



## CPG Update: November 2, 2020

### WHAT'S NEW?

Here is a summary of what's been updated and/or recently announced about the upcoming semester:

**COVID TESTING** - Surveillance testing levels have been modified to now include 50% of the students (both on and off campus) each week. Previously we announced a minimum of 15% of the population would be tested weekly, while the final decision was still under consideration. By testing half of the students each week, the entire student body will be tested on a bi-weekly basis.

**HOUSING DEADLINE** - the deadline to apply for spring housing has been revised to November 11th. Applications received after that date will be considered only if there are remaining available spaces. Requests to cancel on-campus housing contracts and meal plans after Nov. 11th - for extenuating circumstances only - should be sent to [Residential\\_Life@washcoll.edu](mailto:Residential_Life@washcoll.edu) for review.

**REFUND POLICY** - Please note that the refund policy of Washington College for the Spring semester is as follows:

**If the College closes housing after the start of the term:** If a student has to leave campus due to a campus shutdown from COVID-19, a room and board pro-rated refund would be given. Tuition and fees will not be refunded.

**If a student chooses to leave on-campus housing before the end of the semester:** If the College remains open (there is no shut down), no refunds will be issued if a parent/guardian/student decides to have their student move out.

Spring course registration has begun! Currently, seniors are in the process of registering for their classes for the spring semester. The remainder of the schedule is as follows:

- Juniors register this Friday (11/6), followed by sophomores (11/13) and then freshmen (11/20).
- Students will have appointments with their advisors to plan their spring course schedules prior to their registration dates.
- First-year advisors go through training to set students up on the best path depending on whether students know what they want to major in or not.
- Registration information is sent to students the week of their registration.

# Please join us for a **Zoom Forum for Parents**

with:

**Dr. Wayne Powell, President**

**Dr. Michael Harvey, Provost**

**Dr. Sarah Feyerherm, VP for  
Student Affairs**

**Thad Moore, Dir. of  
Athletics**

**Lisa Marx, CRNP  
Dir. of Health Services**



In response the number of questions around health and safety protocols and athletics, our **Director of Health Services** and **Director of Athletics** are joining this session. Questions are encouraged in advance - the link to that form can be found in the confirmation email.

**Thursday, Nov. 12 / 5 to 6 PM**

Sign up today for this session.



**Please join us for the next Parent Forum on November 12 at 5 PM.**

Thad Moore, Director of Athletics and Lisa Marx, Director of Health Services, will also be joining this session (along with Dr. Powell, Dr. Harvey and Dr. Feyerherm) to take questions specific to those areas. We encourage questions to be submitted in advance (use the link below). The session will again be recorded and posted.

[Please submit questions in advance here.](#)

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: SPRING SEMESTER 2021

We have received a number of great questions about the spring semester and want to again thank the community for your thoughtful inquiries and continued input. Below we have included a recap of the questions we have received most commonly and the response. We will continue to update this information with new Q&A's in the weeks ahead.

Additionally, we are compiling a guide (consider it the Ultimate Guide to Spring Semester at WC!) that will include pretty much everything a student needs to know about the upcoming semester. Our goal is to distribute this guide to students and parents by mid-December at the latest.

## **Q: If classes change to in-person in the middle of the semester will the students who stayed at home be allowed to return to campus?**

**A:** This is contingent upon housing availability, which at this point is unknown. Once all students have made their decisions for the spring semester and housing assignments have been made we will know if there is capacity to consider options for a mid-semester return. That information will be communicated once we know more. If they are approved to return at the mid-point, they will be required to follow the same testing upon arrival and the two-week quarantine upon arrival. Additionally, they will need to provide proof of the influenza vaccine (and all other health forms).

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## **Q: How will student behavior and adherence to the safety standards be monitored and enforced?**

**A:** The existing student code of conduct is under review and being modified to account for COVID compliance and how failure to adhere to these safety standards will be handled. This is currently in committee and all constituencies are represented, including students. Once this is finalized, students will be informed and required to sign a pledge acknowledging their understanding of these expectations. Parents will receive this communication as well, so that everyone is fully informed prior to the start of the semester as to the consequences of any actions that are in violation of the student code and/or put the community at risk.

Additionally, we are working with student leaders to develop a student-centered campaign to promote positive behaviors and urge students to take ownership of the actions that are necessary to keep the community safe and healthy. This will include a focus on the things that they can do and enjoy during the semester.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: SPRING SEMESTER 2021 (cont'd)

## **Q: Will student-athletes be invited to return to campus early for pre-season (assuming there will be competition)?**

**A:** While there is no decision yet on the competition season for winter or spring sports, in anticipation of competitions being approved, the Athletics Department is currently modeling schedules that would have those contests starting in March. Therefore, there isn't a need to have student-athletes return early. The arrival window of 1/18 - 1/30 still provides ample time for pre-season preparations. However, we will again reiterate that there is no decision at this time.

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## **Q: A question about the request to quarantine at home prior to arrival on campus - if I have to fly to get to Chestertown, won't that mean breaking quarantine?**

**A:** We understand that for some, in order to get to campus, you will need to "break quarantine" and that's ok. The goal of the quarantine at home is to have students really limit their exposure prior to their arrival, so that we start out with a low baseline. So we'd ask that you still follow that request before arrival, again understanding that the need to travel is not something that can be avoided. During that travel, we would definitely encourage you to follow all best practices and guidelines around mask wearing, hand sanitizer use, etc. This will also help to reduce the risks associated with that travel.

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## **Q: If I send care packages to my student, will they be able to get them during the initial quarantine period on campus?**

**A:** Yes! Absolutely send care packages to your students. We consider this activity to be similar to walking over to Hodson Hall for Grab & Go meals - as long as they comply with all safety protocols (wear a mask, don't congregate with other students, social distancing if there's a line, etc.) then this is something they can do even during that initial two-week quarantine window.

If a student is later sent to quarantine or isolation housing, the delivery of mail and packages will be coordinated by the COVID Care Coordinators and/or Residential Life teams.

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## **Q: After the initial 2 week quarantine period, will students be allowed to visit each other in other dorms?**

**A:** Students may be permitted to visit students in their own residence hall following social distancing protocols and wearing masks. They will not be able to go inside of other residence halls or have other building residents visit them. They will though have opportunities for safe socialization activities outside of their residence halls.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: SPRING SEMESTER 2021 (cont'd)

## **Q: What will happen if a student has to go into quarantine or isolation due to exposure or a positive test? Will they have time to pack? Can they call home?**

A: The answer to those questions are Yes and Yes (yes they'll have time to gather their things, and yes, they can call home). But the bigger answer is that we have been preparing a "what to expect" document that walks you through what the process and sequence of events will be should you test positive or have to quarantine due to exposure to someone who has tested positive. This informational guide will cover everything from what to pack, to meals, to how trash will be handled. You can expect this to be distributed to all students and parents in the next month. This guide will give students a comfort level with knowing what will happen in either of these scenarios.

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## **Q: MOVE-IN PROCESS - there were a high number of questions specific to move-in, so the answer that follows is a summary of this process.**

**ROOM ASSIGNMENTS:** Room assignments are in process, but at this point it continues to be a moving target as many families are still considering their options and have not yet made a final decision. They are being filled as quickly as possible, but we do not yet have a specific date for notification. An ETA for completing all assignments is by the second week of November.

**ASSISTANCE:** Move-ins will be staggered, beginning Jan. 18. Students may have two helpers with them. Everyone must wear a mask at all times during move-in, and helpers will not be permitted to remain on campus once the belongings have been dropped off. A reminder as well that all students must have verification of a flu shot and all other health forms turned in prior to move-in. They will also be administered a COVID test upon arrival, before getting their keys.

**MOVE-IN DATE ASSIGNMENT:** Assigning move-in dates will be the next notification, after rooming assignments. We understand that students need early notification in order to comply with the quarantine at home window, so this information will be provided in time to plan for that stay at home period.

Regarding assignments from the Fall and then transferring over to spring, here are some further details:  
**I had a western shore assignment picked out for Fall 20 before as a senior/junior, do I get that back?** For seniors and juniors who chose western shore in Fall 2020- yes, the plan is to pull up the roster from that original fall assignment (just before the semester was cancelled) and use that as a guideline to house juniors and seniors in western shore- those assignments actually remained very stable and little was changed even though every other area had a lot of re-assigning due to covid.

**I wasn't assigned to the western shore but somewhere else. Can I get my old assignment back?**  
For all other halls that were assigned, we are not guaranteeing that students will be in the same assignment for a wide variety of reasons. The process of assigning students with their suite/roommate requests has started and Residential Life will attempt to keep them in proximity to each other.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: SPRING SEMESTER 2021 (cont'd)

**Q: If students self report symptoms, are they automatically moved into quarantine space and tested? And if yes, have provisions been made for weekend testing or must the student wait until Monday to be tested?**

**A:** Yes, a student who is reporting symptoms will be automatically moved into quarantine and tested. Presently, Labcorp and Health Services aren't open for weekend testing. You raise a good point and as Dr. Feyerherm mentioned during the Forum, we do need to address a process for symptomatic students over the weekend. We will be providing further details on that as we formalize the "after-hours/weekend" plan, which will likely include the Quarantine & Isolation staff - this group will be staffed 24/7 - having Health Services staff o-call, and/or even partnership with the local hospital as it relates to weekend testing and more urgent care needs. We owe you some detail, but rest assured we won't leave students to fend for themselves should they fall ill on a Friday night.

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**Q: Will I be able to visit my student during the semester?**

**A:** While this is still under consideration, at minimum there will be no visits permitted during the first two weeks while students are being asked to self-quarantine. Our official **Visitor's Policy** states that visitors are restricted to those on official business and whose reason for being on campus is critical to the College's operations. Every contact with someone outside the campus "bubble" presents a risk that we need to avoid, which is why we are approaching it this way. While we will certainly permit a parent/guardian access to campus in the event of an emergency, the best way to keep the campus stable and healthy is for families to assume that they will not have in-person access to their student during the semester.

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**Q: Are you considering the creation of outdoor learning spaces?**

**A:** Yes, that is a topic that the CPG has been discussing and are working towards - both for learning opportunities and ways that students can safely socialize. No specific details available yet, but will be sure to provide updates as we are able to.

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**Q: If there's a Spring break when people leave campus and then come back, how will in-person instruction proceed? Wouldn't another quarantine be called for?**

**A:** Two things on that - one is that Spring Break this year is just a 4-day weekend and not the typical week off. The reason for that is largely because we don't want students traveling off campus...but do understand the need for a mental health break. The second thing is that the policy for spring is that travel off campus (outside of visits to town) is STRONGLY DISCOURAGED. We really want students to understand that coming to campus for spring means staying put for the semester. Travel off campus may, as you noted, require additional quarantine time.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: SPRING SEMESTER 2021 (cont'd)

## **Q: If our student tests positive, will we be able to take him/her home?**

**A:** When possible and consistent with CDC guidance, and in consultation with the family as to what's best for them overall, students who are ill would be able to go home if they can travel there safely. Because CDC guidelines around this continue to evolve and individual state mandates also vary (and continue to change), each situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine what the best course of action is. We will add that we are supportive of students who want to go home and can get there safely but will have balance that against state and CDC guidance at the time.

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## **Q: If a student opts NOT to live on campus, or nearby in Chestertown, will they be able to go on campus for a day, for instance?**

**A:** Yes, we recognize the need for this for a variety of reasons and will be accommodating visits from students not living on-campus or in off-campus housing. They will however need to follow standard protocols in coming to campus (symptom attestation, mask wearing, social distancing, etc.). This also applies to students who live close enough and would like access to campus, either occasionally or for regular athletics practices. Students who are coming more regularly will also need to be part of the testing program.

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## **Q: Will faculty be holding office hours for students with questions on advising, etc.?**

**A:** Yes. And if scheduled office hours don't work for a particular student, faculty members will find other times that are mutually convenient. When in doubt, ask the faculty member directly! Faculty are here to talk to students.

## **COVID DATA - as of 11/2**

The data included here represents cumulative totals since classes began on August 24. (Currently there are 245 off campus students, and 37 on-campus students.)

- **Total positive cases among students: 17 (1 on-campus student, 16 off-campus)**
- **Total students quarantined due to exposure since Aug 24: 53**
- **Number of students currently in isolation: 0 (student status is pending test results)**

## **Don't forget to get your flu shot!**

An influenza vaccine is a new requirement for all returning students for Spring 2021. Proof of vaccine must be uploaded through the Health Portal two weeks prior to your move-in date if living on campus, or by Feb. 1 for students living off-campus. You can get your vaccine anytime and we encourage you to do so now. The deadline noted here is for receipt of the documentation only.

Don't forget the Flu Shot Clinic with Walgreens on campus this Wed. 11/4. Call 410-778-7261 to reserve a spot. Walgreens will bill your health insurance plan.