

TITANS RETURN



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

June 11, 2020

Recommendations by the

**UW Oshkosh
Recovery Task Force**

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UW System Guiding Principles for Fall 2020

- UW System will prioritize student and employee health and student academic progress in planning and delivering its mission for the Fall 2020 semester.
- UW System campuses' goal is to maximize in-person instruction for the Fall 2020 semester.
- University housing will be open and available for students in the Fall 2020 semester.
- UW System will offer flexibility for employees, particularly in high-risk categories, to work remotely to the extent practicable.

UWO Guiding Principles for 2020-21 Academic Year

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh provides a high-quality liberal education to all students to prepare them to become successful leaders in an increasingly diverse and global society. Our dedicated faculty and staff are committed to innovative teaching, research, economic development, entrepreneurship and community engagement to create a more sustainable future for Wisconsin and beyond.

UW Oshkosh will continue to operate under this mission with safety of our staff and students at the center of decisions we make for this academic year.

Background

The Recovery Task Force (RTF) was formed as an extension of the work of the Emergency Operations Committee (EOC) which made recommendations concerning University safety during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing primarily on reducing University operations. As conversations evolved to reopening, UW Oshkosh leadership recognized that it was necessary to form a separate group to study and provide recommendations regarding how to safely resume operations. The RTF was tasked with building upon the work of the EOC to develop recommendations to safely conduct University operations beginning in Fall 2020, to include instructional scenarios, aspects of student life, impact on facilities, how to manage COVID transmission and cases, and the financial impact of recommendations.

RTF Membership

The RTF has broad-based representation across campuses including administration, faculty, staff and students. It was led by the UW Oshkosh Police Chief and supported and facilitated by EOC leadership and experts from the University.

RTF Process

Chancellor Leavitt charged the RTF on May 15, encouraging innovation and cross-lateral thinking across the entire University, with a recognition that flexibility was necessary with its recommendations and approach to the final proposal. The RTF developed a Project Plan to guide its work which included identification of both internal and external “subject matter experts” with whom the RTF could consult as needed during the development of its recommendations. The RTF split into “teams” based on impact areas (Impact Area Teams):

- Academics and Student Learning
- Student Life
- Facility Capacity
- Financial
- COVID-Response

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary for the RTF to conduct its work virtually. Microsoft Teams was utilized extensively for meetings, to share and develop documents and ideas, for discussion and to collaborate.

Over the course of 18 calendar days, the RTF conducted five three-hour full task force meetings, where there was an opportunity to gather information from subject matter experts, discuss issues impacting the recommendations, develop criteria to evaluate operational scenarios, narrow down viable scenarios and ultimately reach consensus on recommendations for resuming University operations. Information shared included presentations and Q&A by:

- Aurora Medical Center Oshkosh Chief Medical Officer Dr. John Newman on health and safety issues particular to the university setting and most impactful practices to reduce transmission;
- UWO Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources Shawna Kuether on relevant employee topics;
- UWO Chief Technology Officer Victor Alatorre on status of University technology infrastructure and abilities to enhance capabilities;

The RTF also took part in a webinar with UW System Deputy General Counsel Jennifer Lattis on COVID-19 and Liability of Immunity issues. Lori Welch, campus contact for UW System PlanAhead Team provided periodic updates to the RTF on UW System conversations and development of guidelines around reopening campuses and EOC members updated on local public health developments. The RTF and Impact Area Teams also reviewed numerous articles and studies on COVID-19 transmission, best practices in health and safety measures and student and employee preferences in higher education (References, pg. 12).

The Impact Area Teams worked intensively to evaluate information, engage in robust discussion and generate reports containing detailed recommendations for resuming University operations which also included considerable information for the to-be-formed “Implementation Team” to utilize and consider.

The reports of the Impact Area Teams were used by the full Recovery Task Force to reach consensus on recommendations and formed the basis of this Recovery Plan.

Below is a summary of the recommendations concerning health and safety in “Keeping Us Safe”. This section encompasses the cleaning and safety recommendations of all of the teams with particular focus on the Facilities and COVID Response Impact Area Teams. The Report continues with a summary of the recommendations of the Academics and Student Learning Impact Area Team in “Academics and Student Learning” and the recommendations of the Student Life Impact Area Team in “Student Life.” The Report concludes with “Next Steps” which includes information about Soliciting Feedback, the Implementation Team and the Communication Plan.

Titans Return - Recovery Plan

Keeping Us Safe

In order to keep our University safe and open and to cultivate a strong and inclusive learning environment, all students, faculty and staff will need to contribute. Embracing awareness and considering how our decisions and actions affect our community will be pivotal in the success of our “new normal”. We should strive to foster a culture of accountability so that we are all protecting one another.

A combination of hygiene, disinfection, physical distancing, masks, testing, and contact tracing must occur in tandem with one another to be successful. All areas of the University will need to adopt some form of each of these health and safety measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Other important aspects of safety include making accommodations for mental health needs and ensuring there is a strong relationship with the local health departments and Student Health Center.

Mandatory Actions

- a. All faculty, staff, students and guests of the University are required to wear a face covering while inside University buildings, including classrooms. Residential areas of residence halls, i.e., dorm rooms, are exempted from this requirement. Private offices and other spaces may be exempted when occupied by only one person.

- b. All faculty, staff and students are required to participate in COVID-related safety training.
- c. All faculty, staff and students are required to take the “Titan Pledge” for behavior designed to keep our Titan community safe.
- d. All faculty, staff and students are required to physically distance when possible.

Protecting Mental Health

- a. Evaluate how to reduce stigma of positive cases and promote health and wellness.
- b. Identify safe spaces on campuses for students to be able to relax and take off masks.
- c. Determine how to accommodate the increased mental health needs of students and employees related to COVID-19.

Hygiene

- a. Provide sanitizer refills and disinfecting wipes in all common areas.
- b. Develop a communication campaign about hygiene best practices, i.e., hand washing, face touching.
- c. Provide a basic hygiene kit to all employees and students at the start of the Fall semester.

Physical Space (De-Densifying and Modifications)

Communal Areas

- a. Ensure spaces are configured to facilitate physical distancing.
- b. Utilize non-traditional spaces as classrooms to allow for more classes to have face to face components.
- c. Evaluate limiting access to drinking fountains.
- d. Install Plexiglass barriers for service counters where possible.

Office Spaces

- a. Reduce the number of staff occupying office spaces by encouraging telecommuting to the extent possible and within guidance to be provided by UWO Human Resources.
- b. Employee workspaces should be reviewed and adjusted to maximize physical distancing.
- c. Employees are expected to practice physical distancing in office and shared workspace settings.
- d. Employees should not use one another’s office or related office furniture and equipment such as desk, phone, computer or chair.
- e. Employees should meet virtually whenever possible.

Classrooms

- a. Reduce student occupancy capacity in all classrooms.
- b. Adhere to current physical distancing guidelines.
- c. Provide disinfectant supplies (such as wipes) in classrooms.

- d. Establish a disinfection protocol between classes.

Residence Halls

- a. Ensure common areas in residence halls are disinfected, spaces are set up to allow for physical distancing and that residents and guests are following health and safety measures.
- b. Follow disinfection procedures developed by the University and informed by Federal, State and UW System guidance.
- c. Have available disinfection supplies for residents to use in high touch areas.
- d. Partner with third party owner and operator of student housing on Fox Cities and Fond du Lac campuses to ensure appropriate health/safety protocols are in place.

Signage

Place signage in various locations around the University to remind everyone about physical distancing, hygiene, masks, and other enhanced health and safety measures.

Meetings and Events

Develop a multi-phased approach to scheduling and approving events based on UWO health and safety guidelines. Initially events may be held virtually.

Institutional and instructional meetings should, to the extent feasible and practical, be held virtually until such time as there is additional health and safety guidance recommending otherwise.

Dining

- a. Increase physical distancing and self-hygiene opportunities in dining locations and where food is served and/or consumed.
- b. Establish heightened COVID-19 safety protocols in all food service areas for anyone who enters the facility.
- c. Offer dining options to accommodate ill and high-risk individuals.

Athletics

- a. Athletics will resume in some capacity for Fall 2020. Athletes will return to the University with the assumption that health and safety guidelines are followed through a phased approach of physical distancing and health monitoring. A robust testing protocol and high level of accountability will also be required to ensure minimal spread of COVID-19.
- b. Determine safety needs of various stakeholders (athletes, coaches, officials, trainers, support staff, spectators) and work collaboratively with conference staff to include screening, hygiene, and physical distancing.

Assessment and Testing

- a. Use a personal assessment tree (series of questions and actions to daily monitor symptoms) for students, staff and faculty through UWO Mobile App.

- b. Student Health Center will coordinate testing efforts of symptomatic students at the Oshkosh campus. Fond du Lac and Fox Cities campus students will seek testing through their local public health department, health care provider, or community testing sites. Currently, there is no plan to conduct baseline testing or to test asymptomatic students.
- c. Symptomatic employees are to consult their healthcare provider.
- d. Follow CDC guidance at the time of a positive test for response and return to class or work.

Isolation

- a. Isolate and manage symptomatic students on the Oshkosh campus. Symptomatic students at the Fox Cities and Fond du Lac campuses should consult their primary physicians and self-isolate if necessary.
- b. Some or all of a residence hall will be utilized for isolation purposes for COVID-19 positive Oshkosh campus student residents if needed.
- c. Develop a plan to staff this building if it's used in this capacity (disinfection, food service, laundry service, and medical attention).
- d. Residents at the Fond du Lac and Fox Cities campuses will self-isolate in their third-party owned residence hall.
- e. Students living off-campus will be given guidance on how to best isolate and who to contact with questions or concerns.

Symptomatic employees or students

- a. If students, staff or faculty feel ill they should stay home.
 - i. Human Resources will work with employees regarding leave options.
 - ii. University should create an environment that encourages reporting illness and staying home as not punitive toward employees or students.
- b. Implement a mechanism to allow the University community to report behaviors by individuals that may not comply with expectations for health and safety.

Tracing

- a. Collaborate with local county health departments to develop a plan for contact tracing.
- b. Seek volunteer students and staff to assist with performing contact tracing and analysis of data.
- c. Ensure confidentiality requirements are maintained.

COVID Response Team

- a. Create of a response team to oversee the COVID-19 pandemic during the 2020 Fall semester and beyond.
- b. Review and maintain COVID-19 related policies and procedures for instruction, employee, student life, campus activities and facilities.
- c. Assess compliance of newly created policies and procedures through audit or inspection.

Academics and Student Learning

Course Delivery – Flexible Learning Environment

Courses will be offered in a flexible learning format, depending on class size, course characteristics and timing in the semester. There is an expectation that a majority of classes will have a meaningful face-to-face (FTF) component. Larger classes where physical distancing is not possible due to facility constraints are delivered entirely online/remotely or with Modified Tutorial model, while smaller classes where physical distancing is possible are delivered using the Hyflex model. Below are descriptions of these instructional modalities. The intent is to offer flexibility to students and instructors and to allow for modifying course delivery as the circumstances warrant.

- a. **HyFlex:** Course delivery is both FTF and online, and students can choose to participate in person or remotely.
 - i. Instructors record and post class lectures or make substitute video content available simultaneously or following FTF delivery.
 - ii. The degree to which the online delivery option is synchronous with FTF is at the discretion of the instructor.
- b. **Modified Tutorial delivery:** Each student would have both online and FTF interaction each week.
 - i. Some class sessions (e.g., lectures) are entirely remote.
 - ii. Lectures are recorded and/or livestreamed, with no FTF attendance.
 - iii. Other class sessions (e.g., discussions, performances, activities, labs, etc.) are held FTF in smaller groups.
- c. **Online/Remote:** All course content and delivery are fully online.

Delivery Mode Criteria

- a. Larger density classes are delivered **fully online**.
- b. Lower density classes are delivered as **HyFlex** and/or **Modified Tutorial** depending on the course disposition and if classroom capacity allows.
- c. **Attendance Modulation.** Some courses may have attendance modulation, where an instructor institutes an alternate day/week FTF and remote participation, depending on enrollment caps and physical distancing occupancy standards for the classroom.

Arrangement

- a. **Regular Start Date:** Classes will resume as planned Wednesday September 9th.
- b. **Reduced in-person offerings after Thanksgiving:** The remainder of the semester after Thanksgiving moves to a fully online course modality. Labs or smaller courses may continue with their HyFlex/Modified Tutorial delivery
- c. **The University will remain open** throughout the 2020-2021 academic year.
- d. **Fall Interim:** Will run as originally scheduled from Jan. 4 to 22 and classes will be largely remote with few exceptions.

Student Life

Residence Halls

Residence halls will be open and filled in accordance with normal procedure, with first year students assigned double occupancy rooms and upper level students assigned to the rooms they chose during the housing selection process (single, double or triple rooms, or Horizon Village suites). Once the semester has started, it is possible there will be additional rooms available that could be assigned to students who are currently assigned a room other than single occupancy but would prefer that option. Residence Life will develop a process to assign extra rooms if demand for single occupancy rooms exceeds available supply. There will be additional health and safety measures in place as set forth in “Keeping Us Safe” above, and as further determined by the Implementation Team.

Dining

University Dining will offer various dining experiences to include catering, open style seating, delivery and carry-out options for locations offering food. There will be additional health and safety measures in place as set forth in “Keeping Us Safe”, above and as further determined by the Implementation Team.

Student Events

Student events, as with other events on campus, will resume in a phased approach in accordance with UWO health and safety guidelines. There will be additional health and safety measures in place as set forth in “Keeping Us Safe” above, and further determined by the Implementation Team.

Athletics and Recreation

Athletics will resume Fall 2020 in accordance with guidance from the NCAA, WIAC and health and safety recommendations from local, state and federal health officials. Recreational activities will resume Fall 2020. There will be additional health and safety measures in place as set forth in “Keeping Us Safe” above, and as further determined by the Implementation Team.

Next Steps

Soliciting Feedback

The input of how Titans return to campus is extremely important. For this reason, a survey will be sent to employees and students to solicit feedback on this Recovery Plan. This survey will focus on major aspects of the plan and give an opportunity for community response. This recovery effort will require our entire community to buy-in and embrace an empathetic and accountable culture to stay healthy while upholding our collective values as a community. The results of the survey will be assessed by the Recovery Task Force and/or Implementation Team.

Implementation Team

The purpose of the Recovery Task Force was to research the best and most cost-effective strategy for bringing students and employees back to the University safely. The next stage is to put this high-level plan into action. The Implementation Team will consist of members from the Emergency Operations Center, Recovery Task Force, Instruction, and others from campus to write procedures and develop processes around the Recovery Plan. A core Implementation Team will be developed with larger subgroups in specified areas to update protocols and tailor plans to needs of specific areas.

Spring Semester: The University will continue to evaluate delivery and timing for Spring Semester. Decisions will be made based on the current activity of the virus and operations at the University.

Communication / Education

Communications and marketing are necessary components of the Recovery Plan. How we communicate the importance of our actions and how our actions affect our community will be the bedrock of our success. These communications will be developed by University Marketing and Communications in line with UW System communications and local, state and national health guidelines, with an emphasis on health and safety; information; recruitment/enrollment needs; visual appeal; and the idea that we are “all in this together” when it comes to keeping each other safe. These communications will include a dedicated website, social media updates, printed collateral and training.

Evaluation and Pivoting

This Recovery Plan is fluid, based on the current behavior of COVID-19, federal, state and local guidance, financial viability, and employee capacity to implement and maintain this plan. We will continue to evaluate procedures, financial impact and capacity as this plan is implemented. It is likely that the Implementation Team and subgroups will continually need to pivot and re-evaluate strategies and decisions made and be prepared to move entirely remote if health and safety conditions require it.

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