

From: [McWilliams, Matthew](#)
To: [All Faculty, Staff & Contract Employees](#)
Subject: Returning to Campus
Date: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 9:42:08 AM

Dear Faculty and Staff,

The email below has just been shared with students, confirming our plans to begin undergraduate classes as scheduled January 12, and reminding them of important information about our Covid protocols. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will also be in touch with faculty later today with additional guidance.

In preparing for this semester, Longwood has been in close contact with officials and other Virginia public universities. We are all navigating a surge in omicron variant cases that is causing a range of disruptions. But there is also widespread agreement that we are in a new phase of the pandemic, due to the effectiveness of vaccines against severe outcomes and the different nature of omicron. Our focus this semester will be continuing appropriate public health measures and support for students, while also recognizing what has changed, prioritizing in-person learning, and focusing on what is practical and sustainable.

You can find an updated FAQ list at www.longwood.edu/covid19. The [Temporary Covid-19 Workplace Policy](#) contains additional info. If you have further questions, you can email hrCovid19@longwood.edu or questions@longwood.edu.

Thanks, and I'll continue to be in touch as needed over the semester.

Matthew McWilliams
Assistant Vice President for Communications
Longwood University

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Dear Students,

As President Reveley shared with you last week, Longwood plans to start the semester in-person and on-time, with undergraduate classes beginning next Wednesday, January 12. It will once again take a commitment by everyone in our community to ensure a successful semester. Please read this email carefully so you know what to expect.

The current situation with Covid-19 is different from what we've faced in the past. It's increasingly clear the omicron variant is milder for most individuals, and vaccines offer significant protection against serious illness. However, omicron is also clearly more

transmissible. That means we may face, at least over the next few weeks, a large number of cases simultaneously – and we need to prepare for that.

On our campus and across the country, this change means we'll have to shift away from certain broadly deployed tools, and in the direction of more customized ones, reflecting individual responsibility, risk and circumstances. It also means that, for the next few weeks, we may well see a temporary impact on services like dining or facilities. We will continue to communicate with campus by email.

Faculty and staff may be out more than usual, caring for themselves or impacted family, so individual classes may need to make adjustments or meet temporarily online. In such instances, faculty will be in touch with students. Getting through these weeks will require some patience and goodwill – but we are confident we can do so, just as we have in the past. Longwood's Covid response team has been monitoring developments carefully, in close consultation with the Virginia Department of Health, other universities and public officials. Here is an outline of our Covid protocols and what to expect.

STUDENTS RETURNING TO CAMPUS

As with previous semesters, do not return to Farmville if you have possible Covid symptoms such as sore throat, coughing, fever or congestion, or are awaiting Covid test results. Even if you are asymptomatic, we encourage you to get a Covid test before coming to campus – but we also recognize tests for the general public are in short supply, and that public officials are trying to prioritize availability for the symptomatic and vulnerable populations. Also, remember a test is only valid for the moment taken, so continue to show care in traveling to campus and once you arrive.

If you have tested positive, or are experiencing symptoms and may be arriving late, contact the University Health Center at 434-395-2102 and email your professors to let them know you won't be in class. If you are in day 6-10 of a Covid isolation/quarantine, be sure to contact the Health Center to discuss your situation. When you can return to campus under CDC masking protocols may depend on your housing situation.

VACCINATIONS

Longwood strongly encourages you to get a booster if you are eligible (six months past your second dose of a Moderna vaccine, five months past your second dose of Pfizer, or or two months after one dose of J&J).

The first reason is boosters offer significant added protection against severe symptoms from omicron. The second is that under recently updated public health guidance, those who are

boosted are less likely to have to quarantine if contact-exposed. Getting boosted if eligible means you are less likely to see your semester disrupted by having to isolate or quarantine. We recognize a number of students are not yet eligible for boosters, and that some may have medical concerns, so we are not requiring them at this time. However, please update the vaccination status form we asked all students to fill out before last semester to let us know if you've had your booster (or any other status update) at <https://www.longwood.edu/covid19/vaccinestatus/>. Again, this will help keep you healthy – and also avoid disruptions to the semester.

Moderna vaccinations and boosters are available at the Health Center, as well as area drug stores, all free of charge.

IF YOU EXPERIENCE SYMPTOMS ON CAMPUS

As with past semesters, if you experience symptoms such as sore throat, fever or coughing after you return to campus, please isolate and call the University Health Center at 434-395-2102. Let your professors know you are isolating and – this is important – that you have contacted the the University Health Center. If our testing capacity becomes temporarily strained, we may work with you on finding alternative ways to get a test. We are also working with the Virginia Department of Health to potentially provide some additional testing capacity if needed.

If you test positive for Covid, under updated CDC guidelines you must isolate for five days (down from 10), followed by five additional days of mask wearing whenever around others. Again this semester, we have some isolation housing available in Cox and ARC halls. However, depending on the prevalence on campus and their housing situation, students may be required to isolate or quarantine in their residence halls or at home.

MASKING

Masking requirements for classrooms and any indoor public areas will continue as we begin the semester. There is new CDC guidance that asks those who have tested positive to continue masking around others even outside for an additional five days after at least five days of isolation. Under CDC guidance, masks should have two layers and completely cover your mouth and nose. We encourage the use of masks such as N95s, and have on hand a substantial supply which we will be making available on campus early in the semester to students, faculty and staff.

DINING

Dining services will continue as last semester, including grab-and-go options for those who

cannot or do not wish to eat in the Dining Hall.

You can find an updated FAQ list at www.longwood.edu/covid19. If you have further questions, please email questions@longwood.edu.

I will continue to be in touch over the course of the semester with updates. Please stay safe and continue to do your part to ensure a successful semester.

Thank you,

Matthew McWilliams
Assistant Vice President for Communications
Longwood University