INTRODUCTION

As part of the university’s Health and Safety Guidelines, UB will continue COVID-19 pooled surveillance testing of students, faculty and staff throughout Winter Session and Spring 2021 semester (testing is ongoing). Partnering with Upstate Medical Center, randomized pooled surveillance testing at UB is helping the university further monitor and respond to the prevalence of COVID-19. Upstate Medical individually tests samples from positive pooled tests.

TESTING AND MONITORING

(1) Surveillance Testing - Winter Session. Surveillance testing will continue throughout Winter Session. During the month of January 2021 (Winter Session), any student living in university housing or taking an in-person class will participate regularly in testing. Faculty and staff who are on-campus will participate regularly in testing with the objective of weekly testing of 20 percent on-campus faculty and staff. UB residential students sign an acknowledgement of the rules that will govern their stay while in campus housing.

(2) Winter / Spring 2021: Preparing to return to campus – Specific requirements

1. Utilizing “Daily Health Check” - all students, faculty and staff must participate in daily pre-screening for travel history, COVID-19 history, and COVID-19 symptoms for two weeks prior to return to campus.

2. Upon returning for winter and/or spring 2021 on-campus activities, any student who will (1) reside on campus, or (2) take at least one in-person class, or (3) utilize services on campus (such as, libraries, recreational facilities, dining, laboratories, studios), or (4) work on campus, must:

   o Submit an attestation through HUB that he/she/they have completed a 7 day precautionary quarantine* prior to returning to campus; and either:

   ▪ Present evidence of a negative COVID-19 test taken within 3 days prior to return to campus (UB will provide a document upload process for off-campus testing documentation) or participate in on-campus COVID-19 testing as soon as possible but no later than 5 days of returning to campus (UB will conduct on-campus testing for students who have not been tested pre-arrival – please see above section for details); or

   ▪ Present documentation of a positive diagnostic test result for COVID-19 from the prior 3-month period. (Students with positive results must self-report to the UB Student Reporting Line (716-645-1400) or via ubstudentreportingline@buffalo.edu to fulfill the “positive” results requirement.)
TESTING AND MONITORING, continued

*Exemptions to 7 day quarantine:

*Students in medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, athletic training, dietetics and audiology, among others are deemed by New York State as essential workers and are not required to quarantine.*

*Off-campus students who come to campus and who are employed may apply to the university for an exemption to allow them to work during the precautionary seven-day quarantine. When not working, the students will be expected to quarantine from others. More information about how to apply for this exemption is posted on UB’s Covid-19 Planning and Response website ([https://www.buffalo.edu/coronavirus/latest-update.html](https://www.buffalo.edu/coronavirus/latest-update.html)).*

Pre-Cautionary Quarantine for Travelers

UB students who are coming to campus from a non-contiguous state including travel from a Level 2 or Level 3 country (as defined on the CDC website) must serve a 14-day quarantine upon arrival in NYS.

Students must complete and submit the NYS traveler form. Students can attempt to shorten (“test out”) the 14-day quarantine by completing a COVID-19 test within 3 days of their departure location and quarantining for 3 days upon arrival and completing a COVID-19 test on the 4th day after their arrival in NYS. Quarantine must continue until both test results are known to be negative. If either test results as positive, appropriate isolation must be observed.

UB students who are coming to campus from a Level 4 country must serve a 14-day quarantine upon arrival in NYS. They must complete and submit the NYS traveler form. They cannot shorten their quarantine through testing.

(3) Spring 2021 – Return to campus testing for students

The week of January 24, 2021, UB will begin testing off-campus students and residential students who had not presented evidence of a negative COVID-19 test taken within 3 days prior to return to campus. Students will reserve a time and location for their return to campus test. UB will utilize Upstate Medical pooled surveillance testing protocol.

Residential students will begin moving back to campus (pre-scheduled arrival dates and times) starting Tuesday, January 26, 2021.
TESTING AND MONITORING, continued

(4) Surveillance Testing – Spring 2021

The University at Buffalo will implement a policy in the spring semester (starting February 1, 2021), required by the State University of New York, calling for all SUNY institutions to conduct weekly COVID-19 testing for all students, faculty and staff who live on campus or plan to be on campus regularly during the spring semester.

UB will utilize Upstate Medical pooled surveillance testing protocol.

The following individuals are excluded from surveillance testing:

- Individuals who are already known to be currently infected with the SARS-COV-2 virus.
- Individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 90 days.

MANDATORY AND PRECAUTIONARY QUARANTINE

UB has two residence halls designated for isolation and quarantine for positive cases or suspected positive cases involving students. Isolated and quarantined students are separated by floor. Total capacity for isolation and quarantine is 280. Additional isolation and quarantine space would be provided through off-campus lodging. Off-campus students and employees will be advised to quarantine or self-isolate at their residence and will be monitored by the Erie County Department of Health.

Healthcare for isolated students is provided by UB’s Student Health Services and via telemedicine services. Additional details are listed on UB’s COVID-19 health and safety guidelines web page.

The university has in place mandatory and precautionary quarantine protocols for confirmed cases of COVID-19 as well as those “under investigation” (being tested for COVID-19). In cases “under investigation” students, faculty and staff are directed to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and contact their local health provider or Student Health Service to discuss. Pursuant to NYS DOH and CDC guidelines, those who have had possible exposure may be asked to follow a Required Mandatory Quarantine while it is determined whether or not you will be tested for COVID-19. (Please see https://www2.erie.gov/health/sites/www2.erie.gov.health/files/uploads/pdfs/QuarantineOrders.pdf)

For students who are in on-campus quarantine or isolation, meals are provided by Campus Dining Service and delivered to the student’s room. All rooms are equipped with refrigerators and microwaves.

Campus Living professional staff conduct daily check-ins with students to assess their physical and mental well-being. UB Health Services, Counseling Services and Wellness Services are available for our students.
NY HIGHER EDUCATION THRESHOLD FOR POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES

In accordance with New York State Department of Health guidance, the university is prepared to implement a 14-day pause of in-person instruction if 100 members of the on-campus population test positive for COVID-19 within a two-week period. [https://www.buffalo.edu/coronavirus/return-to-campus-updates/what-if-pause-inperson-instruction.html](https://www.buffalo.edu/coronavirus/return-to-campus-updates/what-if-pause-inperson-instruction.html)

The New York State Department of Health’s guidance states that colleges and universities must transition all in-person learning to remote, when 100 members of the on-campus population – inclusive of students, faculty, and staff – test positive for COVID-19 within a 14-day period. According to this guidance, only active cases at UB that are characterized as on-campus would count toward the 100 metric.

REMOTE INSTRUCTION

As we prepare for the spring 2021 semester and continue to adapt to the uncertainties and challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, UB is committed to delivering the very best educational and research programs possible while protecting the health and safety of the university community. When we return this spring in a modified, in-person capacity, faculty, staff and students who are on campus have a shared responsibility to follow UB’s Health and Safety Guidelines on face coverings, physical distancing, handwashing, health screening and monitoring to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Regardless of whether our students are taking remote, in-person, hybrid, and HyFlex courses (details have been sent to the SUNY Provost), we are all responsible for ensuring that our undergraduate, graduate, and professional students receive the highest quality education. To that end, the following are the specific teaching obligations and responsibilities of our faculty:

- UB has re-thought every part of the UB student experience to provide all students the best and safest possible living learning environment.

- UB has built IT capacity and personnel to ensure the university is providing the very best “modified in-person” setting for all of our students. This includes enhancing the current range of synchronous and asynchronous technologies as well as expanding training services to better equip faculty and instructional staff for quality teaching (Please see Center for Educational Innovation at [http://www.buffalo.edu/ubcei.html](http://www.buffalo.edu/ubcei.html)).

Course format (in-person, hybrid in-person/remote, or fully remote) are based on course goals and curricular/clinical requirements. Definitions and instructions for viewing course instruction modes in HUB are available on the Registrar’s [Important Spring 2021 Schedule](#)
REMOTE INSTRUCTION, continued

Information website. UB will publish the percentage of course taught in person (32%) and fully-remote (68%) on our COVID-19 website.

Teaching, learning and assessment will be consistent with course content including direct and meaningful instruction, assessment of learning outcomes, and opportunities for didactic exchange for all students and all programs.

Academic advisement is available to all students – pre-major advisement, undeclared advisement and departmental advisement.

The spring semester will be held from Feb. 1 to May 15, 2021 for undergraduate, graduate, and pharmacy students. To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, classes will be scheduled through the week previously designated as spring recess. For professional school calendars, please visit the Dental Medicine (DDS), Law (JD), and Medical Education (MD) websites. The revised Spring 2021 academic calendar was amended to protect the health and safety of the campus community and align with SUNY reopening guidelines.

Instructors and programs have made efforts to accommodate international student needs—for example, by scheduling course sections at times that work for synchronous instruction. Some of our ESL courses with Chinese students enrolled from China are offered in the evening EST. For our Singapore Program, our Buffalo based faculty teach online courses either in the evening or early morning EST to students in Singapore so that synchronous instruction is possible. Academic Affairs has provided guidance to faculty to be mindful of time-zone issues for international students in cases where there are significant numbers of these students enrolled.

Moreover, the Policies of the State University of New York Board of Trustees define the academic year obligation as “an annual obligation of service for the academic year, not to exceed 10 months.” The University at Buffalo’s 2020 - 2021 academic year obligation for faculty commenced on August 24, 2020 and will conclude on May 22, 2021. During that period, faculty members are expected to be available for service, consistent with their departmental assignments, program responsibilities, and the university calendar.

UB’s Teaching Assessment and Improvement Policy states, “Professorial faculty from each department should directly monitor and supervise all teaching by graduate teaching assistants. Moreover, each department should have in place a mandatory teaching-effectiveness program for its teaching assistants.”
Remote Instruction, continued

Finally, UB’s Faculty Responsibility Policy states, “Faculty members are required annually to submit a report describing in detail their professional activities and accomplishments, for review by the chair and the dean. Based on this report and in consultation with the faculty member, the chair should ascertain that the performance of the faculty member is consistent with departmental guidelines and with the current needs of the unit.”

UB faculty and staff are dedicated to continuing to advance our research mission and to provide the best possible experience for our students.

CAMPUS DEMOGRAPHICS WINTER SESSION AND SPRING 2021

During Winter Session 2021, classes will be conducted in remote format but for designated clinical courses pursuant to accreditation and licensure regulations.

Spring 2021 semester (February 1, 2021 start date), UB population will continue to be reduced in order to limit campus population density. To reduce campus density, the number of residential and non-residential students on campus as well as the number of faculty and staff will be reduced. Occupancy rates in residence halls and campus apartments will be at approximately 40% occupancy with the number of residential students on campus at 4,500. Total non-residential students who are assumed to come on campus sometime during the Spring 2021 semester is approximately 11,000.

UB has also limited in-class student instruction to 25% capacity, which has also contributed to reducing the number of non-residential students on campus. For the Spring semester, 32% of courses will be offered in-person and 68% of course will be offered in a remote format. This information will be published on UB’s COVID-19 website. The in-person workforce has been reduced by at least 50%. This reduction in density includes faculty, staff, and vendors to approximately 3,000 or fewer on campus daily.

CAMPUS DEMOGRAPHICS WINTER SESSION AND SPRING 2021, continued

Spring 2021 semester will proceed without the traditional spring break in order to reduce the likelihood of COVID-19 spread.

Currently, the university is planning for virtual commencement ceremonies similar to the May 2020 commencement.
FACE COVERINGS

We know that 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 wear 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 has modified 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.

COMPLIANCE

At UB, it is imperative that we stay vigilant in our efforts to control the spread of COVID-19. Actions and behavior will help preserve the right to maintain this in-person experience for the entirety of the fall semester.

In support of ensuring a safe campus experience for all, in the Fall semester, SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras issued a new policy aimed at fostering uniform SUNY-wide sanctions for COVID-19 health and safety violations and non-compliance of these policies.

Please note that these increased uniform sanctions took effect at 8 a.m. Oct. 1, 2020.

While this is a newly announced SUNY policy, the policy presented is consistent with our current student Code of Conduct and student compliance policies. Students will be uniformly sanctioned if they are found to be responsible for any of the following:

- Test positive for COVID-19 and then intentionally expose others to the virus;
- Fail to adhere to isolation or quarantine orders;
- Host or attend a prohibited on- or off-campus gathering;
- Fail to follow face mask and physical distancing requirements;
- Fail to complete Daily Health Check
- Fail to comply with COVID-19 contact tracing efforts; or
- Fail to attend at least two scheduled appointments, without a sufficient excuse, to obtain diagnostic or surveillance COVID-19 testing.

View a full list of SUNY violations and sanctions

Sanctions range from restriction from all on-campus activities and classes, to permanent dismissal from the university and the inability to apply/transfer to any other SUNY institution. Many of the sanctions include a suspension with a time period of a year or more. Sanctions of suspension or dismissal also come with no refund of tuition, room, board, or fees, and students would be fully responsible for all amounts owed. It should be noted that not all classes and activities can be offered virtually; thus a student could seriously jeopardize their academic progress if found to be in violation of the policy.

Student-athletes found to have violated the SUNY policy also may lose the ability to compete in intercollegiate athletics. Student organizations that are found to be in violation of any of the above may be deregistered or derecognized, possibly even permanently. They also must report the violation(s) to their national organizing body, if applicable.
MENTAL HEALTH

UB Counseling Services promotes the personal well-being and academic success of students by providing brief mental health services, educational programs, crisis intervention, and campus community consultation. Please refer to UB’s Counseling Services website for our robust counseling services https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/counseling/covid-19.html

COMMUNICATIONS

Information and updates about UB’s response to the pandemic are posted on the university’s COVID-19 Planning and Response website.

UB has developed and implemented a campus-wide health information campaign, to raise awareness (and remind) 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 is focused 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.

COVID-19 Dashboard


What students should know notice

The university conspicuously posts reopening plans for faculty, staff and students to access. Information and updates about UB’s response to the pandemic are posted on the university’s COVID-19 planning and response website. Additional information and resources specific to students are available in the online Student Guide, UB Forward, a digest of related news, updates and resources, is emailed weekly to all students, faculty and staff. Pertinent information is also regularly pushed out through UB’s social media channels.

CAMPUS SAFETY MONITOR

As already on record with SUNY, Joe Raab, UB’s director of Environment, Health and Safety, is serving as the campus safety monitor.

UB CHILD CARE CENTERS

The UB Child Care Centers located on the North and South Campus are following Office of Child and Family Services health and safety guidelines as well a NYS Department of Health guidance for operating. UB Child Care employees are participating in UB’s surveillance testing program.