

Social Practices Working Group Considerations for Reopening

The Social Practices group met twice to provide initial considerations/recommendations for the EEPG and BOT to consider in having students and employees return to campus in fall 2020 with greater safety operations in place. The document reviews four main areas, social distancing in public spaces, masks, housing and residential dining, and retail operations and catering. The Social Practices Group can provide additional information and updates recommendations as further information is known regarding COVID-19.

Social Distancing in Public Spaces

1. In order to facilitate social distancing, the Social Practices Group discussed two criteria for setting event/group size: a base number of participants allowed at any event and a space capacity for each room.
 - i. Determine guidelines for the maximum number of participants allowed at events.
 - Initial thoughts show support for a “staged” approach, which would align with state/federal guidelines and change over time based on the status of community spread. For example (draft ideas, as there are varying opinions on an appropriate number):
 - Stage 1: Events cannot exceed 10 people without approval.
 - Stage 2: Events cannot exceed 25 people without approval.
 - Stage 3: Events cannot exceed 50 people without approval.
 - Stage 4: Events cannot exceed 75 people without approval.
 - Stage 5: No limits on capacity.
 - Understand that we may need to move back and forth between these stages, if a resurgence in community spread occurs.
 - Consider contact tracing when setting capacity. Events and classes that meet regularly have the same attendees from week to week. Public events are much more difficult to track.
 - Specific suggestions for large events are being determined. For example, Group Campus Pass, can split into two events (one fall and one spring) that would be capped at 250 persons (student and guests). Each of those events would be broken into 3 rotations that allow for staged movement (three separate check in times and rotation between activities that kept groups to no more than 75 participants).
 - ii. Determine guidelines for number of participants allowed in a specific space:
 - Space seating in meeting rooms to reduce capacity by at least 25-50% to ensure social distancing.
 - Using a formula based on square footage will not be sufficient, as capacity guidelines need to consider the functional use of the space. (i.e. What amount of space is actually useable within a room? How many people can reasonably use the space while maintaining 6 feet of distance?)

- Suspend the use of smaller meeting rooms that would not allow adequate social distancing.

2. Modify spaces to reinforce social distancing.

- Contact the Fire Marshal to obtain temporary easing of fire code to prop main entry doors during high traffic periods (i.e. Union doors during lunch).
 - Eliminates the need to touch doors.
- Remove furniture from meeting rooms, waiting areas, and lounge spaces to facilitate social distancing.
- 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.

3. Create guidelines for events.

- Encourage the use of RSVPs, check-ins, and appointments where possible.
 - Keeping a list of attendees at events makes it possible to do contact tracing in the event someone gets sick.
- Rent hand washing stations for larger outdoor events.
- Encourage the use of online alternatives when possible.

Masks

1. Strongly encourage the use of masks in public spaces on campus. Determine where it is appropriate to require a mask.

- While it is difficult to enforce a mask requirement in public spaces, campus services could require a mask for service (Washakie and Student Health are currently requiring masks).
- It is more feasible to enforce a mask requirement for employees and athletes.
- Design professional/standardized signs at major entrances for high trafficked buildings (A&S, Classroom, Enzi, Union, Education, etc.) to encourage people to social distance and wear a mask.
- Provide disposable masks to students or visitors where appropriate (Student Health Service, campus tours, etc.)

2. Provide each student with at least one cloth mask.

- Brand the mask with Steamboat and create a culture around wearing them. Should be accompanied by a positive branding campaign to reinforce the importance of wearing masks, normalize the practice, and share educational information about how to wear a mask properly.

- Make available to staff and faculty, should they need one. Broad distribution of masks prevents assumptions about socioeconomic status, eliminates the need for individual departments to supply their own masks.
- Consider the pros and cons of different mask styles (i.e. neck gaiters vs. ear loop masks)
 - Neck gaiters are inexpensive, comfortable, and students are more likely to wear them. However, the CDC recommends:
 - Washing hands immediately before putting a mask on and after removing, which may not occur if students are frequently taking off/putting on their mask.
 - Ties or ear loops (to avoid touching your face when putting on and removing masks)
 - Multiple layers of fabric (could order thicker neck gaiters)
 - Multi-layer cotton ear loop masks are more expensive and currently in shorter supply than neck gaiters. It is also unclear if students would be willing to wear them for extended periods of time. There will likely still be issues with hand-washing and face-touching, regardless of mask style.

3. Consider access and inclusion in the context of masks.

- Those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may rely on lip-reading, which would be impossible with masks.
- People of color wearing masks have historically been perceived negatively. Masks may increase bias-motivated actions, and people of color may be uniquely reluctant to wear masks.

Housing and Residential Dining

1. Convert all residence hall rooms to single rooms.

- This will put residence hall housing capability at approximately 1300 with Crane Hall reopened, however estimated hall occupancy for fall is approximately 1500. In order to handle this enrollment gap, we could implement the below solutions (or some combination of the following):
 - Rent hotel space for approximately 200 students in local hotels, such as the Hilton Garden Inn. Operate a shuttle bus system from 6:00am – 10:00pm daily to transport those students to and from campus. This would be expensive to operate.
 - Rent apartment facilities at WyoTech for approximately 200 students. Operate a shuttle bus system from 6:00am – 10:00pm daily to transport those students to and from campus. This would be expensive to operate.
 - Reopen Crane Hall and Hill Hall as single rooms, move Hill Hall offices temporarily. Hill Hall would provide 226 single rooms.
 - Modify freshman exemption policy and allow more students to be exempted from the live-in policy and not allow returners (sophomore and up) to live in the residence halls. There is a financial impact and a student success impact associated with this option.
 - Allow students who would like to room together to do so. These would be students who already know each other and not roommate matched by RLDS. Have the balance of the hall students placed in single rooms. This would put more students using one community bathroom and would likely still not provide enough freshman housing.

2. Set up quarantine housing at the armory for students living in the residence halls.
 - Food would need to be delivered multiple times per day for those in quarantine.
 - This offers quarantine capability for up to 12 students in quarantine, which should cover quarantine needs for students living in the residence halls, but may not cover the quarantine needs of the full campus community.

3. Modify the residential dining plan to facilitate social distancing.
 - It will be critical that residential dining operate at least one secondary dining center to provide for appropriate social distancing.
 - Potential options include: Crane Hill Dining Room, Wyoming Union Family Room & Ballroom
 - Smaller locations that may require a 3rd location would be: UW Conference Center, Shoshone Room (Rendezvous considered as a 3rd location)
 - Anticipating additional labor expense as a result of the need to operate in at least one additional location.
 - Food would be served in disposable containers and some students would be able eat in the dining room, but most would need to take their food back to their rooms.
 - No self-serve food or beverage machines available and all dining operations will need large sneeze guards installed.
 - Ensure at least 48sqft per person for dining rooms.
 - Consider scheduled meal times, to ensure social distancing and facilitate contact tracing.

4. Modify Move-In to allow social distancing.
 - Lengthen move in period to 3 or 4 days.
 - Schedule students for specific time/date.
 - Restrict guest access to the residence halls, except to assist a student with move-in. (No more than two guests would be allowed to assist with move-in).

5. Change social practices in the residence halls to enforce social distancing.
 - Create programs that take advantage of social media and video apps to help support students, laugh together, and take care of each other until the virus is under control.
 - Mark floors in front of desks to indicate waiting distance. Confidential information could be shared via phone or email to the front desks.

Retail Operations and Catering

1. All retail dining orders would be ordered and paid online.
 - Customers would need to pick up at a set time.
 - Considering Grub Hub, Get Food, and others to serve as an online ordering platform.

2. CJ's would operate relatively normally.
 - Consider eliminating cash transactions and switching to card-only.

- Increase in commissary grab and go products available, such as sandwiches, salads, sushi, etc.
3. Catering may not operate until social distancing regulations can support such programs.
- The catering staff and potentially the catering kitchen may need to be used to support additional residential dining operations and grab and go production for retail dining.