Together, we are UB:

Guidelines for protecting the health and safety of the university community

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The University at Buffalo is committed to protecting the health and safety of the UB community while remaining focused on our academic, research and community service mission. Ensuring the safety of the entire university community is paramount as UB responds to the COVID-19 pandemic and implements plans for a safe return to campus.

PRECAUTIONARY QUARANTINES

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“TOGETHER, WE ARE UB” PLEDGE

UB HEALTH GUIDELINES COMMITTEE
The following guidelines are being implemented across the university to help protect students, faculty and staff from spread of the new coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). Our guidelines are based on the most recent scientific research on effective methods for preventing the spread of COVID-19. They were informed by the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New York State Department of Health and SUNY, as well as UB experts in infectious disease, laboratory medicine and public health.

Every element of this plan was developed with the goal of providing the safest environment possible for all members of the university community. Equally important is the role that each and every member of our campus plays in keeping one another safe. Described within these guidelines are simple but very effective measures that are critically important in mitigating virus transmission. These include wearing a face covering, frequent handwashing, adequate physical distancing and participation in daily health screenings. Your commitment to these interventions when on UB’s campuses and in the local community is essential and fundamental to a safe campus reopening.
To reduce the risk of virus transmission, and in accordance with SUNY guidelines, a precautionary seven-day quarantine at their own residence is highly recommended for all UB students, faculty and staff who return to or come to campus in August (or thereafter) to start the academic year.

- Upon return to campus, it is important and necessary that all individuals adhere to all UB health guidelines, which include the use of a face covering at all times, appropriate physical distancing and frequent handwashing.

In coordination with New York State officials, the university will follow guidance on mandatory 14-day quarantines when a person travels to the university from a region or country experiencing heightened prevalence of COVID-19. Students, faculty, staff and visitors arriving in New York State from designated states that have significant community spread of COVID-19 will be required to quarantine for 14 days before coming onto campus. This requirement does not apply to any individual passing through designated states for a limited duration (i.e., less than 24 hours) through the course of travel. Additional information for UB employees is available on the Administrative Services Gateway.
Face Coverings and Physical (Social) Distancing

The use of face coverings (preferably a multilayered cloth covering or a surgical mask) is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19, according to the most recent scientific evidence gathered by the CDC. To protect their own health and that of their classmates, colleagues, friends and families, members of the UB community must commit themselves to wearing a face covering at all times according to the following guidelines.

When inside all UB buildings, classrooms, labs and facilities, all UB students, faculty, staff and visitors are required to wear a face covering at all times.

- This guideline should not be construed to mean that face coverings must be worn while a person is inside their own residence hall room alone or with a roommate, alone in a fully enclosed private office or within a private vehicle.

- Occupants of all on-campus dining halls, dining areas and dining establishments must wear face masks until seated at least 6 feet apart from any other individual, and then may remove their masks by necessity when actively eating or drinking. However, mask usage is strongly encouraged inside the dining area when individuals are not actively eating and drinking. Masks must be worn when entering and exiting the dining area.

A face covering must also be worn at all times in outdoor spaces on UB’s campuses, to further reduce the risk of transmission as people travel from place to place.
In addition to wearing a mask at all times, physical distancing (also known as social distancing) is highly recommended by the CDC. To promote physical distancing, the university will modify or reconfigure public spaces and/or restrict the use of classrooms and other places where people tend to congregate, so that people can stay at least 6 feet apart in all directions.

- Even when physical distancing is possible, face coverings still must be worn at all times when in public spaces on UB’s campuses – indoors and outdoors – because some risk of transmission still exists at distances greater than 6 feet.
The university has developed a protocol for screening, testing and contact tracing based on evidence-based methods recommended by the most recent scientific research. UB’s protocol is based on SUNY and state guidelines, the expertise of UB faculty specializing in infectious disease and public health, and on the most recent guidance from the CDC, which does not recommend viral testing of all returning students, faculty and staff. UB’s protocol involves a process of screening, targeted testing and surveillance, as outlined below:

- The university will institute mandatory health screenings using chatbot technology for students, faculty and staff, and, where practicable, scheduled visitors (e.g., on-campus tour groups) asking about, at minimum:
  1. COVID-19 symptoms in past 10 days
  2. Positive SARS-CoV-2 test in past 10 days, and/or
  3. Close or proximate contact with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days when both parties were not wearing masks.

- The university will require viral testing for individuals who report symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or develop such symptoms during quarantine. Faculty and staff should arrange testing through their health care provider. Students will be directed to available testing off-campus. The cost of testing is the responsibility of each person through their health insurance carrier. Any person who has a positive viral test will be immediately sent home or to a designated isolation location.

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In the event that infection becomes more widespread in the local community and/or on campus, widespread testing for SARS-CoV-2 infection may be appropriate in order to identify cases for isolation and to guide aggressive contact tracing. Both of these measures would mitigate further spread.

The university will immediately notify the state and local health departments of known confirmed positive cases.

In the case of an individual testing positive, the university will support the Erie County Health Department’s contact tracing procedures in accordance with the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations.

The university will require a quarantine for individuals awaiting the result of viral testing; or who report close contact (being within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes or receiving respiratory secretions via cough, sneeze or kiss) with people who have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2; or who report close contact with people whose symptoms are highly suggestive of COVID-19 (e.g., the loss of taste or smell) if one or both parties were not wearing masks. The quarantine period is 14 days from the time of exposure.

The university will continue to evaluate new smartphone and web-based technologies that monitor individual activities and potential exposures to assess whether these new technologies will add value to current screening and contact tracing programs.
The university will provide one reusable face covering to each student, faculty and staff member at no cost. Individuals may choose to wear their own face covering if desired, provided it meets the criteria for an appropriate face covering.

- Face shields will be provided if there is a medical reason a person cannot wear a face covering.
- Additional face coverings will be available for purchase on campus.
- Do not wear face coverings (masks) with plastic valves. These are one-way valves; the air is filtered coming in but not out, so if you are infectious you will be expelling virus.

The university will provide training to students, faculty and staff on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable) and discard face coverings, per the recommendations of the CDC.
The university will utilize a mix of traditional in-person and remote classes. Considerations will include whether a course can be taught remotely, technological capabilities and measures to reduce in-person congregation.

The university will adjust course schedules to reduce the density of students on campus and reduce congestion in campus hallways, walkways and buildings.

The university will encourage pedestrians to stay to the right, in single file, when traveling through hallways, walkways and staircases throughout campus. The university will expect campus community members to observe physical distancing guidelines in all areas of campus whether visual guidance is provided or not.

The university will provide guidance for clinical, laboratory and research training and experiences to address safety in these specific on- and off-campus settings.

The university will designate space for and provide for the daily needs (e.g., meals, medication) of on-campus students who require a period of quarantine or isolation if they are exposed to COVID-19 or test positive for the virus.

The university will implement industry-specific guidelines provided by the New York State Department of Health and state government for operations of dining halls, research spaces, office workspaces, gyms, transportation, retail stores and other activities, as applicable.
To reduce risk of exposure to airborne SARS-CoV-2, the university will continually assess the guidance provided by the CDC and the New York State Department of Health for the operation of building heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. UB is currently making an inventory of all HVAC systems on campus to assess the capability of each system to implement measures described in new CDC considerations, i.e., increasing ventilation rates, bringing in additional outside air, increasing air filtration and running continuously. The use of face coverings is mandated in all UB facilities to further reduce risk.

The university will limit visitors to invited guests only. Guests are expected to abide by all campus safety protocols and are the responsibility of the invitee, who will ensure their guests are aware of and follow university protocols.
In all of its facilities – including in residence halls, dining halls and on university buses and shuttles – the university will adhere to hygiene, cleaning and disinfection requirements from the CDC and the New York State Department of Health, and will document the scope of cleaning and disinfection.

The university will provide and maintain hand hygiene stations across campus, including handwashing areas with soap, running warm water and disposable paper towels/air dryers, as well as alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for public areas where handwashing is not feasible.

The university will conduct regular cleaning and disinfection of facilities and more frequent disinfection of high-traffic public areas and frequently touched surfaces.

Within university classrooms, the university will provide a limited supply of disposable wipes to faculty, staff and students so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down before and after use.

The university will provide UB units with a limited supply of disposable wipes as part of a cleaning starter kit so that commonly used surfaces within office spaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down before and after use.

The university will ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of all restrooms.

The university will follow the CDC guidelines on cleaning and disinfecting when cleaning and disinfecting exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19.
For events and gatherings on campus, the university will adhere to New York State guidelines, as well as recommendations from the CDC and public health experts. This includes limiting large gatherings in both indoor and outdoor public spaces to no more than 50 people. For smaller events and gatherings, including arts and entertainment and other leisure activities, the university will adhere to the following state guidelines:

**Social gatherings:** Social gatherings of up to 50 people will be allowed. Individuals must wear face coverings at all times, as well as maintain physical distancing (six feet of separation) from other individuals. The number of people allowed at a gathering may change with changes in the degree of community-based infection.

**Low-risk indoor events and gatherings:** The number of faculty, staff, students and visitors must not exceed 25% of maximum occupancy. Individuals must wear face coverings at all times, as well as maintain physical distancing (six feet of separation) from other people. New York State provides additional information on low-risk indoor events and activities.

**Low-risk outdoor events and gatherings:** The number of faculty, staff, students and visitors must not exceed 33% of the maximum occupancy for a particular area. Individuals must wear face coverings at all times, as well as maintain physical distancing (six feet of separation) from other people. Additional information on low-risk outdoor events and gatherings is provided by New York State.

**High-risk events and gatherings:** This guidance does not address higher-risk indoor arts and entertainment activities including, but not limited to, concerts, movie theaters, performing arts or other theatrical productions, which are cancelled until further notice.
For any person who identifies a need for UB to address a specific medical issue, UB will utilize the ADA regulations to accommodate a request made with appropriate medical documentation.

UB is determining and will clearly communicate curricular options and possibilities for students who are unable to come to campus.

For faculty and staff who share concerns with their supervisors regarding their level of comfort about returning to work on campus, the university will address specific issues and situations on a one-to-one basis. The university’s “Return to Campus” website provides more information about how to safely work on campus.
Athletics

Student-athletes participating in varsity athletics at the university will adhere to additional best practice guidelines set forth by the NCAA and the Mid-American Conference in order to reduce the spread of the virus among student-athletes and the university community.
Communications

The university will continually review and understand the state-issued higher education guidelines and submit reopening plans prior to reopening.

The university will conspicuously post completed reopening plans for faculty, staff and students to access. Information and updates about UB’s response to the pandemic will be posted on the university’s COVID-19 Planning and Response website.

The university will engage with the campus community members when developing, updating and implementing reopening plans.

The university will develop a communications plan for students, parents or legal guardians, employees and visitors that includes reopening-related instructions, training and signage, and a consistent means to provide them with information.

Through development and implementation of a campus-wide health information campaign, the university will raise awareness about the importance of complying with health behaviors and university guidelines that reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and which protect the entire university community. The campaign will focus particularly on the importance of always wearing a face covering in all public spaces at the university, physical distancing, regular handwashing and the need to remain in one’s home or residence hall room when feeling ill.

When a positive case of COVID-19 is identified among university students, faculty, staff or visitors who have been on campus, the university will notify members of the university who may have had contact with the infected individual as soon as possible and provide them with health care instruction in coordination with the Erie County Department of Health.
The UB community is strong, smart and determined—Bulls through and through. Being a part of this community requires that everyone take the necessary steps to protect themselves and others. All UB students, faculty, staff and guests are asked to demonstrate their shared commitment by pledging to follow these guidelines at all times and in all circumstances while on campus.

**Together, we are stopping the spread.**
I pledge to conduct daily self-checks for symptoms of COVID-19. I pledge to notify the appropriate entities if I am experiencing symptoms, to isolate myself from others, and to seek medical attention and testing as called for.

**Together, we are staying safer.**
I pledge to wear an appropriate face covering indoors and outdoors on UB’s campuses, even when social distancing is maintained.

**Together, we are respecting space.**
I pledge to maintain proper social distance from others while on campus, in both indoor and outdoor settings.

**Together, we are protecting each other.**
I pledge to wash or sanitize my hands frequently as called for throughout the day and to use proper personal hygiene. I pledge to contribute to a safe environment by following proper sanitation guidelines.

**Together, we are staying informed.**
I pledge to obtain the information I need to act safely and responsibly. I pledge to be aware of and up-to-date on all guidelines and expectations and to seek answers to questions when I have them.

**Together, we are acting responsibly.**
I pledge to show concern for myself and for others. I pledge to encourage others to comply with all health and safety guidelines.

**Together, we are UB.**
UB Health Guidelines committee

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Questions or Concerns?

Questions, concerns and feedback about UB’s health guidelines can be submitted to the university via buffalo.edu/health-safety-guidelines

The university’s guidelines will continue to be updated as needed in accordance with new recommendations from the state and CDC, and as new scientific findings emerge. Guideline updates will be posted on the Health and Safety Guidelines webpage.