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Key Assumptions for Fall 2021 Planning

1. No de-densification or social distancing is required.
2. Face coverings will not be required on campus if you are fully vaccinated.
3. All students will be vaccinated or approved for an exemption.
4. The majority of faculty and staff will be vaccinated.
5. Physical barriers are not required for customer-facing operations.
6. Asymptomatic testing will not be required for students who have been vaccinated.
7. Residential halls will not be required to be single occupancy.
8. Dining Services will be fully operational without restrictions.
9. Athletics will practice and compete without restrictions.
10. All staff will return to normal operations on campus the week of August 2, 2021, based on safety protocols and to allow time for employees to become vaccinated and make appropriate childcare and other personal arrangements.

Planning Process

In the summer of 2020, UMass Dartmouth formally announced the creation of an overarching Pandemic Emergency Response Team (PERT). PERT is a collaborative effort of students, faculty, and staff to help the University address the immediate needs of the community and maintain the continuity of its critical mission of education.

PERT has been configured into ten planning groups that span the workings of every area of campus and bring multiple forms of expertise and skills to help campus operate safely. Each group has submitted a detailed report on their specific area, which was used to create UMass Dartmouth’s prior semester planning documents. The PERT groups have continued to work towards the University’s goal of returning to normal operations.

The PERT groups are:

- Onsite Learning with Social Distancing
- Lab and Research
- Online and Blended Learning
- Graduate and Law
- Facility Preparation and Supplies
- Daily Operations
- Residence Halls
- Dining Services
- Pre-Opening Programs
- Events and Athletics

The University has an Implementation Team made up of students, faculty, and staff that meet weekly to address issues as they arise and recommend adjustments to this plan and daily operations, as necessary. In addition, the Health and Safety Committee is a joint Labor-Management Committee established and dedicated to working in collaboration to identify,
bargain, and resolve, to the best of its ability, the health and safety issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the campus, students, staff, and the South Coast region. The Committee is comprised of the UMass Dartmouth Administrative Team and members of the UMASS Dartmouth Unions United.

Health & Safety
In each functional area of UMass Dartmouth, health and safety remain the top priority. Throughout the entire COVID-19 pandemic, the University has followed the science as well as the guidance of the CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health and will continue to do so as conditions improve due to vaccinations.

- Requirement of COVID-19 vaccinations for all undergraduate and graduate students who wish to live, learn, or physically come to campus before the start of the Fall 2021 semester unless an exemption waiver is received.
- All faculty and staff are encouraged to be fully vaccinated before the start of the fall semester.
- Face coverings will not be required on campus if you are fully vaccinated.
- Massachusetts guidance still requires face coverings to be worn in some settings, such as public transportation, health care, and childcare settings. Students, faculty, and staff will still be required to wear face coverings while using campus shuttles, visiting Health Services or the Counseling Center.
- Asymptomatic surveillance testing will not be required for individuals who are fully vaccinated in the Fall 2021 Semester.
- Reserving a limited amount of on-campus residential space for quarantine and isolation.
- UMass Dartmouth is using all available methods of communication to promote the necessary safety precautions to inform the community.

Vaccinations
Throughout the pandemic, the University has followed the science, which led to health and safety protocols that protected our campus. The science is clear that vaccination is the best way to stop COVID-19 from spreading and our best way to continue protecting each other’s wellbeing.

- UMass Dartmouth will require COVID-19 vaccinations for all undergraduate and graduate students who wish to live, learn, or physically come to campus before the start of the Fall 2021 semester.
- This decision was made on the basis of expected additional state, federal and legal guidance and vaccine availability. The University will accommodate medical, religious, or disability exemptions pursuant to state and federal law. Evidence to date concerning the present and expected approval status and effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccines supports the university’s position.
- Students are required to upload their proof of vaccination to the Health Services Portal. Students claiming an exemption to the requirement must also submit either a written request for exemption upon religious grounds or medical exemption documentation from a healthcare provider.
• Consistent with other campuses in the UMass System, UMass Dartmouth also strongly encourages and recommends that:
  o All faculty and staff be fully vaccinated
  o Visit the Health Services Portal to indicate their vaccination status before the start of the Fall semester. Proof of vaccination is confidential and is only available to health care professionals on campus in order to assist them in making campus-level health recommendations and reacting to potential outbreaks. If the Department of Public Health changes vaccine recommendations or requirements these polices may be revisited in order to promote the health and safety of our entire campus community.

• Please visit VaxFinder.mass.gov to find an appointment at retail pharmacies and community health centers near you.

• Throughout the Spring and Summer, the University will continue its public health messaging campaigns to remind and educate students, faculty, and staff about the importance of vaccination.

• International students who intend to get vaccinated in the United States are urged to arrive well ahead of the start of the semester to be fully vaccinated by September 1, 2021.

• Fully vaccinated is defined as two weeks after a second dose in the two-dose vaccine or two weeks following a single-dose vaccine.

Testing
During the 2020-2021 Academic year, UMass Dartmouth utilized a robust asymptomatic surveillance-testing program where thousands of students, faculty, and staff engaged with testing each week. All residential students and commuter students that visit campus regularly were required to test weekly. Since the Testing Center began operations on August 17, 2020, more than 43,000 tests were administered. Asymptomatic surveillance testing will not be required for individuals who are fully vaccinated in the Fall 2021 Semester.

Academics
UMass Dartmouth anticipates resuming on-campus, in-person classes for all applicable students for the Fall 2021 semester. There are no changes to the 2021-2022 Academic Calendar. The first day of classes will be Wednesday, September 1, 2021. The first day of classes for UMass Law will be Monday, August 30, 2021. Students, faculty, and staff should plan to return to campus for in-person instruction.

In-person Teaching and Learning
Classrooms, labs, studios, and clinics will return to pre-pandemic student and faculty density.
  • The University will continuously monitor federal and state public health guidance and classroom configurations and protocols will be adapted as necessary and communicated with the campus community.
• With more than a year of remote learning experience for our community, should pandemic conditions worsen, the University is prepared for a switch to remote instruction.

Selected Remote Teaching and Learning Opportunities
The final schedule for fully online courses being offered in the Fall 2021 semester are now listed in COIN.

Academic Advising
Academic advising will return to pre-pandemic operations, per public health guidelines. Throughout the pandemic, virtual meeting options and technologies have provided increased flexibility for students, faculty, and staff. These practices are encouraged to continue to provide greater access to student support.

Library Access
The Claire T. Carney Library will be open during normal hours throughout the Fall 2021 semester. Protocols within the Library regarding social distancing, use of face coverings, eating and drinking, and sanitation measures will be adjusted per public health guidance.

Research
All research lab procedures at UMass Dartmouth must comply with the Massachusetts Safety Standards for Laboratories to enable activities that are currently allowed by the State Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplaces. Protocols within labs regarding social distancing, use of face coverings, eating and drinking, and sanitation measures will be adjusted per public health guidance. Researchers must receive approval from the Chief Research Officer to perform on-campus research.

Student Affairs
Protecting the health and safety of students while enabling them to progress towards their educational goals continues to be the most important part of pandemic planning efforts. UMass Dartmouth is committed to supporting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) members of the campus community who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. This includes counseling, academic advising, and all necessary support services.

• UMass Dartmouth will require COVID-19 vaccinations for all undergraduate and graduate students who wish to live, learn, or physically come to campus before the start of the Fall 2021 semester.
• This decision was made on the basis of expected additional state, federal and legal guidance and vaccine availability. The University will accommodate medical, religious, or disability exemptions pursuant to state and federal law.
• Students are encouraged to adhere to all safety and wellbeing protocols.
• A student who tests positive will be required to isolate. Close contacts will be identified and be required to quarantine if they are not vaccinated.
• The University has specific residence halls and rooms on campus for required periods of quarantine or isolation for residential students. No visitors or guests are allowed in or around identified quarantine or isolation housing at any time.
• All residential students who are in quarantine or isolation on campus will be fully supported by health services, dining services, and additional offices as needed.
• Off-campus/commuter students are not allowed to quarantine or isolate themselves on campus and are required to comply with Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines for quarantine or isolation.
• Compliance with these requirements is a condition for returning to and remaining on campus.

Student Support Services
Student support services will return to pre-pandemic operations, per public health guidelines. Throughout the pandemic, virtual meeting options and technologies have provided increased flexibility for students, faculty, and staff and are encouraged to continue. If you need assistance from Student Affairs, please utilize this form.

Orientation
Please visit the Orientation website for the updated Orientation schedule for new UMass Dartmouth students. New Student Convocation is Wednesday, September 1, 2021.

Housing & Residential Life
Residential halls will not be required to be single occupancy, housing will return to pre-pandemic operations, per public health guidelines.

Move-In
New Student move-in will begin Saturday, August 28, and returning Student move-in begins on Tuesday, August 31.

Dining Services
Dining Services will return to pre-pandemic operations for dine-in. For more detailed information on changes to the dining experience, please visit the Dining Services website.

Remote/Hybrid Work
The University is currently developing a remote/hybrid work policy.

Events & Conferencing
All event venues, conferences, and student activities will resume activities in the fall and follow all public health guidance. Booking for on-campus events will begin after June 15, 2021.
Athletics
All athletic activities will follow public health and NCAA guidance for competition and fan attendance. UMass Dartmouth intends to sponsor Fall 2021 intercollegiate competition. Teams will work directly with their coaches and Athletics & Recreation staff to understand updated protocols for practice, training, travel, and competition.

The Fitness Center with resume pre-pandemic operations. For more information, please visit the Fitness Center website.

University-Travel
Please visit the Domestic & International Travel Information website for updated protocols and policy related to University-travel.

Resources & Contacts
- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- Governor Baker’s Plan for Reopening Massachusetts
- UMassD Returning to Campus Informational Website
- Student Affairs Department Directory
- Human Resources – 508.999.8060 or humanresources@umassd.edu
- On-Campus Emergency – UMassD Police – x9191 or 508.999.9191
- Counseling Center – 508.999.8648
- Health Services – 508.999.8982