

April 21, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Planning

Reminder: If you plan to have student interns, students, or program participants on campus this summer and have not already done so, please contact Conference Services (conferences@sewanee.edu) to make arrangements. You'll need to be aware of our summer policies and outline your COVID-19 mitigation plans. Given the number of protocols that have been submitted, it looks like we'll have a very busy summer!

We are planning for a mostly normal fall semester. Students and faculty should plan to be back on campus and in classrooms and laboratories next semester. We are not planning to have any travel or visitor restrictions in place for the Domain, and we expect to have a full slate of lectures, concerts, social activities, and athletic competitions. At this point, the demonstrated safety of the classroom and the wide availability of vaccines make this a viable and safe assumption. Many of our peer institutions are making similar plans. We hope that all students, faculty, and staff will be vaccinated by the fall, and we will continue to pay close attention to guidance from the Centers for Disease Control.

Updated Vaccination Information

Shots available on campus: Last week, the CDC and FDA recommended pausing usage of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. University Health Service had been administering the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, and has paused until further notice. Fortunately, we were able to arrange for Walgreens to administer [Moderna COVID-19 vaccines](#) on campus! Tomorrow is the last day for those vaccinations. Pharmacists will be at the Fowler Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday for anyone seeking a vaccination; no appointment is necessary. They are prepared to administer first and second doses. About 130 people were vaccinated through this program on Monday and Tuesday. Let's have a great turnout!

To find other vaccination sites near Sewanee, use vaccinefinder.org. All U.S. residents ages 16 and up are eligible for COVID-19 vaccination. Remember that the University provides up to three paid hours for work time missed while receiving a COVID-19 vaccination, as well as one paid day off following the final shot to allow recovery time from any symptoms due to an immune response. See details on the [Human Resources website](#).

In case you missed it, we've started a "[Pop the Bubble!](#)" campaign with students. Along with the effort to get them vaccinated, we decided that two weeks after at least 1,200 College students (that's 80%) have received at least their first shot, limitations regarding movement on and off campus will be lifted, as will gathering limits. Family and friends may visit; however, outside visitors will still not be permitted to go inside residence halls and/or stay overnight on campus. We're monitoring the number of vaccinated students and employees based on entries into [our database](#). For further information, you can check out [the FAQ](#).

As of April 20, 1,035 students have been verified as receiving at least one vaccination. Updates to that number will be posted on the [COVID-19 dashboard](#).

COVID-19 Testing

Another 1,719 tests were administered last week with only one student testing positive, for a 0.06% positivity rate! See the University's testing results published daily on our [Daily COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

There were no employee positive tests again last week—great job! Thank you for continuing to be mindful of the 3W's—along with vaccines, they are our most powerful tools to combat the spread of this disease: [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](#).

[Fully vaccinated](#) employees are no longer required to participate in COVID-19 testing. They are also no longer required to quarantine in the event of an exposure, as long as they remain asymptomatic. In order to be eligible to discontinue COVID-19 testing, a record of your vaccination must be submitted to Sewanee's public health team via [vaccine.sewanee.edu](#). This HIPAA-compliant survey requires the date you completed your vaccination series, banner ID, and a photo of your CDC-issued vaccination record card. If you have trouble completing the survey or submitting your documentation, please contact philip.loyd@sewanee.edu. Until these requirements are met, we ask that you continue testing as required. I took my last regular surveillance test yesterday!

Surveillance test results are available the day after testing, and you will receive a communication only if the results are positive. Remember that employees who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and who are working on campus may request to be tested by our team by calling 931.598.1010 (please do not show up at the Fowler test site unannounced). 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.

Other University News

EQB Reflection & Response next steps: EQB Values Project gatherings are coming next week. Thanks to the data collected from the EQB Reflection & Response gatherings held earlier this semester, a short list of proposed institutional values is ready to be shared. Please join in to provide your input to fill out and sharpen the proposed values. Faculty, staff, and students from the College and School of Theology are encouraged to be a part of shaping our guiding principles together. Three gatherings will be held next week [via Zoom](#) (note the added Tuesday session, and the time change on Thursday):

Tuesday, April 27, 7-8 p.m.

Wednesday, April 28, 9-10 a.m.

Thursday, April 29, 1-2 p.m.

College Commencement May 22: We have changed the time of the College Commencement ceremony to 9 a.m. (from 10 a.m.). The change is for a couple of reasons, both having to do with weather: As you know, the ceremony will be outside on Hardee-McGee Field. The turf field can get very warm, and the earlier start time allows us to avoid the hottest part of the day. (I know that's hard to imagine right now!) In addition, if the weather forecast calls for heavy rain or severe storms, the new start time gives us an extra hour to be able to reschedule the service later that day.

Thank You: This week I want to thank the faculty and those tirelessly supporting them—the staff in IT including the faculty technology specialists, the co-directors of the Center for Teaching, and the deans and associate deans. I am in awe of the incredibly heavy lifting you have all done. Starting in March 2020 with the immediate switch to completely online classes; continuing into the summer, putting research and vacation plans aside to plan for every option (in-person, online, and hybrid); enthusiastically welcoming students back to campus in the fall, supporting them and persevering with no break; and weathering rain, snow, wind, ice, and power outages that put tents out of commission. And this morning it is 32°F, feels like 23°F? Seriously?

Please know that your herculean efforts have not been taken for granted or gone unnoticed. The last day of classes in the School of Theology is only two weeks away (May 5) and three weeks away for the College (May 12). I have never been prouder to be in Sewanee than I have been this past year as we have shown the country how to continue on-campus residential liberal arts and seminary education in the middle of a pandemic. It has taken everyone, and not least all those in our academic programs.

Sincerely,

Nancy Berner

Provost