

August 25, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Despite the fact that I had the dates wrong in my email last week, we managed to get underway. Classes have begun! The School of Theology matriculation ceremony took place on Monday, and new students in the College signed the Honor Code on Tuesday, both in All Saints' Chapel, masked, but otherwise normal and in person! Those of us speaking at the Honor Code signing took the opportunity to talk about [our community's shared values](#), how they relate to us, and how we hope the students will live into them.

COVID-19 Dashboard

Keep track of our testing results and vaccination rates by visiting the University's [COVID-19 dashboard](#). The dashboard is being updated weekly. It is important that the data we display publicly is as accurate as possible, and we have seen dramatic increases in our reported vaccination rates over the past two weeks. *If you are vaccinated but have not yet done so, please upload a copy of your vaccination card to vaccine.sewanee.edu as soon as possible.* This is a HIPAA-compliant survey that 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.

Vaccination Information

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)—and now based on the experience of more than 198 million U.S. residents—COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. In fact, the Food and Drug Administration on Monday gave its first full [approval to the Pfizer vaccine](#). The available COVID-19 vaccines are very effective at preventing people from getting very sick. Vaccinated people are much less likely to go to the hospital or to die from COVID-19. The University is following the developments of the Delta variant and other variants and their potential impact on the semester.

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](#). If booster vaccinations become recommended and approved, we will update the policy such that employees will also receive paid time off this fall to receive an additional shot.

Masking Policy Reminder

As the campus fills up, don't forget the [University's masking policy](#). *Effective Aug. 3, 2021, and until further notice, all students, employees, and visitors must wear face coverings/masks over*

their nose and mouth when they are in public spaces inside all University buildings. While outdoors, masks are not required unless otherwise indicated by the University. For the most up-to-date information, check the [University's COVID-19 website](#), and look for email announcements.

Faculty and staff in various work areas are encouraged to remind anyone not complying with our indoor masking policy to please do so. Given the many changes to policy, it is easy to forget that even fully vaccinated persons need to mask indoors. Please be gracious in reminding, and when you are reminded!

Other University News

University Values: Last Friday, the Values Steering Committee introduced the [four shared University values](#) that emerged from the process we began last spring. More than 400 members of the campus community contributed to the process of identifying our values—thank you!—and the steering committee spent the summer distilling that input. The values of inquiry, community, flourishing, and courage will inform our conversations and planning going forward. And you will be invited once again to help define ways to use these values in shaping the way we live and work together in Sewanee. Look for more information to come about that process.

COVID-Relief Funding: Here is a brief update regarding how the passage of various COVID-relief bills have affected the University and our students. This [website](#) provides detailed information. In the spring of 2020, the University received \$1,094,094, half of which (\$547,047) we passed directly on to students. The other half of the funds were incremental to our Fiscal Year 2020 bottom line to reimburse ourselves for some of the \$2.5 million that we refunded in room and board. We received an additional \$1.5 million from the second relief bill that was passed in December 2020. In April we distributed another \$547,047 to students. They could receive the funds directly or elect to have the funds applied to their student accounts. We were allowed to apply the other \$1 million toward our FY20 bottom line as further reimbursement for the refunded room and board. Finally, we received another \$2.8 million from the third COVID-relief bill passed in March 2021. As with funds from the first bill, we passed half directly on to students. They will receive the funds directly or elect to have the funds applied to their student accounts. We were allowed to apply the other \$1.4 million toward our FY21 bottom line to cover some of the approximately \$7 million we spent in monitoring and suppressing the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

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