

SPRING SEMESTER 2021 FAQs

<u>ALL THINGS COVID: CONTACT TRACING, COVID-19 TESTING, SOCIAL DISTANCING, QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>MOVE-IN AND “QUARIENTATION”</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>ACADEMICS</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>LIVING ON CAMPUS</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>LIVING OFF-CAMPUS</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>LIVING & LEARNING PODS</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>STUDENT ACTIVITIES</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>OTHER</u>	<u>9</u>

ALL THINGS COVID: CONTACT TRACING, COVID-19 TESTING, SOCIAL DISTANCING, QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION

Q: What health services will be available on campus?

A: Welty Student Health Center will be able to provide general health services for students as well as symptomatic COVID-19 testing. The Counseling Center will be available to support the mental health of students through counseling and references.

Q: How will contact tracing work?

A: Contact tracing will be carried out by the Walla Walla County Department of Community Health. When they receive notification of a confirmed case of COVID-19, they will call the infected person to identify any close contacts who may have been exposed. Exposed individuals will also be notified by the county health department so that they can quarantine and monitor their health. For the health of everyone in the Walla Walla Valley, it is essential that any member of the Whitman community who is diagnosed with COVID-19 cooperates with the county contact tracing process.

In the Whitman community, we will supplement the county contact tracing through a campus-specific process through the Everbridge Contact Tracing app and paper contact logs. All members of our campus community who have a smartphone should download the Everbridge Contact Tracing app. This app uses bluetooth technology to determine when people have come into “close contact” (following the guidelines set by the CDC). Anyone not using the smartphone app will complete a paper log detailing the names, dates and times of anyone with whom they interact.

In the event that someone reports a positive case of COVID-19 (to the campus health center, Human Resources, a supervisor, or through the Everbridge Contact Tracing app), a notification will be sent to the people on campus responsible for triggering the contact tracing process. They will be able to run a report showing who the app has identified as a close contact or review the paper contact log, and these people will be notified that they have possibly been exposed and should begin quarantine. We will have follow-up conversations with the person who has COVID to identify any campus locations they have been in which should be closed and sanitized as well as any contacts who may not have been recorded in the app or paper log.

Q: Does the Everbridge Contact Tracing app track my location?

A: The Everbridge Contact Tracing app uses iBeacon technology to keep the app awake and operating in the background. iBeacon requires location services to be enabled and set to ‘Always’ allow. However, Everbridge does not capture, store, use any location data through iBeacon and no location data is not available to Whitman through the iBeacon technology. Location services is only used for iBeacon purposes.

There are optional settings for “Check-in” and “Auto Check-in” which the app user may enable. Through the Check-in and Auto Check-in functions of the Everbridge app for iOS and Android, the user’s location is securely sent to the Everbridge server and is only accessible by an authorized user from Whitman College. The authorized user may view the device’s location and the contact’s name on a map within Everbridge Suite in the event of a COVID-19 exposure event that necessitates a contact tracing process.

[Learn more about the Everbridge app.](#)

Q: How will the initial COVID-19 testing work?

A: During the initial quarantine period, students (both those living on-campus and off-campus) will be tested on Day 0 (move-in day) and Day 7 using PCR testing. This will be done on campus and the specimens sent to a lab for testing.

Q: How will testing happen after the initial quarantine?

A: We will use a surveillance testing strategy, which will use PCR testing on students (both those living on-campus and off-campus), faculty and staff randomly selected each week. The sample size will be adjusted weekly depending on the community case rates. These tests will be processed by an off-site lab and we expect to typically receive test results within 48 hours.

We will also use our onsite testing machine to provide rapid result tests for any student with COVID-19 symptoms.

Q: Isolation: What will happen if a student tests positive for COVID-19?

A: Any student who lives on campus and has a positive coronavirus test will enter isolation in specifically designated campus housing. Any student who lives off campus and has a positive test will have the option to isolate within their house or in the campus isolation housing. The Welty Student Health Center will help coordinate medical care, food will be provided for students in on-campus isolation and professors are prepared to offer accommodations, including remote learning for classes that are in-person or hybrid.

Walla Walla County Department of Health and Whitman College will work together on contact tracing and making sure that any exposed individuals are notified and able to quarantine appropriately.

The release date from isolation will be determined in accordance with the [CDC guidelines on isolation](#).

Q: If a student gets sick and needs to isolate and/or be transferred to the hospital, will their parents be notified?

A: If a student needs medical care beyond the capacity of Welty Student Health Center staff, our clinic will take them to the hospital here in Walla Walla. In those kinds of cases we parents should be informed by the student if possible and involved in the medical care decisions as

appropriate. If the student is incapacitated a Whitman administrator will be in touch with the student's emergency contacts.

Q: How will quarantine work for people who may be exposed to COVID-19?

A: Quarantine is a period during a person who has been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 or who is symptomatic and awaiting test results remains in their residence apart from others in order to prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms.

Quarantine will last for 14 days, unless the individual tests positive and therefore moves into isolation. Because COVID-19 can take up to 14 days to develop, a negative test during the quarantine period will not exempt an individual from quarantine.

During quarantine, the affected person will remain in their on-campus residence or their off-campus house, and any roommates will quarantine as well. Students in quarantine on campus will have food delivered to them and will receive other support services from Residence Life. Residence halls will have designated bathroom facilities for quarantined individuals to use. Students in off-campus quarantine should use grocery delivery or curbside pick-up services to minimize their potential interactions. Faculty are prepared to offer accommodations, including remote learning for classes that are in-person or hybrid, for any student in quarantine.

Q: What types of masks should students have?

A: Students should have cloth face masks in line with CDC recommendations; consider having at least 7-10 masks so that there is a sufficient quantity of masks to correspond with your laundry schedule, as masks should not be worn more than one day without being washed. Students living on campus will receive several masks when they arrive on campus.

Q: Will the vaccine be available to students through the college?

A: At this point, we do not know when vaccines will be available to students or if Whitman will be a vaccination site. We will be in conversation with the county department of health as the state vaccine distribution plan continues to roll out.

Q: Are you also doing waste water testing like other campuses have been doing?

A: No. We considered this option but because of how Whitman's sewage system is designed, it is not practical for our campus.

Q: Will you be able to detect whether a positive test is due to the UK new variant?

A: Our lab will be able to detect positive cases of COVID-19 that are caused by the new variant but is not currently identifying which strain of SARS-CoV-2 has caused the infection.

MOVE-IN AND “QUARIENTATION”

Q: How will the “quarientation” period work?

A: Students living both on campus and off campus will be expected to return by Sunday, Jan. 17 to begin quarantine, which will be Jan. 18-31. Students will be expected to quarantine in their residences for the full two week period. The first day of classes is Jan. 25, and all classes will start remotely during the second week of quarantine (Jan. 25-29). Classes that will meet in-person will begin to do so the week of Feb. 1.

During this two week period, no campus buildings will be open. Students will be able to leave their rooms in order to:

- Pick up food. On-campus students will get meals from Bon Appetit, which students will take back to their rooms to eat. Cleveland Commons will be open starting on Friday, Jan. 15 for dinner from 5:30-6:30 p.m. [Normal hours of operation](#) will begin on Saturday, Jan. 16. Most stations are available with the exception of the comfort food station and pizza station which will only be available on Fridays. All items will be in grab & go packaging for easy pickup. Jewett Cafe will be open from 8 a.m.-8 p.m. beginning Jan. 18 with a hot entree available for lunch and dinner. Off-campus students should use grocery delivery or curbside pick-up services.
- Pick up books, packages and mail on the Reid patio; this will be a scheduled process to manage physical distancing. [View the Reid Campus Center Pickup Times.](#)
- Participate in outdoor individual exercise.
- Participate in socially-distanced group activities organized by Whitman.
- Access health services.
- Be tested for COVID-19.

Q: If a student living off campus arrives earlier than Jan. 17, can they do their testing and start quarantine then?

A: Students living off campus cannot begin their testing or quarantine period early. The success of our initial quarantine period and implementation of our testing strategy depends on having as many members of our community as possible go through the process at the same time.

Q: How will the on-campus move-in process work?

A: Students living on campus will sign up for an assigned move-in time. They will be allowed one person to accompany them to campus during their move-in window. Once the student has moved in, they will begin their quarantine period and will not be allowed to leave campus or host any visitors, even family members. If they need items for their dorm room or the quarantine period, these should be brought at the time of move-in or mailed to the student via the campus post office.

Q: Should we quarantine and/or get a COVID-19 test before traveling to Walla Walla?

A: We encourage you to be very careful in your interactions for the week prior to traveling to Walla Walla. If you are able to quarantine at your home for seven days before coming to Walla Walla, that will provide some extra measure of protection. Depending on what testing is available in your area, you may choose to get a COVID-19 test before traveling to Walla Walla.

However, neither a pre-arrival quarantine nor a negative COVID-19 test will exempt any student from the two week initial quarantine period and campus-wide COVID testing procedures.

Q: Will students be able to work during the 2 week isolation?

A: Students will be able to work during isolation if they can do so remotely.

Q: will there be help for students flying in without parent help to get luggage across campus after initial testing?

A: Students can contact their RA for assistance with move-in, including help with luggage.

Q: Do we need to make an appointment to pick up large packages starting 1/18 from the mailroom?

A: No individual appointments are necessary to pick up large packages from the mailroom, however students are asked to follow the [Reid Campus Center Pickup Times schedule](#) organized by the first letter of their last name.

ACADEMICS

Q: How do we know what classes will be in person, hybrid, or entirely online this spring?

A: You can find out the format of each class on [this list from the Registrar's Office](#). More than half of the classes offered for the spring semester have some in-person component. Classes will not change format after the start of the semester.

Q: How will science labs, music ensembles, or other classes with specialized requirements take place?

A: Many of our classes will have specific accommodations to meet their requirements. If you have a question about a specific class, please contact the Registrar's Office or the faculty in charge of the class. Classes using specialized facilities, including SSRA classes, have created specific safety plans to ensure they

Q: What will happen if I am taking an in-person or hybrid class and become sick and need to quarantine or isolate?

A: Faculty teaching in-person or hybrid classes are prepared to provide online learning to accommodate students who are temporarily unable to attend classes in-person due to illness or possible exposure.

Q: If a student wishes to stay in remote learning but needs to take a class that is being offered in-person, can they do that?

A: Students who are online but need an in-person class will be accommodated. They should contact the Registrar's Office for assistance.

Q: What are the plans for commencement?

A: We know that commencement is an important part of a student's Whitman experience and are thinking through many scenarios for how to make that a meaningful celebration, but at this point it is too early to commit to any specific plans.

Q: How will specialized spaces such as the rock climbing wall, music practice rooms and lab spaces be open?

A: Following the initial quarantine period, specialized spaces will open following approval of specific health and safety plans.

Q: Can faculty instructional methods be changed at this time?

A: For the most part, the instructional method indicated when a student registered for classes will remain the same. If conditions change such that it is unsafe for in-person instruction based on the factors outlined in our [Threshold Action Level document](#), it could affect in-person instruction. There may be rare cases in which a faculty member's health or family situation changes requiring a change in the format of their class.

LIVING ON CAMPUS

Q: When will I know my housing assignment and move-in time?

A: Housing assignments will be sent by Dec. 1. In mid-to-late December, an email will be sent with an opportunity to sign up for an assigned move-in time slot.

Q: What dining services will be provided?

A: Bon Appetit will provide food service on campus for the spring semester. Students living on campus are required to purchase a meal plan. During the initial quarantine period, students will pick up take-away meals. For the rest of the semester, assuming quarantine goes well and guidance is okay to resume some in-person dining, we will have that under limited capacity and following social distancing practices.

Q: What about people who have food allergies or specific dietary needs?

A: Bon Appetit is prepared to offer a variety of options to students to accommodate any food allergies. Please make sure that you have notified Residence Life of any specific dietary needs.

Q: How will the bathrooms in residence halls work?

A: Each particular wing of a residence hall will use an assigned restroom and students will schedule their times for showering. Our custodians will be cleaning restrooms frequently, and there will also be supplies in the bathroom for students to clean before and after their use. We will have a specific bathroom in each residence hall designated for use by any student in quarantine.

Q: Is the requirement to live on-campus for first- and second-year students still in effect?

A: The residency requirement for first and second years students may be waived for the spring semester if a student petitions Residence Life. Any student who starts the semester living off campus may be permitted to move on campus after the start of the term if space is available.

Q: What will social distancing look like in the dorms after the quarantine period is over?

A: There are many measures that will be in place to keep students healthy in the dorms. Students will be required to wear masks any time they leave their dorm room or any time someone who is not a roommate is in their dorm room. Students may have one Whitman community visitor at a time in their dorm room if maintaining six feet of physical space between individuals is possible, and are not allowed to have guests from outside the college in their residential spaces. Furniture in common living spaces has been arranged to maintain safe physical distancing and common spaces will be cleaned frequently as well as maintained with cleaning supplies for individual use. RAs will be trained to provide education on and enforcement of social distancing guidelines and there will also be informational and directional signage throughout residence halls.

Q: How will sanitation be handled for furniture in the dorms?

A: Facilities Services has implemented enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched areas across campus and common spaces. This includes entrances, handrails, restroom fixtures, elevator buttons, countertops, etc. With shifts starting at 8:00 a.m., the primary focus in the morning is on the high-touch surfaces.

In addition to high-touch surfaces, the Residence Life custodial team will focus on shared spaces, such as bathrooms, kitchens, lounges, and laundry rooms twice daily Monday-Friday. In addition, weekend cleaning and disinfecting in the residence halls will be supported by student workers who will go through all the halls at least once each day focusing on high touch surfaces and shared spaces.

LIVING OFF-CAMPUS

Q: How will you monitor students living off-campus to make sure they are following social distancing requirements?

A: Because we've only had one case all fall among the many students living in Walla Walla, we believe students can and are being responsible. Security staff are available to walk around the neighborhoods where most of our students live and will talk to students they see behaving inappropriately. Students will also sign a new version of our Community Pledge and will agree to responsible behavior and to report potential violations or concerns.

Q: Will off-campus students have to socially distance from their roommates?

A: No, roommates are considered a student's household and they do not have to maintain social distance or wear a mask with members of their household. However, in the event of a student needing to quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure or isolate due to a confirmed case of COVID-19, roommates should practice social distancing with each other in order to minimize the risk of transmission.

Q: What resources will be available to students living off-campus?

A: Students living off campus will be able to access Welty Student Health Center, the Counseling Center, Penrose Library, and all the other academic, recreational and support services available to students.

LIVING & LEARNING PODS

Q: Are the pods still happening?

A: Given our plans to move forward with an in-person spring semester, we have made the decision to ease the restrictions on the pod classes. This means that students assigned to pods can take other in-person or hybrid courses beyond the pod courses. We are planning to continue the residential arrangements of the pods, as we strongly believe in the positive student experience that happens when they take classes with other students they live with. Should a student wish to make a change, however, they are welcome to be in touch with Residential Life to make a request to be moved. They will continue to be expected to follow the community standards expected of everybody in our community, including wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, being tested, providing information for contact tracing, and limiting travel, but there will no longer be additional expectations for students in pods.

Additionally, we will be opening up the courses in the living/learning pods to other students who are not a part of the pods. In this way, pod classes will become indistinguishable from your other in-person or hybrid classes. Please note that we do not allow changes in sections of the First Year Seminar as a rule, so students will not be able to change your registration for First Year Seminar.

Q: What is the living situation for students in pods?

A: They will be housed with other members of the pod in a specific residence hall section. They will have the choice to have a single room or a roommate.

Q: Do students in pods have different social restrictions than students not in the pods?

A: No, students who are in pods will follow the same guidelines for social interactions and physical distancing as all students living on campus.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Q: What facilities will be open in the spring?

A: We will open all the academic and recreational facilities that we can open safely and in keeping with state guidelines. We have health and safety plans in place to open Reid Campus Center, Penrose Library, the athletic facilities and other spaces assuming state guidelines permit it.

Q: Will students be able to volunteer, intern, attend community events or work off campus?

A: We have developed a protocol for students who are engaging off campus, making sure that the off-campus entity is following health and safety guidelines to the same measure that we are. If that is true, then students may volunteer or work off-campus jobs or internships.

Q: Will on campus work-study jobs be available this spring?

A: We are committed to finding employment for all students with a work-study component to their financial aid. Those jobs may be in-person on campus or done remotely depending upon the job.

Q: Can students leave campus or travel in the area on the weekends or during the pause days in the semester?

A: Students may leave campus as long as their off-campus activity is in line with the travel and activity guidelines detailed in the community pledge: not traveling outside of Washington, following the same requirements of on-campus living/working (face coverings, physical distancing, etc.) and observing local city and state policies regarding safe physical distancing.

Q: What happens if students aren't following the health and safety guidelines?

A: Every member of our community is responsible for helping to keep our community safe and make sure that we are working together to follow guidelines. In the residence halls there are RAs and RDs who students can address potential concerns or violations. In academic buildings there are faculty and staff who can help, and the Dean of Students Office is also available. We hope that through education and discussion students will follow the guidelines, but if not we will use the Student Code of Conduct to determine appropriate disciplinary measures.

Q: Will students be able to have visitors post-quarantine?

A: Visitors wearing face coverings and following social distancing protocols are welcome to walk through outdoor areas of campus. However, students may not have any visitors from outside the Whitman College community in campus buildings or in their residences.

OTHER

Q: What is the criteria at which Whitman would make the decision to move completely online for the spring semester and/or send students home?

A: Our plans for an in-person spring semester will only change if directed by Washington Governor Jay Inslee. Beyond that, the models suggest we can safely resume in person with frequent testing and if we follow our protocols.

In the event of a spike of COVID-19 cases on campus, it will be better for public health to keep students here, quarantining and/or isolating as needed and not traveling.

Q: Will the campus be closed to people who are not part of the Whitman community?

A: Campus buildings will be closed to all visitors, including the family members of students, faculty and staff. Contractors may enter campus in order to carry out specific work and will be provided with a copy of Whitman's COVID-19 practices and expected to follow them while on

campus. Visitors wearing face coverings and following social distancing protocols are welcome to be in outdoor areas of campus.

Q: Where can we look to find the info about everything COVID-19 related? Is there a website we should have bookmarked?

A: You can find much of this information on the [COVID Resources page of our website](#). Updated testing results can be found on our [Covid-19 Dashboard](#).

Q: Considering that case numbers were much lower when Whitman decided to be fully online for the Fall 2020 semester, what's the justification for being in-person now that case numbers are much higher?

A: The biggest factor when it comes to the choice to return to in-person learning was the availability of testing equipment. The equipment needed for consistent surveillance testing of the Whitman community was not readily available in the fall semester. We were able to contract with several companies to ensure that testing could be done prior to move-in as well as throughout the spring semester. With our robust testing and isolation plan for the spring semester we feel confident that we can react quickly to COVID cases and keep our community as safe as possible.