

TO: ALL ADMITTED AND DEPOSITED STUDENTS FOR FALL 2020

SUBJECT: UPDATES ON FALL SEMESTER

In preparation for the new school year, the leadership of Thomas Jefferson University has created a comprehensive plan to re-open campus in a way that ensures the safety of our students, faculty, and staff while promoting a meaningful and rewarding educational experience. The purpose of this email is to provide information and links to resources that will aid you in your understanding of the plan.

Our Priorities

Our focus has been clear and steadfast since the pandemic began and our plan for the new academic year is based on the following priorities:

- The **Health and Safety** of our students, faculty, and staff;
- The **Academic Progression** of our students;
- And **Regulatory Alignment** with all federal, state, local, and accrediting body regulations.

As the country grapples with the unprecedented challenges associated with the pandemic, we at Jefferson are motivated and inspired to respond to the challenges with the qualities that define our institution - innovation, creativity, intelligence, empathy, and enthusiasm for a future that we get to create. At the center of our values lies a fundamental commitment to each other as humans - it is our humanity that has sustained Jefferson for almost 200 years and it is the core value that will guide us through the challenges we currently face. We welcome you into our community of scholars and ask for your commitment to our priorities - it is through a shared responsibility that we will assure a successful academic year.

The Plan for Fall

The leadership at Jefferson has created a comprehensive [Relaunch Guide](#) that details plans for the academic year. Following are key takeaways:

Reopening Campus: Jefferson is committed to delivering in-person education with hybrid and online components to ensure proper physical distancing. We will operate within a framework that optimizes safety and abides by CDC, the Philadelphia Dept. of Public Health, and state and federal guidelines. The current situation with COVID-19 requires us to be nimble and we are prepared to pivot to alternative scenarios (such as remote learning) if circumstances require.

Pre-Arrival Requirements: All students, faculty, and staff should self-isolate for 14 days prior to coming to campus. Students will be prompted to complete an online health & safety orientation prior to coming to campus. Students residing on campus will receive additional training as well as specific move-in instructions.

Fall Semester Modification: We will make one adjustment to the fall term: all in-person instruction will end at Thanksgiving and the remainder of the term will be delivered online. This is a mitigation tactic many schools are using to avoid bringing the virus back to campus after Thanksgiving travels. For a review of the academic calendar, please visit <https://www.jefferson.edu/university/academic-affairs/tju/academic-services/registrar/calendars/academic-calendars/2020-2021.html>.

COVID-19 Screening, Testing, and Case Management: The online health & safety orientation includes instructions for an initial self-screening prior to coming to campus. Students will be given frequent messaging during the academic year to self-screen for signs and symptoms. Students who are symptomatic can obtain a COVID-19 test at one of our Student Health offices. The University has developed a protocol for managing students who are symptomatic or who have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. Additional details are available in the Relaunch Guide.**Health & Safety Guidelines:** Jefferson has instituted several requirements to ensure the health & safety of our students, faculty, and staff; all members of the Jefferson community must commit to the following actions:

- Mask use at all times
 - Social distancing
 - Frequent hand washing
 - Avoiding touching one's face
 - Coughing/sneezing into one's elbow
 - Staying home when feeling ill
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- Reporting signs and symptoms, and possible COVID-19 exposures, to University Student Health.

Housing & Dining - East Falls Campus: Only first-year students and a small number of upperclassmen will reside on the East Falls Campus. Every resident student will have their own bedroom and bathroom sharing will be limited. Nearby off-campus housing is being arranged for upperclassmen with shuttle service to campus. Dining services on the East Falls Campus will primarily be grab-and-go for all meals and food items, with limited seating in dining areas.

Housing - Center City Campus: For students with housing contracts for Martin, the above guidelines generally apply. For students leasing apartments from PMC in Barringer or Orlowitz, these are private apartments and you will determine your own safety rules.

Reimagined Classroom: Classroom, lab, and studio occupancy is designed to ensure physical distancing. Specific safety protocols will be enacted - these include the use of plexiglass as well as the presence of cleaning supplies so that faculty and students can wipe down their own personal contact areas. Additional information about

clinical education and internships can be found in the ***Relaunch Guide***.

Campus Life: Student engagement outside of the classroom is an important part of University life. During this period where physical distancing is necessary but social interaction is critical, the University will work to facilitate connections - most of it will be remote with in-person opportunities when possible. Physical distancing will not last forever, but the connections our students make early in their career at Jefferson will last a lifetime.

Student Support: Academic support services as well as administrative offices will continue to offer a full complement of services; some of the services will be offered in-person while most will be conducted via telephone, email, or online meetings.

Additional Resources

As you finalize preparations for the upcoming year, we invite you take advantage of a variety of resources:

Academic Relaunch Guide - Abridged Version: The version of the relaunch guide available to the public can be found at <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/academic-relaunch-guide.html>.

Academic Relaunch Guide - Full Version: The full Relaunch Guide can be found by logging into your BannerWeb account.

New Student Relaunch - Frequently Asked Questions: We have created a list of FAQs submitted by incoming students; this list can be found at <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/academic-relaunch-guide.html>.

New Student Town Hall Video: A video recording of the New Student Town Hall on Friday, July 17 is available at <https://youtu.be/7GoBTbFBEMo>.

Admissions: If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Admissions at enroll@jefferson.edu or 215-951-2800.

Future Town Halls: We are planning two more Town Halls -- one for international students and another one for all students; watch your email for details on these Town Halls.

In Closing

While we will no doubt be telling stories about 2020 for decades to come. I sincerely hope the enduring memory is that of your new beginning, the time in your life when you joined the Thomas Jefferson University community and embarked on an educational, professional, and interpersonal journey that would change your life in positive and meaningful ways.

We look forward to being a part of your future and we welcome you to Jefferson.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Tykocinski, MD
Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs
Provost, Thomas Jefferson University