

January 20, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Planning

We learned a lot last semester. With a semester under their belts, Sewanee Dining is able to expand the hours and food options in McClurg to an almost-normal menu. We'll continue to have other food options for students. Cravens will be open at the beginning of the semester and the Pub again will have omelets. It'll probably be too cold for the pop-ups early in the semester, but the food trucks will be around in the evenings. With students returning, McClurg will go back to offering meals only to students on the meal plan, beginning on Monday. But look for an announcement of some new take-out options for faculty and staff, coming soon.

A few students have started to arrive: residence hall staff, firefighters, and some winter athletes. Most students will arrive next week. The big onboarding push is Jan. 27–31, with classes starting on Monday, Feb. 1.

We are expecting most students to return for an on-campus experience again for the spring semester. A total of 1,664 students have registered for at least one course, and 1,643 have at least 12 hours (three courses), a full course load. This latter number is in line with our expectations based on normal retention and attrition. Students can continue to register for classes and modify their class schedules into February. Another indicator of expected student participation is bill payments. Payments were due earlier this month. While there are still approximately 175 outstanding accounts, of those students who have paid their tuition, 93% have also paid room and board.

Tents are going up now (YAY!), but we are also outfitting some additional indoor spaces for classes given that it may be too cold early in the semester for very many classes to meet in the tents. We are outfitting the climbing room in the Fowler Center, the SUT, and Guerry Auditorium with technology so that these spaces can be used for classes.

Testing

HR sent [a communication](#) last week with details about employee testing. All employees engaged in on-campus activities are being tested this week, today through Friday. Testing is happening in the Fowler Center and you will be assigned a date and time. **Don't forget to bring your signed waiver and ID card.** If you have received a positive COVID-19 test result from a lab or organization other than the University, you'll need to bring the documentation of the test result with you to the testing site as well.

All tests are now being analyzed by the Sewanee Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory, and we are using a new sampling protocol, [explained in this video](#). Results should be available the same day you test. For this first test of the semester, your results--whether negative or positive--will be communicated via email. Should you be asked to test again later in the semester, Public Health will continue last fall's practice of notifying via phone only those employees who test positive.

You can keep track of the University's testing results on our [Daily COVID-19 dashboard](#), which is updated each morning.

Don't forget the 3W's remain our most powerful tool to combat the spread of this disease. As the number of cases continues to rise in our region, please remember to practice the 3W's: [Wear your mask](#). Wash your hands. Watch your distance. It's important to follow good [COVID-19 protocols](#) both on campus *and off campus*, and [to continue to limit your social interactions](#).

Remember that employees who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and who are working on campus may request to be tested by our team. Employees who receive positive test results must work with their primary care providers to determine how to proceed and must follow University policies related to COVID-19 and sick leave.

Sincerely,

Nancy Berner

Provost