

RADFORD
UNIVERSITY

COVID-19 Working Group

**SPRING 2021 SEMESTER
OPERATIONAL PLAN**

Executive Summary



Introduction

Radford University worked diligently over the spring and summer months to plan for and execute a successful reopening in the fall. Once students, faculty, and staff returned to campus, a number of additional initiatives and measures were put in place to ensure a safe learning, living, and working environment for all Highlanders.

As we prepare to conclude the Fall 2020 semester, we recognize that many students, faculty, and staff will be departing campus. The University is making arrangements for the availability of COVID-19 testing prior to their departure. As such, exit testing will be available by appointment and at no charge for students on the main campus and at Radford University Carilion (RUC) during the week of finals (November 16, 2020 through November 19, 2020). Information regarding dates, times, locations, and pre-registration links will be provided to the campus community by November 1, 2020. Any faculty and staff members interested in exit testing should email COVID19@radford.edu.

Building upon the success of the Fall 2020 semester, the COVID-19 Working Group, as well as many offices and departments, have provided critical support for continued engagement. Now is the time for our campus to prepare for the Spring 2021 semester and beyond as we continue to focus on the health, safety, and well-being of the campus and the community.

SPRING 2021 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Due to public health concerns regarding travel among students, as well as faculty and staff, and then returning to campus, Spring Break will be observed at the end of the semester, thereby concluding the semester a week early. As such, the Spring 2021 academic calendar for Radford University is being revised as follows.

- *January 13, 2021 through January 17, 2021:* Residence Halls Re-Open (Structured Return) and COVID-19 Prevalence Testing
- *Monday, January 18, 2021:* Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- *Tuesday, January 19, 2021:* Spring Classes Begin
- *Monday, January 25, 2021:* Last Day for Undergraduate Students to Add/Drop Classes
- *Monday, February 1, 2021:* Last Day for Graduate Students to Apply for Spring Graduation
- *Tuesday, February 2, 2021:* Last Day to Change Pass/Fail or Audit Options, Last Day for Graduate Students to Add/Drop, Census Date, and Last Day to Withdraw with a Full Tuition Refund
- *Friday, March 12, 2021:* Mid-Semester Grades Due by 10:00 a.m.
- *Friday, March 26, 2021:* Last Day to Withdraw from One or More (but not all) Classes with a Grade of "W"
- *Friday, April 9, 2021:* Last Day to Withdraw from the University (all classes) with a Grade of "W"
- *Friday, April 23, 2021:* Last Day of Classes
- *Monday, April 26, 2021 through Thursday, April 29, 2021:* Spring Exams
- *Thursday, April 29, 2021 through Sunday, May 2, 2021:* Class of 2020 Commencement Ceremonies and Related Activities
- *Friday, April 30, 2021 through Sunday, May 2, 2021:* Class of 2021 Commencement Ceremonies, Related Activities, and Degree Conferral
- *Monday, May 3, 2021:* Grades Due by 2:00 p.m.

SPRING 2021 OPERATIONAL PLAN

After much review and in-depth analysis, the COVID-19 Working Group recommended the following actions to ensure a successful Spring 2021 semester.

The following items will continue with the current level of implementation and enforcement.

- The Commonwealth of Virginia masking requirement;
- Physical distancing in classrooms, laboratories, and shared spaces (such as common areas, meeting rooms, etc.);
- 50-person classroom capacity with an available option for “large” classes to meet with face-to-face instruction in a hybrid format and an available exemption due to faculty resources and/or accreditation requirements;
- Dedicated entry and exit points for all buildings;
- Two-person capacity in all elevators;
- Specialized cleaning and disinfection guidelines;
- Daily symptom tracker for all students, faculty, and staff;
- Visitor requirements and registration process for non-students, faculty, and staff;
- No visitors in residence halls;
- Structured process for the return of residential students;
- Initial screening of returning students in accordance with prevalence testing strategy; and
- Continued practice and competition in Athletics with a blanket exemption from the University for gathering limitations consistent with state orders and in accordance with Big South Conference and NCAA guidelines.

The following items have been evaluated for some level of continuation and/or reconsideration.

- Alternate learning arrangements for students;
- Alternate working arrangements for employees; and
- Gathering limitation for on-campus and off-campus events.

Alternate Learning Arrangements for Students

After navigating the Fall 2020 semester and reflecting on lessons learned, the Division of Student Affairs, in collaboration with the Division of Academic Affairs, has made several recommendations to improve the process for the Spring 2021 semester. As such, academic advisors should ask about, and students should be encouraged to make sure their academic advisors are aware of, the intent to take in-person classes and/or engage in online/remote learning. If students indicate an interest in remote learning options, then to the greatest extent possible, these students should enroll in courses that are listed as being delivered online as part of the Spring 2021 class schedule. If students need particular courses that are not offered online and there are no other courses to substitute for the Spring 2021 semester that would not impede progress to graduation, then students can request an Alternate Learning Arrangement for such courses.



The request form will be housed on the Office of the Dean of Students website at www.radford.edu/dos beginning on October 26, 2020. The request form will be available until January 3, 2021 and must be completed by that date. Individual follow-up will occur with students regarding their submitted requests and next steps.

Any questions about Alternate Learning Arrangements for Students should be directed to the Office of the Dean of Students by calling 540-831-6297 or emailing dos-web@radford.edu. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., but will observe all University closures around the holidays.

Alternate Working Arrangements for Employees

In order to ensure the business needs of the institution will be met, while also providing necessary flexibility to impacted employees, the University is accepting requests for Alternate Working Arrangements into Spring 2021 for eligible employees who are at increased risk for COVID-19 infection as defined by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html and as outlined below, in addition to other considerations as noted on the form.

People of any age with the following conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19:

- Cancer;
- Chronic kidney disease;
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease);
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant;
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher);
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies;
- Sickle cell disease; and
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus.



Radford University's COVID-19 Alternate Working Arrangement request process is in lieu of and supersedes the need to complete a separate Teleworking Agreement. Exceptions to the Teleworking Policy last only for the duration of the considered alternate working arrangements, specifically the Spring 2021 semester.

Employees who are at increased risk for COVID-19 should first discuss their concerns with their supervisor. Individual employees do not need to disclose any specific medical information only that he or she, a member of their household, or an individual for which the employee is the primary caregiver meets the higher risk criteria defined by the CDC guidelines. A request form is available at www.radford.edu/spring2021-alternativework and

should be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on October 13, 2020. Employees will receive an email confirmation of their submission. Submissions will be collected by the Department of Human Resources and reviewed by the appropriate division. Individual follow-up with employees will occur by October 20, 2020.

Any questions about Alternate Working Arrangements for Employees should be directed to the Department of Human Resources by calling 540-831-5008 or emailing hr@radford.edu. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Gathering Limitation for On-Campus and Off-Campus Events

During the Fall 2020 semester, Radford University made significant adjustments to the gathering limitation on main campus for both on-campus and off-campus events. The limitation for main campus was revised from 50 individuals to 10 individuals, while the limitation at RUC remained at 50 individuals. The increased restriction and related enforcement on main campus and in the surrounding area were critical components in slowing the spread of COVID-19.

As the Spring 2021 semester begins, a gathering limitation of 10 individuals will remain in place on main campus for on-campus and off-campus events. The RUC gathering limitation will remain at 50 individuals. Once the semester begins and if the number of positive cases remains low and overall compliance remains high, the following gathering limitations will be considered for the main campus.

- January 13, 2021 through February 3, 2021 – 10
- February 4, 2021 through February 18, 2021 – 25
- February 19, 2021 through March 5, 2021 – 40
- March 6, 2021 through March 20, 2021 – 50
- March 21, 2021 through April 4, 2021 – 75
- April 5, 2021 through April 26, 2021 – 100
- Commencement Week – TBD

Please note that classroom and laboratory instruction, as well as clinical rotations and field experiences, are not included as part of this limitation. Regular communication and important updates regarding up-to-date gathering limitations will be provided to the campus community and posted on the Reopening website. Exemptions may be requested and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. All gathering limitations will be in compliance with state orders, as well as local ordinances where appropriate.

Spring 2021 Commencement

Due to the change in the academic calendar, Commencement ceremonies and related activities for the Class of 2021 will be held from Friday, April 30, 2021 through Sunday, May 2, 2021. In-person ceremonies, for both undergraduates and graduates, will be held in Radford for the main campus and in Roanoke for RUC and comply with state mandates regarding attendance and capacity. Please note that multiple ceremonies will be held, and the Class of 2021 will graduate separately from the Class of 2020. All ceremonies will include required face coverings and enforced physical distancing.

SPRING 2021 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Local Health Officials: The University will continue its close collaboration and continued engagement with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), specifically the New River Health District, as well as the Roanoke/Alleghany Health District. This strong partnership was a critical component of our planning over the spring and summer months, as well as our implementation and response during the fall. Radford University is appreciative of VDH's partnership and work.



Student Health Center: On the main campus, the Student Health Center will be prepared to make necessary adjustments to their process and staffing based on student needs and utilization. During the Fall 2020 semester, the team quickly mobilized to add a secondary testing location and a revised in-take process to serve more students. The team also offered weekend hours for a number of weeks. The Radford family is grateful for their efforts and the partnership with Carilion Clinic. Such services will continue to be critical during the Spring 2021 semester and should be offered and adjusted as needed.

Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning: The Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) will deliver a variety of faculty development offerings in preparation for Spring 2021 based on faculty feedback. Specifically, CITL will facilitate the two-week Resilient and Flexible Teaching (RAFT) online course from January 4-18, 2021 welcoming anyone teaching in spring. CITL will also host Our Turn from January 5-7, 2021 tightly focused on spring teaching needs and featuring multiple faculty panels highlighting successful strategies. A one-day Our Turn on January 8, 2021 will focus on staff development. To accommodate faculty seeking support prior to January and after Our Turn, CITL will provide a series of day-long course development workshops in December and January. Finally, CITL will continue individual, department/school, and college consultations via multiple venues (in-person meetings, Zoom, email, Facebook, etc.).

Student Move-In, Prevalence Testing, and Campus Return: Students will move back into residence halls over an extended period and utilize a structured process. Information will be distributed by the Division of Student Affairs by December 15, 2020, including a method to sign-up for appointments. Students who are selected for re-entry testing will be required to comply in order to regain access to their residence hall. Prevalence testing will be required for students traveling to and/or returning from hot spots. All students will be asked to complete a Travel Declaration Form to assist with this process. Information regarding testing will be distributed to impacted students by January 8, 2021. Please note that any required testing, as part of move-in and/or return to campus, will be scheduled and completed in order for test results to be returned prior to the first day of class. All students, as well as faculty and staff, will be required to begin completing the Daily Symptom Tracker two weeks prior to returning to campus.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service: The Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service is a proud tradition for Radford University. The event platform is being revisited for the Spring of 2021.

Conclusion

We look forward to welcoming our students, faculty, and staff back to campus for the Spring 2021 semester! Any questions regarding the Spring 2021 Semester Operational Plan should be directed to COVID19@radford.edu.



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