

Principles and Objectives Underlying Consideration of Restarting On-Campus Educational Experiences at University of Wyoming

Principles driving this decision

An on-campus educational experience provides benefits to students both within and outside the classroom. As John Dewey wrote in 1897, “Education is a social process.” For this reason, we are asking the University of Wyoming’s Board of Trustees to consider the possibility of reopening the University for on-campus instruction in the fall of 2020. The well-being of our faculty, staff, students and members of our local community should be paramount in making this decision.

Overarching policy goal

The goal of our policy on reopening UW to residential instruction is to keep students, staff, and faculty safe from COVID-19 by preventing SARS CoV-2 transmission within the University of Wyoming community. The University’s transition back to residential teaching, learning and research will be done in a measured, disciplined way that accounts for the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, staff and greater community. Recently, President Theobald appointed five internal working groups to examine best practices and make recommendations around the return of residential teaching/learning and research: University Operations, University Structure, Social Structure, Personnel Policies, and Community and State Interaction. The University has not yet made a decision about the delivery of fall instruction, but we are planning for a number of contingencies.

To keep students, staff, and faculty safe from COVID-19 by preventing SARS CoV-2 transmission within the University of Wyoming community, we are developing a logistical and tactical plan to move towards on-site work and in-person fall instruction with the following five principles and standards:

- **Keep the virus out to the extent possible**
- **Reduce the probability of transmission**
- **Implement frequent population-wide testing to rapidly identify and isolate individuals capable of transmitting SARS CoV-2**
- **Reduce environmental contamination by extensively cleaning and disinfecting UW facilities.**
- **Provide clear communication and academic resources/support**

This preliminary plan will need to be flexible to allow for up-to-date information and changing conditions, both on campus, and in the community of Laramie and State of Wyoming.

If the Board of Trustees approves this framework, the University will appoint a director to oversee the management of the strategies outlined below and will continue to engage the working groups to refine and implement these strategies. The five internal working groups (see Appendix for a full description of working groups) will advise the COVID-19 Emergency Executive Policy Group (EEPG), which will continue to rely on the Government Relations Working Group, the Emergency Operations Group, Business Continuity Leads, and Incident Command to continue to provide guidance in this time of need.

Keep the virus out to the extent possible

- Develop a return-to-work plan for employees during the summer
- Require testing consistent with guidelines provided by EEOC, the FDA, the CDC, and the U.S. Department of Education
 - Require surveillance testing during the summer for select numbers of student-athletes and employees

- Require surveillance testing during the fall semester for designated high-risk groups of on-campus students and employees, and other groups or individuals as needed. Surveillance testing may be expanded if more rapid, less invasive specimen collection becomes available (e.g., saliva samples rather than nasopharyngeal swabs).
- Seek to contract with a third party to schedule and administer the surveillance tests, track and process the test results, and deliver timely and confidential reports of results
- Perform diagnostic testing for symptomatic students and employees
- Obtain rapid diagnostic testing capability at Student Health as soon as available to allow convenient, on-campus testing resource for eligible students with symptoms
- Consider antibody tests if additional research verifies reliability and clearly explains meaning of antibody results
- Consider requiring temperature scans for entry to designated buildings, areas, and events
- Minimize personal off-campus travel and issue business-related travel policies in late July/early August
- Review, evaluate and implement other best practices as they become available

Reduce the probability of transmission

- Social distancing – students
 - Re-engage unused or repurposed residence halls and dining facilities
 - Convert residence hall rooms to single rooms
 - Modify the residential dining plan to facilitate social distancing
 - Modify move-in to allow social distancing
 - Change social practices in the residence halls to enforce social distancing
 - Re-open retail operations and catering per established guidelines. This will evolve as conditions change.
 - Allow events for maximum number of participants and per established guidelines. This will evolve as conditions change.
 - Modify current student areas across campus to ensure adequate social distancing. Possible modifications include:
 - Space seating in meeting rooms
 - Suspend the use of smaller meeting rooms
 - Remove furniture from meeting rooms, waiting areas, and lounge spaces
 - Mark floors of waiting lines or areas to indicate suggested waiting position/distance
 - Mark egress for one directional travel in highly trafficked spaces such as classroom building, Half Acre, Union, Washakie, Rendezvous, etc. (for example, enter through one entrance and exit through another)
 - Install Plexiglas “sneeze guards” at all service counters
 - Implement a personal protective equipment (PPE) policy
 - Hand sanitizer stations
 - Cleaning supplies for residence hall/apartments/student areas
 - Face masks or coverings
 - Hygiene guidelines
- Social distancing – employees
 - Implement a *return-to-work* policy for employees, which will address the following components:
 - Flexibility to allow remote work for high risk employees and employees with high risk household members
 - Equipment and accessibility

- Community check-in meetings
 - ADA and religious accommodations
 - Safety and well-being, including cyberbullying, discrimination, domestic violence
 - Training
 - Video conferencing capabilities
 - Varied work shifts and reduced percentage of employees in work area
 - Visitation guidelines
- Modify current employee areas across campus to ensure adequate social distancing. Possible modifications include:
 - Conference and meeting rooms
 - Workspaces
 - Customer-facing stations (for example, installing Plexiglas “sneeze guards” at all service counters)
 - Waiting and lounge areas
 - Break areas
 - Circulation routes
- Implement a personal protective equipment (PPE) policy
 - Hand sanitizer stations
 - Cleaning supplies
 - Face masks or coverings
 - Workplace hygiene guidelines
- Social distancing – instruction
 - Consider maintaining a 15-week long semester to support effective teaching and learning best practices and outcomes but possibly (1) shorten or eliminate fall break and the days off prior to the Thanksgiving holiday or (2) finish the fall semester remotely/online after the Thanksgiving holiday to reduce bringing the virus back to campus
 - Mandate social distancing, per established guidelines, in our classrooms and laboratories
 - Assign entrance and exit doors in each building
 - Implement directional navigation in Classroom, Enzi, and Biological Sciences Buildings to manage movement through hallways
 - Sign stairwells in all buildings to indicate climbing/descending on right side of stairway
 - Use both remote/distance learning and face-to-face instruction and laboratory work

Implement frequent population-wide testing to rapidly identify and isolate individuals capable of transmitting SARS CoV-2

- Contract with a third party to facilitate a contact tracing policy
- Develop a standard process to allow supervisors the ability to send home employees and require testing for employees who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, consistent with EEOC guidelines
- Continue the availability and use of emergency leave with pay for both salaried and hourly employees
- Review and refine sick leave policies to facilitate the COVID-19 situation
- Implement a quarantine policy
 - Define who must quarantine, and
 - Identify spaces for quarantining students
- Determine a clearly defined level of infection/quarantine that will trigger campus closure

Reduce environmental contamination by extensively cleaning and disinfecting UW facilities

- To achieve CDC and OSHA recommendations regarding cleaning and sanitizing, create detailed cleaning schedules for individuals for their workspaces, common areas, and any high-touch surfaces in addition to what the UW Operations staff performs
- Hire a significant number of additional custodial staff to clean classrooms between sessions

Provide clear communication and academic resources/support

- Communicate consistently, broadly, and widely
- Effectively communicate to all constituencies to enhance and help enforce the strategies outlined above
- Continue to communicate the university's reopening plans to state and local partners/entities, including:
 - Wyoming Executive Branch
 - Wyoming Legislature
 - Students and parents
 - Wyoming Department of Health
 - Wyoming Community Colleges
 - Albany County School District 1
 - Albany County and City of Laramie
 - Ivinson Memorial Hospital
 - The public
- Closely coordinate with Albany County School District and childcare providers as their operations/services will directly affect many of UW's employees
- Develop a contingency plan for the University to provide childcare services, in addition to ECEC, for students and employees
- Add to the University's COVID-19 interactive website the current status of the following:
 - Number of tests
 - Quarantine status
 - Disease status
- Provide central resources and support for its faculty and researchers while also allowing for decentralized and flexible decision making at the college and department level, including:
 - Begin contract review and selection process for outside pedagogical support
 - Establish a summer stipends program for faculty and graduate assistants for summer work needed to prepare for 2020-21 academic year pedagogical model shift and impact on research programs
 - Begin acquisition and installation of technological equipment and resources
 - Develop staffing plans and begin hiring/contracting the staff needed to support faculty (i.e., Instructional Designers, Technology Support, Operations (janitorial and other), etc.)
- Consider the entire 2020-21 academic year and spring semester implications of decisions
- Develop plan and resources needed to provide enhanced student support

Appendix

Five working groups of faculty, staff and students have been formed to put together policies and procedures that could be used if the trustees decide to reopen campus this fall.

The five working groups focus on:

--**University Operations:** On-campus education/activities present numerous challenges (e.g., visitors to campus) that UW must mitigate with rules, regulations and policy changes.

Vice President/General Counsel Tara Evans and Acting President Neil Theobald, co-chairs.

Other members: Athletics Director Tom Burman, Interim Vice President for Administration Bill Mai, Director of Government Relations Meredith Asay, Wyoming State Veterinary Lab Director Will Laegreid, Student Health Service Director Mary Beth Bender, Associate Vice President of Global Engagement Shelley Jewell.

-- **Social Structure:** Residence hall practices and student interaction guidelines.

Vice President for Student Affairs Kim Chestnut, chair.

Other members: Residence Life and Dining Services Executive Director Eric Webb, Center for Student Involvement and Leadership Director Jeremy Davis, Associate Vice President/Dean of Student Success and Graduation Nycole Courtney, ASUW President Riley Talamantes, Associate Vice Provost for Enrollment Management Kyle Moore, Senior Project Coordinator Courtney Thomson-Lichty, Deputy Athletics Director Matt Whisenant, Student Health Service nurse Holly Bowlds, Sports Medicine Dr. Matt Boyer.

-- **Personnel Policies:** Protecting older populations, especially those with underlying health problems and guidelines for working remotely.

Associate Vice President for Human Resources Tom Koczara, chair.

Other members: Deputy General Counsel Paula Whaley, HR Operations Director Mark Bercheni, Chief Diversity Officer Emily Monago, Vice President for Information Technology Robert Aylward, Staff Senate representative James Wheeler, Faculty Senate representative Rudi Michalak, ASUW representative Jason Wilkins, Executive Assistant to the Provost Mandy Gifford.

--**Community and State Interaction:** Protecting Albany County residents, coordination with Wyoming Department of health, coordination with community colleges.

Interim Vice President for Community Affairs Chris Boswell and Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications Chad Baldwin, co-chairs.

Other members: Director of Government Relations Meredith Asay, Chief Risk Officer Tim Wiseman.

-- **University Structure:** Curriculum procedures such as class size restrictions and modes of instruction for larger classes.

Vice Provost Tami Benham-Deal and Associate Vice President for Financial Affairs David Jewell, co-chairs.

Other members: Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Anne Alexander, Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education Jim Ahern, Associate Vice President for Research Diana Hulme. (Additional subgroups listed below.)

Additional subgroups under the University Structure working group:

Scheduling and Instructional Delivery

College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean Danny Dale, facilitator.

Other members: College of Engineering and Applied Science Interim Dean Cam Wright, School of Nursing Dean Sherrill Smith, Department of Visual and Literary Arts Head Ricki Klages, Department of Music Head Scott Turpen, Department of Plant Sciences faculty member Randa Jabbour, Department of Chemical Engineering faculty member Joe Holles, Faculty Senate Chair Rudi Michalak, Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning Director Janel Seeley, Director of Enrollment Marketing Jenny Petty, Registrar Kwanna King, Scholarships and Financial Aid Director Debra Hintz, Campus Architect Matt Newman, Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit graduate student Rhiannon Jakopak.

Research

Department of Botany Head Naomi Ward, facilitator.

Other members: College of Health Sciences David Jones, School of Pharmacy Dean Kem Krueger, Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station Interim Director John Ritten, American Heritage Center Director Paul Flesher, Department of Zoology and Physiology Head Scott Seville, School of Energy Resources Executive Director Holly Krutka, Department of Chemical Engineering faculty member Patrick Johnson, Department of Economics faculty member Dave Finnoff, Department of Theatre and Dance faculty member Marsha Knight, Department of History and American Studies Head Isa Helfgott, Director of Research Integrity and Compliance Carolyn Broccardo, Office of Sponsored Programs Senior Director Comfort Brownell, Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education Jim Ahern, Associate Vice President for Research Diana Hulme, neuroscience/pharmacy research assistant Danny Burns, Assistant to the Vice President of Research and Economic Development Karyn Bercheni.

Reflection, Assessment and Lessons Learned

College of Business Dean Dave Sprott, facilitator.

Other members: College of Education Associate Dean Leslie Rush, Department of Family and Consumer Sciences Head Chrissy Wade, Department of Mathematics and Statistics Head Jason Williford, Department of Theatre and Dance Head Margaret Wilson, Department of Economics Head Dave Aadland, WWAMI Medical Education Program Director Tim Robinson, School of Nursing faculty member Ann Marie Hart, Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning faculty member Christi Boggs, LeaRN Programs Director April Heaney, Outreach Credit Programs Manager Jayne Pearce, ASUW President Riley Talamantes, Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center Interim Director Tiffany Cook.

Additionally, several other groups continue to handle UW's response to the pandemic:

-- **Emergency Executive Policy Group:** General Counsel Tara Evans, Vice President for Student Affairs Kim Chestnut, Vice Provost Tami Benham-Deal, Associate Vice President for Financial Affairs David Jewell. Provides overall direction, management and coordination for all operational functions. Establishes operational priorities and strategies.

-- **Emergency Operations Group:** Vice President for Information Technology Robert Aylward and Interim Vice President for Administration Bill Mai, co-chairs.

Other members: Chief Risk Officer Tim Wiseman, Associate Vice President for Human Resources Tom Koczara, UW Police Chief Mike Samp, Associate Vice President for Operations John Davis, Facilities Engineering Deputy Director Jen Coast, Deputy Risk Officer Curtis Cannell, Student Health Service nurse Holly Bowlds, Sports Medicine Dr. Matt Boyer, Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Anne Alexander, College of Health Sciences Dean David Jones, Residence Life and Dining Services Executive Director Eric Webb, Interim Dean of Students Ryan O'Neil, Associate Vice President for Research Diana Hulme.

Provides policy direction and general support, defines emergency policy, and determines program closures and resumptions.

-- **Government Relations Working Group:** Director of Government Relations Meredith Asay, chair.

Other members: College of Health Sciences Dean David Jones, School of Pharmacy Dean Kem Krueger, College of Engineering and Applied Science Interim Dean Cam Wright, Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education Jim Ahern, Associate Vice President for Research Diana Hulme, veterinary science Associate Professor Brant Schumaker, and botany Professor Alex Buerkle.

Leverages the knowledge of UW employees and research base to serve Wyoming and its citizens during the pandemic.