

Faculty FAQ
COVID protocols, updated September 23, 2021

- *The University has required vaccinations this year, what percentage of our community has been fully vaccinated?*
 - While we are still processing late submissions, we anticipate that the Seattle Pacific University community will be fully vaccinated before the start of classes. While we are requiring vaccinations, there are those who have been granted medical or religious exemptions.

- *Are we currently required to wear masks on campus?*
 - Given recent state mandates, everyone – including those who are fully vaccinated – is generally required to wear a mask while indoors on SPU’s campus. Exceptions to this requirement are described on SPU’s [COVID-19 Health and Safety Expectations webpage](#). For example, if you are alone in a private office and don’t expect others to enter the room, you do not need to wear a mask. Also, masks are not required for employees who are fully vaccinated if they are in a closed, non-public space with only fellow employees. If students, including student employees, are present, masks are required.

- *Can I ask someone about their vaccination status?*
 - Yes, you can ask someone if they are vaccinated. However, students and employees are not obligated to disclose their vaccination status to each other.

- *What are the expectations for those who are unvaccinated, even if they have an exemption?*
 - SPU’s [COVID-19 Health and Safety Expectations webpage](#) describes expectations for individuals on campus. Currently, all SPU community members are generally required to wear a face covering while indoors on campus, regardless of vaccination status. Even if a state-wide masking mandate is relaxed, we expect that unvaccinated individuals will still be required to wear masks indoors.

- *Will I know which students in my class have been vaccinated?*
 - While we do not plan to provide faculty with detailed vaccination information about students or what kind of exemption a student has been granted, we plan to add a column on the class roster that will indicate which students will still be required to wear face coverings in indoor spaces if/when the universal face covering mandate is relaxed. Faculty should treat this information as confidential as with any FERPA protected data and should take care not to disclose it to anyone else.

- *Are there different requirements for graduate and undergraduate students?*
 - No, there are no differences. The mask and vaccination requirements are guided by state mandates and those do not provide any differentiation between graduate and undergraduate students.

- *Do exemptions extend to internships, practicums and clinical placements?*
 - Our exemptions only apply to SPU classes. If an external agency has more stringent guidelines, such as requiring vaccinations of everyone with no exemptions, the student must abide by the requirements of that placement.

- *Can I meet with students in my office?*
 - Yes, for those offices that are well ventilated you can continue to have meetings in your office. The current masking requirements, that vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals are required to wear masks indoors, apply to indoor meetings with students. If you are in a building with adequate ventilation (HVAC system), we ask that you keep windows closed as opening windows reduces ventilation.
 - In buildings where ventilation is not as robust we ask that in addition to masks that meetings be less frequent, that there is time between meetings and that windows remain open. In these buildings alternatives to face-to-face meetings (e.g. Teams, Zoom) should also be considered. All faculty offices are considered well ventilated for this purpose with the following building exceptions:
 - McKinley
 - Beegle
 - SBGE “house”
 - Peterson Hall: 2nd floor (Peterson 3rd and 4th floor has adequate ventilation)

Marston: Faculty offices on 1st and 2nd floor, Marston 3rd floor offices on the south end. (What is ventilated in Marston/Watson: CAS suite, Student Media area; Watson basement; Larger conference rooms on Marston 1st and 2nd floor).

- **Added: 9/23/2021**
- Other rooms that should not be scheduled:
 - Peterson 101, 302 and 303
 - Kingswood House (the office is approved for use)
 - Senior Art Studio
 - First Free Methodist Church, Sanctuary and Wilson Building
 - IMAGE building (office use is approved)

- *What do I do with a student who is sick because of COVID?*
 - We are asking faculty to work with their students in the same manner they would if a student were absent due to any other illness. If a student does become more seriously ill, we will attend to that student just as we do now with any serious illness, by working with the faculty member and the SAS counselor to determine if the student can complete the course.

- *If a student is ill or prefers to not be on campus, will I be expected to offer my course in a hybrid format?*
 - No, as we shared with faculty last spring we do not expect any faculty member to offer their course in a hybrid format, or in a separate online format, to meet the

individual needs or the desire of a particular student. As we have received requests from students over the summer, we have informed them that we anticipate to be fully face-to-face this fall. Currently, 90% of our courses will be delivered this fall in a face-to-face format.

- In a separate but similar topic, in some cases faculty members may be asked to work with Disability Support Services to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities who may not always be able to attend class in person due to immuno-compromised status (e.g., possibly recording some class lectures).
- *What are the requirements for field trips?*
 - In addition to our existing protocols for field trips, the current mask mandates practiced on campus extend to any field trips.
 - Added 9/23/2021
 - Off campus populations may not be vaccinated or potentially screened for illness before our groups arrive. Good practice would be to ensure that individuals wear the best snug fitting masks that they can obtain. A further good practice is to not take the masks on and off. Hand sanitizer should be used following off campus visits. Large gatherings inside unventilated spaces pose a significant risk. Department of Health (DOH 420-350) recommends that facilities should provide 4-6 air exchanges per hour. Spaces with 3 or fewer air exchanges per hour should not be visited.
 - Students/ staff traveling in vehicles between campus and facilities should wear masks, while riding and using windows for ventilation, if possible distance to the degree possible. While Department of Labor and Industries has re-written their previous guidance on vehicle travel to be less prescriptive, they do continue to state that transportation without ventilation and distancing represents a higher risk activity that requires better masking.
 - You may want to check with venues and ask if they have mechanical ventilation systems. Those that do not should be reconsidered. On our campus we have moved to 90-100 percent outside air, increased filtration, and closed or significantly reduced access to spaces that have 3 or fewer air exchanges per hour. Students participating in team visits off campus may assume that we have vetted these spaces and that we are representing that they are safe to go there. We need to ask enough questions that we have some confidence that we are sending students to places that do not pose an increased health risk.
 - When traveling off campus – do as much as you can reasonably do outdoors.
- *What do I do if a student refuses to wear a mask in class?*
 - We do not want our faculty to be the “mask police”. If a student who is required to wear a mask refuses to comply, please ask the student to leave and please notify the COVID-19 Decision Group (CDG) at COVID19Plan@spu.edu. If a student refuses to leave the classroom please contact the Office of Safety and Security by calling 206-281-2922.

- *As the professor, am I required to wear a mask?*
 - Yes, current guidelines indicate that faculty are to wear masks while teaching. However, a face covering is not required when a party to a communication is deaf or hard of hearing and not wearing a face covering is essential to communication. In these cases, a mask may be removed if the faculty member is fully vaccinated and can maintain social distancing.

- *How will I know if my classroom is sufficiently ventilated?*
 - Each classroom has been evaluated for adequate ventilation. Any classroom or public space on campus that does not meet the ventilation requirements will not be used. Air exchange in classrooms will actually occur more efficiently if windows are kept closed than if they are opened. While this may seem counterintuitive, we ask you to keep classroom windows closed.

- *Is COVID testing available on campus?*
 - Students should be able to access testing on campus. There may be times when we need to refer them off campus due to clinic hours or if access in the clinic is limited due to other factors or if we think the results of a PCR may come back faster through another lab. Staff and faculty will need to go off campus for testing with very limited exceptions.
 - Additionally, the Student Health Center indicated we should not need to screen asymptomatic fully-vaccinated individuals but they do want to screen all symptomatic individuals promptly, if possible.

- *What are the protocols for students if they have symptoms, suspect they have COVID or if they have tested positive for COVID?*
 - All students and employees should contact the [Student Health Center](#) regarding symptoms, close contact with a confirmed COVID-positive individual, and if they test positive for COVID. The next steps for individual students are dependent on their vaccination status and whether they are symptomatic. The Health Center will do contact tracing as necessary, contacting students, faculty and staff if they have been deemed to be in close contact. Additional information about reporting illness, reporting exposure, and contact tracing is included on SPU's [COVID-19 Health and Safety Expectations webpage](#). SPU has established isolation and quarantine [protocols](#) that have been used over the last 18 months. These protocols are currently being updated to align with current requirements.
 - **Added 9/23/2021**
 - What should I communicate to my class if I am notified that a student has tested positive for covid?
 - Once a student has tested positive for COVID and notified Health Services the student will be instructed to notify the professor. Once notified, faculty are asked to send the following email to the class:

I have been notified that someone from our class tested positive for COVID-19 and was in class on the following date(s)/time(s) _____ when they were potentially infectious.

Health Services has worked with the positive individual to identify and notify close contacts in this classroom. If you get a phone call or message from Health Services, please contact them right away at 206-281-2231.

If you have not been notified, you are not considered a close contact and you do not need to do anything except monitor yourself carefully for any new symptoms and if you develop any new symptoms, such as cough, fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, vomiting, diarrhea or change in taste or smell – stay home and call health services right away.

If you have questions about your risk or would like to get tested please contact Health Services as soon as possible, via email at healthservices@spu.edu or via phone at (206) 281-2231 (Health Services hours: Monday-Friday 9AM-4:30PM).

- *What if I test positive for COVID?*
 - You must contact the [Student Health Center](#), as we are required to report all cases to the Department of Health. As with students, your vaccination status and whether you are symptomatic will determine next steps. See SPU's [COVID-19 Health and Safety Expectations webpage](#) for more information.
 - Regarding teaching, we ask that you treat this similarly to other illnesses. If you are ill, you should not come to campus. If you are asymptomatic or if your symptoms are mild, teaching remotely for a few days could be a good option, or you could identify other options while you are unavailable to teach.

- *What are the contingency plans if there is a significant outbreak on campus?*
 - We are looking forward to fully returning to campus this fall, knowing it works to our advantage that our campus vaccination rate and that of King County make this move possible. However, if we have a significant outbreak, CDG and SLC will determine if it is necessary to return to a remote learning environment and we will notify students, staff and faculty, as soon as possible.
 - During the last academic year when we did not have vaccines over 900 students lived on campus. Due to the tremendous work of Sally Thunselle and her staff in the Health Center as well as Dave Church and his crew in Facilities, we developed and implemented protocols that kept the spread of infection very low. We have continued to develop and enhance our protocols and are well prepared for the upcoming academic year. As a side note, we simply cannot say enough about the endless hours that Sally, Dave and their staffs have given over the last 18 months to creating a safe campus. Please, when you have the chance, offer them your thanks.

- *What if I prefer to teach remotely?*
 - We understand the breadth of concerns that our faculty and our staff have as they return to campus. We are very fortunate to have good vaccination rates, mask

policies and campus protocols that are designed for safety. We also know that many students are returning after an 18-month absence and are very much looking forward to in-class instruction. As well, we will welcome 600 freshman that spent the last years of their high school career in a remote environment and are particularly looking forward to being in person. Because of all of these factors, we will return to in-person instruction. If you have a particular health issue that makes you unable to offer in-person instruction, we ask that you speak directly with your dean.

- *Can students eat in class?*
 - Yes, students can continue to bring food and drink to class. Masks may be removed while students are consuming food or a beverage. However, we would ask that students avoid “nibbling” as a way to keep masks off.
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- *How will I know if all students are vaccinated or have an exemption?*
 - Today, September 10, we will unenroll all students who are not vaccinated or received an exemption. If a student is in your class and says they are enrolled but are not on your roster the student needs to speak with an SAS counselor, who will instruct the student on next steps. Once a student has submitted their vaccination document, received an exemption, or provides evidence they have received at least their first vaccination (or one dose if J&J) they will be allowed to reenroll.