wellness Coaching through Student Wellness Services. This is a confidential service available to all UNI students, covered by your student fees. The program provides students with opportunities to explore personal character strengths and apply them to strategic wellness goals. Sign up online for your [free sessions](#).

Students can focus on their mental well-being with the services in the [Counseling Center](#). They offer a variety of [therapy groups](#). Groups take place in the Student Health Center, on the second floor in the Counseling Center's group room. Please call 319-273-2676 to sign up asking to speak with the group facilitator for the group that interests you. The Counseling Center also offers short-term individual counseling. You and your Counselor will discuss the actual number of sessions necessary to address your concerns. We also have [Let's Talk](#) at a variety of locations on campus. This provides student's a confidential space for support and problem solving with a trained

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graduate student. The service is **free** for all UNI students. The service is on a first-come, first-serve walk-in basis. Please note this is not intended to be a crisis service. If you or someone you know is in crisis, please go to the UNI Counseling Center or call (319) 273-2676 for crisis support.

If you are interested in learning more about how to help create a culture of care at the University of Northern Iowa consider taking mental health training. VAR was created by [Active Minds](#), a student organization, to provide steps that everyone can take in helping other people deal with everyday struggles. Learn how to listen and respond to others in a helpful way. To register for this training and to see many more go to the Counseling Center's [training page](#).

Let's stay healthy and safe while having fun this year. Go Panthers!

Dr. Heather Harbach, Vice President for Student Life

Shelley O'Connell, Executive Director Student Health and Well-being