

UAS Fall Semester and COVID - Updates, Questions, and Answers



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This time last year....

- Virus spreading out of control across the U.S.
- No possibility of vaccination
- Public Health unable to keep up with testing and tracing
- Huge anxiety heading into the fall semester
 - Would students be responsible?
 - Would we be overwhelmed when flu season hit?
 - Would we have to shut down housing (again)?
 - **Were we doing the right thing?**



What we did...

- COVID Incident Management Team
- Guidelines, restrictions and mitigation plans
- Modification to classrooms and campus spaces
- Communication, education and collaboration
- COVID report assessment team
- Promoted stability and flexibility
- Promoted vaccination, once that was possible



What happened?

- The UAS community was exceptional
- We were not overwhelmed
- We made adjustments as the science evolved
- We held safe on-campus classes and activities
- We innovated delivering services on-line.



COVID Cases On-Campus

- Since the start of the pandemic:

As of 8/9/2021	UAS Region	UA Total
Students	15	261
Faculty	1	32
Staff	3	149



Where are things now?

- We have multiple, highly effective vaccines
- Vaccination rates in SE Alaska are very high
 - Eligible population with 1+ dose:
Juneau 79%, Sitka 78%, Ketchikan 67%
- Testing and tracing capacity is high (and free)
- The delta variant is surging
- So is misinformation



Plan for Fall 2021

- UAS Campuses facilities are open
- More classes will be taught face-to-face
- The full range of face-to-face services and activities will be available
- Departments are encouraged to find flexible approaches



“Layered Protection” at UAS

- Per CDC guidance, we combine multiple measures and consider the level of vaccination and infection in our larger community.
- At UAS, we:
 - Strongly encourage vaccination, and require it for our residential students.
 - Restrict access to anyone who is symptomatic
 - Require masking for both vaccinated and unvaccinated students on campus
 - Seek physical distancing in classrooms and hallways
 - Provide cleaning supplies and encourage good hygiene
 - Provide good ventilation indoors and encourage outdoor gathering and activities
- A layered approach ensures that where one measure is not practicable, the other measures continue to ensure safety
- See: <https://uas.alaska.edu/pub/covidstatus>



FAQ Time!



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Frequently Asked Questions

- Are UAS campuses safe?
 - YES!
- Will I be told if someone in my on-campus class has COVID?
 - Yes
- What should I do if I learn someone in my class may have COVID?
 - uas.virusresponse@alaska.edu



FAQ: Masks

- Do my students have to wear masks?
 - Yes
- Do I have to wear one?
 - Yes
- What do I do if a student refuses to properly wear a face covering?
 - Contact the Dean of Students

<https://sites.google.com/alaska.edu/coronavirus/uas/face-coverings-on-uas-campuses>



FAQ: Other measures

- Do we have to practice physical distancing?
 - As much as you can, yes
- Should I open the windows?
 - If you can comfortably do so, yes
- What about “enhanced cleaning”?
 - If you like, but the risk is very low



FAQ: Campus Access

- What should I do if someone in my class is sick?
 - Send them home!
- Will I have to quarantine if I am exposed to someone with COVID?
 - Not if you are vaccinated
- What if a student can't come to class because of COVID restrictions?
 - Arrange a temporary accommodation



FAQ: Contacts

- **Who should faculty contact for classroom technical needs?**
 - Donovan Grimes, Classroom Support Coordinator: dmgrimes@alaska.edu or 796-6189
- **Who should I contact for other classroom setup options (plexiglass barriers, etc.)?**
 - Nathan Leigh, Facilities Services Director: nleigh1@alaska.edu or 796-6487
- **What if I have specific safety or other COVID-related concerns?**
 - Ryan Sand, Emergency Management Planner: rgsand@alaska.edu or 796-6015
 - Michael Ciri, COVID Incident Commander: michal.ciri@alaska.edu or 796-6570



Closing thoughts from Fall 2020 (still applies today)

UAS encourages everyone to extend and assume:

- Flexibility
 - seek alternate working arrangements to accommodate life demands
- Adaptability
 - be prepared to change with changing conditions
- Sustainability
 - find what will work in the longer term
- Integrity
 - model integrity and assume it in others
- Grace & Compassion
 - we all are doing the best we can under extraordinary conditions



Q & A?



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