



Return to Campus Plan

July 2020



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A Safe Return to Campus and In-person Instruction

Message from President Jeff Bauer

Dear Campus Community,

As our state, nation, and the world continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are taking steps to ensure that our return to campus this fall is done with the necessary adjustments, protocols, and guidelines to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all.

No matter what adjustments we will be required to make in the delivery of services, we will continue to provide our students and community the full range of services they have grown to rely upon from Shawnee State University.

“All plans are based upon Guiding Principles that adhere to local and state official’s guidance...”

We have gathered input from faculty and student leaders, key community representatives, state and local officials, and the local health department regarding our safe return to campus.

Various task groups and committees have been working on different aspects of our phased return over the summer leading to the start of the fall 2020 semester and I thank them for their work. Their efforts informed our [Bears Return Plan](#) and our [Health and Safety Guidelines for Employees](#). Our plans incorporate orders and guidance from the Ohio Department of Health and describe expectations for returning to work. These plans are based upon a set of Guiding Principles that we share in this document. One of these principles is flexibility. While we have outlined the following plans, they will be adjusted as situations surrounding the coronavirus pandemic change.

I welcome you back to campus as we start a new academic year and thank you once again, for your role in preparing today’s students to succeed in tomorrow’s world.



Guiding Principles

- Shawnee State University’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic is based upon safety for our staff, faculty, students and the public we engage.
- The primary goals of Shawnee’s response are to protect public health and continue the University’s vital missions of education and student life experiences.
- Shawnee’s plans for full return to campus will be aligned with local and state orders and recommendations and best practices provided by the federal government, Centers for Disease Control, Ohio Department of Public Health and our local health departments.
- Guidelines and plans for returning to campus will be modified as we gain more understanding of the COVID-19 virus.

Phased Return to Campus

Our return to campus will be done in three phases:

- **Phase 1** began June 1 and ended June 28. This phase included the return of most non-public offices focused on “backroom” business, student needs, operational services, assessments and preparations for the next two phases.
- **Phase 2** runs June 29 through August 23. This phase has the return of limited public services for business, administrative support, academic and student services.
- **Phase 3** occurs August 24 with the start of the fall semester. Classes will begin on ground with expanded public and non-public operations returned to campus. Remote instruction for larger populated classrooms and other specified instruction and services will begin.

Throughout the entire **Bear Return Plan**, on-campus and remote services will be provided based on the needs of the operation and assurance of maintaining safety guidelines.

Shawnee State University will comply with [CDC](#) and [State of Ohio](#) guidelines to the maximum extent possible. Assessments of work, student and academic locations have been conducted to ensure protective equipment. Based on these assessments, adjustments have been made to provide a safe environment, including the reconfiguration of offices, classrooms, laboratories, and gathering areas to preserve physical distancing.

Health and Safety Guidelines

Guidelines for all Members of the Campus Community

Safety is everyone’s responsibility and all members of the Shawnee State community should follow these guidelines during the pandemic, whether on campus or at home:

- Attentiveness to illness and self-monitoring
- Proper hygiene, notably hand washing and use of hand sanitizer
- Social distancing
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including facial masks, as appropriate

Guidelines Unique to Students and Visitors

Cloth face coverings and/or disposable masks are expected to be worn at all times inside campus buildings, with few exceptions. Although a limited inventory of disposable masks will be available on campus for emergency needs, students and visitors are expected to supply their own facial coverings. Both cloth facial coverings and disposable masks will be available for purchase in the University Bookstore.

Students exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, dry cough or difficulty breathing) and those who believe they have been exposed to a person who has tested positive are not permitted to attend on-campus gatherings or classes. Students should contact their instructors for alternative delivery of course content and contact the SSU Health Clinic for monitoring and guidance.

Students who arrive on campus after visiting locations with positive COVID-19 cases or who have been exposed to someone who tests positive will enter into mandatory quarantine for 14 days.

A complete Guide for Students has been developed and includes a [Student Pledge to “Go the Distance.”](#) All students will be expected to sign this pledge and to do their part in protecting the campus community. In general, visitors to campus are expected to do the same.

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Guidelines for Employees, Contractors, and Volunteers

Since mid-March, most employees were required to work remotely. Over the summer, some work schedules were reduced and some services continued in a limited fashion via remote access, reduced hours, and with staggered shifts for operations requiring presence on campus. At all times, physical distancing, face coverings, sanitation and other safety protocols were in place. These steps were in accordance with health department advisories and state mandates. As permitted, beginning June 1, the University moved into Phase 1 of the **Bears Return Plan**.

[Health and Safety Guidelines for Employees](#) were issued June 4, 2020. These Guidelines remain intact and are modified when necessary to align with local health department and state return-to-work/campus advisories and rules.

Employees are expected to acknowledge and honor an Employee Safety Pledge as part of Phase 2 re-opening of some public services. This pledge is an acknowledgment of safety protocols and working conditions.

In general, guidance for employees applies to contractors and/or volunteers who perform work on behalf of the university.

Employee Health and Quarantine

Employees are expected to take their temperature every day and monitor their health. Employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, dry cough, or difficulty breathing) and those who believe they have been exposed to a person who has tested positive are not permitted to return to campus. [Leave policies](#) have been established to address medical needs associated with COVID-19. Employees are expected to notify their supervisors for alternative work options and to contact the SSU Health Clinic for monitoring and guidance.

Employees who have traveled to locations with positive COVID-19 cases, locations designated as [COVID-19 hot spots](#), or who have been exposed to someone who tests positive are expected to enter into mandatory quarantine for 14 days.

Environmental Controls

Shawnee State University will comply with [CDC](#) and [state guidelines](#) to the maximum extent possible. Assessments of work, student and academic locations have been conducted to ensure protective equipment and necessary modifications. Based upon these assessments, adjustments have been made to provide a safe environment, including the reconfiguration of offices, classrooms, laboratories, and gathering areas to preserve physical distancing. Capacities for elevators will be greatly reduced in order to maintain social distancing requirements.

In general, all indoor and outdoor spaces will be modified and all services provided will be adjusted as necessary to minimize the chance of disease spread. These areas include:

- **Public facing areas**
 - Classrooms, labs and other instructional spaces
 - Research facilities
 - Dining and other public gathering areas
 - Athletic and fitness facilities
 - Library
 - Performing arts facilities, including practice rooms
 - Business functions with regular contact with students or the members of the public
- **Non-public facing areas (includes internal service functions with no contact with students or members of the general public)**
 - Private offices
 - Open office environments
 - Conference rooms, break rooms and other common areas generally occupied by employees only
- **Student residences**

Instructional Delivery and Classroom Settings

Classrooms and laboratories have been assessed to determine seating capacity and reconfigured to ensure compliance with physical distancing guidelines. Academic course scheduling alternatives have been developed to protect the health of students and faculty. A variety of scheduling alternatives are being offered, including the use of staggered and sprint courses, to facilitate a transition to remote delivery in case of an outbreak and accommodate vulnerable students and faculty.

Other modifications include the use of barriers (sneeze guards) and face shields to aid instruction for hearing impaired students. The use of non-traditional areas will be used to preserve physical distancing. Directional signage will aid with new entrances and exits to buildings. Additional time may be allowed between classes to provide sufficient time for students to navigate new pathways to alternative classrooms.

Research

Physical distancing will be expected along with the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as required by the professor and established in the course requirements. Numbers in attendance will be limited and schedules staggered if necessary in order to ensure adherence to safety protocols and mitigate the risk of exposure for students and faculty. Students must follow all rules established for laboratories and other research experiences on and off-campus in order to participate.

Study Abroad/International Travel

Shawnee State will follow [U.S. Department of State](#) and [CDC](#) guidelines and provide pre-travel health counseling before travel. Risk assessments will be conducted for all travel and protocols are established if a traveler needs to quarantine outside of the U.S. or upon return to the U.S.

Student Conduct Code

A Temporary Addendum to the Student Conduct Code has been developed to proactively respond to COVID-19 and increase safety for students and visitors. Students will be required to sign a Student Pledge agreeing to follow all safety precautions for themselves and their visitors.

Students will be expected to follow physical distancing and PPE as established for classrooms, indoor and outdoor gathering spaces, the Morris University Center, Bears Den, Clark Memorial Library, administrative offices, student housing, etc. Members of the community are responsible for reading and following posted information about gathering limits and distancing while on campus.

Face coverings are required throughout campus except in a student’s personally assigned apartment. Students found not wearing their masks will be asked to do so immediately and may be subject to discipline through the Student Conduct Code.

Situations where a face covering is not required include: while eating or drinking, in the student’s own residence hall room, during physical exertion, manual labor, running or athletic training, outdoors with more than six feet of continuous separation between all people, other physical limitations or conditions that preclude an individual from wearing a mask. For exceptions, the student may contact the Dean of Students or the Office of Accessibility Services.

Students are expected to clean their own workspace before and after using it.

Student Life

Student Events

On-campus student activities and programming will be restricted to the number of individuals advisable by public health officials and state mandates. Attendance at student events will be limited and planned events will be evaluated to determine if the event can be held virtually or through a combination of on-campus and virtual delivery.

Residential Housing & Dining

Shawnee State will comply with all state mandates and CDC guidelines for student housing. An assessment identified the optimal number of students per room to reduce density or group exposure. Students will receive a pre-arrival communication with guidelines and expectations for check-in. Upon arrival, students will be screened. The number of guests helping with move-in will be limited. Resident Advisors will meet with students in each unit to discuss community standards, execute a roommate/housemate agreement, and review the contents of the Student Pledge. Move-in dates for Fall 2020 will be extended and staggered to minimize congestion and gathering sizes. All housing maintenance, service and contract personnel will be required to wear masks.

The Bears Den will be open with reconfigured food delivery procedures that promote physical distancing and minimize touch. Buffet services have been eliminated. Disposable utensils will be used and surfaces will be continually cleaned. Pick-up services will be offered where feasible.

Sports & Athletics

Shawnee State will follow NAIA, MSC and local health guidance for athletic sporting activities and events. Physical distancing will be observed. Equipment will be sanitized before and after each use and enhanced facility-wide cleaning and sanitation will be conducted daily.

Athletes will return to campus on a staggered schedule and will be screened upon arrival and every time they enter the James A. Rhodes Athletics Center. Activities will be limited to conditioning, strength training, and physical therapy over the summer. No practices will be held until after August 15.

Locker rooms will be reconfigured to provide more individual space. A risk assessment of all travel will be conducted before any trips are scheduled. Athletes will receive an orientation that covers personal safety, expectations for use of face coverings, laundry and sanitation of equipment and other topics related to health and safety. Athletes are expected to follow the SSU Student Conduct Code requirements.

Testing & Contact Tracing

Shawnee State will conduct testing under the guidance and direction of the local health department. Contact tracing will be internally managed with assistance of trained safety ambassadors who will follow prescriptive processes as approved by the Portsmouth City Health Department.

It is anticipated that international students traveling to the U.S. will undergo a 14-day quarantine period and tested if symptomatic. Athletes and residential students will be monitored for symptoms, given a temperature test and required to complete a health questionnaire.

Students and employees who are symptomatic, have been in contact with a person who tested positive or have been in gatherings with persons who tested positive will be referred to the SSU Health Clinic and the local health department for testing. If positive, a 14-day quarantine will be required.

No personal information will be released throughout this process, except for information required by the local health department.