

# Westfield State University **SAFE OPENING FALL** **2020**

*Revised 9.10.20*







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## A Plan to Welcome Back Our Students to Campus

Westfield State University will utilize both on-ground and online academic instruction and welcome back commuter and residential students to campus in September 2020.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the University Emergency Response Team's Coronavirus Management Group worked to manage continuity of operations throughout the spring and summer. In addition, a Safe Opening Task Force (SOTF) was convened this spring with representation from all University divisions and unions to work through various scenarios for our fall semester.

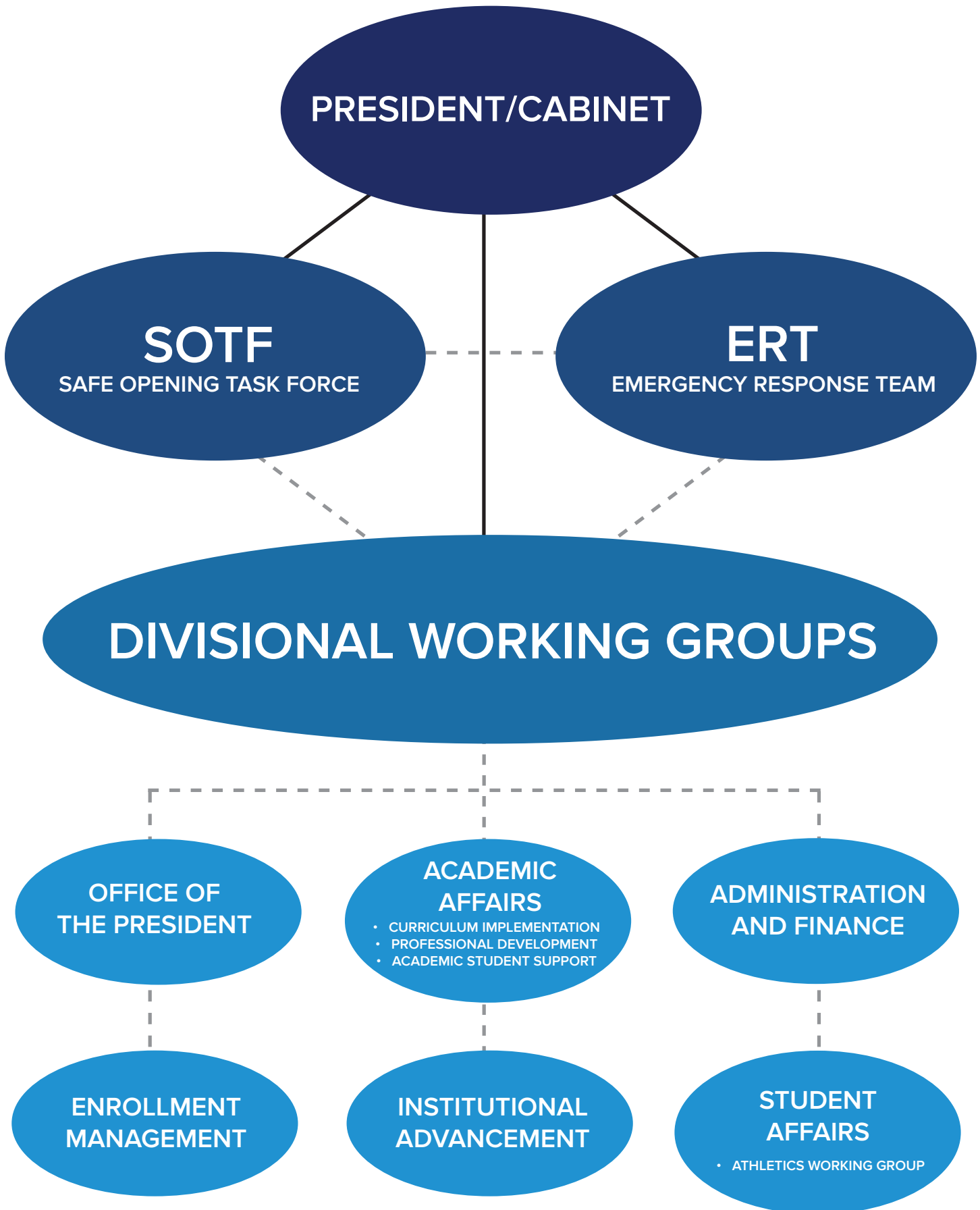
The SOTF surveyed the evolving guidelines, standards, and protocols put forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the American College Health Association (ACHA). The group used these expert sources—combined with the guidance and directives of Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker, the state Department of Higher Education, and state Department of Public Health—to present three scenarios for the Cabinet to consider for the fall 2020 semester.

The Cabinet ultimately decided on the plan outlined in this document. Although the learning and working environments will be physically different in the midst of a global pandemic, Westfield State University's safe fall opening plan will preserve the University's ability to:

- provide an environment with proper health and safety precautions;
- operate during a favorable downward trend of the data related to COVID-19 in Massachusetts;
- provide a high quality, engaging student experience;
- maintain flexibility given the uncertainties related to the pandemic; and
- ensure continuity.

Westfield State remains in contact with state and local health officials as the University finalizes the remaining logistical and operational details related to our Safe Fall 2020 Opening. The patience and understanding of students, families, faculty, and staff is appreciated as final preparations are set for our students return in the fall, despite the ongoing uncertainties related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Safe Opening Planning Structure





# Safe Opening Task Force

## Goal of the Task Force

The task force's goal is to lead the development of three fall opening scenarios under the assumption that a "normal" fall opening may not occur. While there is a high degree of uncertainty at this time, it is essential that multiple fall opening scenarios be planned and developed. The end result will be the development of a planning document with sufficient detail to implement any one of the selected options before the fall semester begins.

## Charge

The Safe Opening Task Force will serve as the organizing and coordinating body for the campus, delegating on-ground planning work to divisional working groups. As such, the task force will provide a scaffold for the plan, creating iterative versions of the plan as vetted and filled-in by divisional groups. The scaffold will consist of higher order activities (e.g., plans for adherence to state orders and guidance, adherence to public health requirements and guidelines; consideration of campus-wide supplies and local supplies, etc.).

In order to guide campus work, the group will serve as a clearinghouse for information from a variety of external groups. The task force should review any available existing plans and be in touch with sister institution planning groups to assure that where necessary, plans are aligned.

## Fall Opening Scenarios

1. Modified "Normal" Opening – This scenario assumes campus operations resume with students living on campus but under restrictions, including but not limited to, physical distancing, mandatory masks and possibly testing or contact tracing in place.
2. Hybrid Semester – The scenario assumes that we are not able to have students on campus for the scheduled academic semester due to a second wave of COVID-19. This scenario assumes no specific time-period for the disruption, but suggests these possibilities: a delayed on-ground start, early exit from the campus, or mid-semester interruption. This scenario assumes a disruption of 5–8 weeks.
3. Fully Remote Semester – This scenario involves local, state or federal stay-at-home guidance for the full semester. All courses and programming would be delivered remotely and a minimal number of students would be able to reside on campus due to a lack of alternative housing options.

## Communication and Liaison Work

The task force would maintain consistent communication with the associated planning groups, Emergency Response Team's Planning and Recovery Group. The chair of the group will meet with and update cabinet on a regular basis. A report from the chair will be a standing item on the Cabinet weekly agenda.

## Membership

Richard Lenfest,  
*Director of Athletics, Task Force Chair*

Dr. Lisa Brosnan,  
*Interim Director of Health Services*

Brian Cahillane,  
*Chapter President, APA Union*

Luis Gonzalez,  
*Chapter Steward, AFSCME Union*

Dr. Jennifer Hanselman,

*Dean, College of Mathematics and Science*

Dr. C. Margot Hennessey,  
*Chapter President, MSCA Union*

Dr. Joshua Hettrick,  
*Director of Housing Operations*

Lisa McMahon,  
*Director, Institutional Advancement and Stewardship*

Maureen Socha,  
*Executive Director, Facilities and Operations*



# Emergency Response Team

## Emergency Response Team's Recovery Planning Team

Thomas Kettle  
Shannon Broderick  
Dr. Lisa Brosnan  
Tony Casciano  
Tracy Daborowski  
Dr. Joshua Hettrick  
Dr. Enrique Morales Diaz  
Maureen Socha

## Divisional Working Groups

### Office of the President

Tricia Oliver  
Lorraine Martinelle  
Troy Watkins

### Academic Affairs

#### Curriculum Implementation

##### Chairs:

Dr. Jennifer Hanselman (CMS)  
Dr. Juline Mills (CEHHS)  
Dr. Emily Todd (CAHSS)  
Dr. Stefanie Sanchez (CGCE)

##### *Membership:*

Academic Department  
Chairs/Program Area Chairs  
CGCE Program Administrators  
Office of the Registrar

#### Student Academic Support Services

##### Chairs:

Sarah Lazare, Director, Banacos Academic Center  
Dr. Lisa Plantefaber, Institutional Research

##### *Membership:*

Directors of Academic Support Services

#### Professional Development and Support

##### Chairs:

Dr. Enrique Morales Diaz, Dean of Faculty  
Tom Raffensperger, Dean,  
Academic Information Services

##### *Membership:*

Directors of CIT  
Faculty Center  
Media Services

### Administration and Finance

Evie Soucie  
Gary Duggan  
Maureen Socha  
Thomas Kettle  
William Connor  
Jason Florek

### Enrollment Management

Daniel Forster  
Dr. Kelly Hart  
Dr. Joshua Hettrick  
Alyssa Goudreau  
Michael Mazeika  
Dominique Chapman

### Institutional Advancement

Marnie Dacko  
Bill Hynes  
Jenn Zajac

### Student Affairs

Chris Willenbrock  
Andrea Bertini  
Julia Nedry  
Giselle Frechette  
Mike Foyle  
Pauline Moran  
Shannon Broderick



# University Commitments

**We are a community that embraces the well-being of each other and will make individually appropriate and sound decisions about how to protect that community and its members.**

As a University whose mission is to nurture and educate, which emphasizes the importance of an engaged citizenry, we are guided by a deep commitment to the principle of common public good. In all our planning work we have been guided by a set of principles that reflect our values as a university and a community. The University is committed to:

1. The health, safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff as the top priority of the University in all decisions and planning.
2. A strict adherence to public health practices including physical distancing, face coverings, hand hygiene and frequent cleaning of high traffic areas to slow the spread of diseases, and protect vulnerable students, faculty, and staff to help ensure a safe and healthy learning environment.
3. Testing of all students who will have an on-campus presence this fall upon their arrival to campus. Daily self-monitoring for symptoms by all students, faculty, and staff is expected.
4. A continued focus on engaged learning and a robust and comprehensive learning experience as central to the University's mission and guides all planning in every modality.
5. Giving students and their families multiple options so they may make choices that are best for them.
6. Being able to adapt rapidly and effectively as required by the evolving public-health situation.
7. Being open and transparent in all communication.

## Health and Safety

### Personal Safety Practices

In order to successfully prevent the transmission of COVID-19, the University has established the expectation that all individuals must make a commitment to care for each other in ways that safeguard our health collectively. Wearing a mask and frequent hand washing and physical distancing are the most effective ways to protect everyone from the virus and are only successful when everyone commits to them.

**Handwashing:** Frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after time in a public area, or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face, is expected. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol is recommended. Individuals should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth, and handwashing is recommended after touching one's face.

**Face Masks/Coverings:** In accordance with Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker's executive order, face masks or face coverings must be worn by all faculty, staff, and students working, learning and living on campus when in the presence of others and in public settings where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., common workspaces, hallways, meeting rooms, restrooms, classrooms, etc.). Appropriate use of face masks is critical in minimizing risks to others. It is important to note that COVID-19 can be spread by individuals who do not feel sick and are not displaying symptoms. The wearing of a face mask is not a substitute for physical distancing. Face masks should cover both the nose and mouth and extend to one's chin.



**Physical Distancing:** Keeping space from others is important to prevent exposure to the COVID-19 virus and slowing its spread. Physical distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at high risk of contracting the virus. Students, faculty, and staff must follow these physical distancing practices:

- Stay at least six feet (about two arms' length) from other people at all times.
- Avoid gathering in groups where physical distancing is difficult or not possible such as break rooms, eating areas, copy rooms, etc. If you are utilizing group spaces, be sure to allow six feet of physical distancing.
- Avoid engaging in activities that could lead to crowded places and mass gatherings.

**Accessing Student Services:** In support of de-densifying the buildings on campus, students will be able to access student services remotely. The University will provide instructions to setup remote appointments. In limited cases when necessary, students may set-up in-person appointments.

**Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene:** When in a private setting without a face covering, individuals are reminded to cover their mouths and noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or to use the inside of their elbow. Tissues should then be thrown in the trash and hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol should be used.

## Student Health Services

The mission of Student Health Services (SHS) is to provide coordinated health care, wellness education and disease prevention enabling students to achieve their academic goals. The pandemic has necessitated several changes in the way SHS will operate in the fall. The office is being reconfigured to promote physical distancing and good hygiene practices, and the ventilation system is being upgraded to provide negative pressure areas for the evaluation and testing of patients with COVID-19 symptoms. Operating hours will continue to be Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. (after office hours and on the weekends, students on-campus should contact Public Safety at x5262; students off campus should dial 911).

Students will be seen in SHS by appointment only. If a student needs to be evaluated, they will be required to call the office (413-572-5415) for a health screening to determine whether a Telehealth or in-person visit is most appropriate. In-office well visits will be scheduled in the morning only; sick visits will be scheduled in the afternoon. A thorough cleaning of our exam rooms and waiting area will occur daily. A mask must be worn by anyone entering SHS, and everyone must have a temperature check, regardless of the reason for their visit. Students may not have friends or other individuals accompany them to their appointments.

All students with symptoms associated with COVID-19 will be asked to report these immediately to SHS, and will be required to visit the office for COVID-19 testing. Rapid case identification, isolation, and contact tracing are critical disease control strategies.

## Student Testing

At the beginning of the fall semester, the University is planning for periodic COVID-19 surveillance testing of residential and commuter students who will have an on-campus presence during the fall semester. The University has contracted with Cambridge-based The Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard for these services. More information will be shared as operational logistics are finalized. Student Health Services will also be available to students to conduct symptomatic testing. Currently, logistics and details for faculty and staff testing are being finalized, and further information will be shared.

While awaiting symptomatic test results, students with symptoms will be asked to isolate (preferably at home, but if this is not possible, then in the University-designated isolation/quarantine housing). If a symptomatic student tests negative, they can rejoin the campus community. Any student who tests positive (regardless of whether symptomatic or asymptomatic) will be required to isolate for at least 10 days, or until cleared to leave isolation by SHS and/or the City of Westfield Health Department. All students who are deemed to be “close contacts” of an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to have COVID-19 testing and to quarantine for a period of 14 days (again, preferably at home). All students will be asked to have an isolation/quarantine plan in place; students will be encouraged to talk with their support person(s) at home and to know what their plan will be if they are told that they need to isolate/quarantine.

## **Students from High-risk Areas**

Effective August 1, 2020, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will implement a new travel policy for individuals traveling from high-risk areas of the United States or from outside the country. Students who fall within one of these two groups will need to do one of the following when arriving on campus:

- Produce a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered within 72 hours of arriving on campus; or
- Be tested on campus and quarantine in your residence hall room until a negative test result has been returned.

All students traveling from a high-risk area of the United States or from outside the country will need to complete the [Massachusetts Travel Form](#) prior to arriving in the state. Students should print out a confirmation page and bring it with them when arriving on campus.

Travelers from [COVID-19 lower-risk states](#) are not required to fill out the Massachusetts Traveler Form and do not need to quarantine.

## **Contact Tracing**

It is important to underscore that all contact tracing efforts must be conducted with sensitivity, and with respect for the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals involved. The City of Westfield Public Health Department reports that during their contact tracing efforts, they will not divulge the name of the COVID-19 positive individual to close contacts; they only let close contacts know that they were exposed to someone with the virus.

SHS has been working closely with the City of Westfield Public Health Department since the start of the pandemic. The City of Westfield Public Health Department reports that, if for some reason the job of contact tracing becomes overly burdensome for their department, they will call upon the trained contact tracing staff from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, who will send a team to Westfield to assist with contact tracing for the University.

SHS will immediately report any positive COVID-19 cases to the City of Westfield Public Health Department so that contact tracing may begin as soon as possible. Likewise, the City of Westfield Public Health Department will notify the University if they become aware that a member of the University community has tested positive so that the University can take immediate action to isolate the affected individual if necessary and assist with contact tracing.

According to the City of Westfield Public Health Department, the University may be called upon to provide data if available (e.g.- logs on who visited a particular office on a certain date) and will also be asked to keep track of data, including the number of students in isolation/quarantine. The University plans to have a team of trained staff ready to assist as needed with contact tracing and data collection. In preparation for this work, the staff will enroll in a free online contact training course offered by Johns Hopkins/Coursera, and the staff in SHS plans to take this training course as well.



## Counseling Center

The Counseling Center will be following national guidelines to offer virtual counseling sessions through a secure platform. In-person sessions will be rare, limited, and reserved for unique situations. Virtual nutrition and relaxation coaching sessions will also be available. The Counseling Center also will be providing outreach programs addressing various mental health issues using a variety of virtual tools.

For information on making appointments and the Center's various outreach programs, visit <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/student-life/counseling-center> and follow us on Instagram at @reachoutWSU.

## Facilities and Campus Operations

The staff in the Facilities and Operations department have worked tirelessly to prepare our buildings for the safe return of students, faculty and staff for the fall semester.

It is important to note that as part of our preparation we followed the recommendations and guidelines provided by the CDC in addition to our own infection control plans.

All of our buildings are prepared for the phased return to campus.

- Signage to promote appropriate physical distancing: Procedures to guide students, faculty and staff of the necessity to physical distance themselves from one another include but are not limited to:
  - Designating entrances and exits in each building.
  - Corridors have been lined with arrows and signage that indicates directional flow.
  - Signage to remind everyone to wear their masks.
  - Signage to reinforce the limited elevator occupancy to one person or family group at a time.
  - Signage to designate 25% limitation number of occupants in each of our restrooms.
  - Where mechanically possible outside air and air changes have been increased.
  - Reduced the number of desks in each classroom for safer occupancy levels.
  - Reduced the seating in common areas and break areas to safer occupancy levels.
  - Stairwells have been directionally designated (with the exception of an emergency).
- Cleaning Protocols: Enhanced cleaning protocols are aligned with CDC guidelines for frequent cleaning and infection prevention.
  - Staff will be outfitted with appropriate PPE to ensure their safety as well as the safety of our students, faculty and staff.
  - Special cleaning and disinfection attention will be given to high touch areas.
  - Signage with proper handwashing practices have been installed in English and Spanish in the restrooms across campus
- Training, Education and Site Upgrades: The Environmental Services staff has been trained with the disinfecting chemical used to combat the virus. In addition, to promote and ensure a clean and healthy environment the following additions and modifications to our physical plant have been taken:
  - Placed hand sanitizer at the entrance and exit of the buildings
  - Placed hand sanitizer station outside the restroom locations
  - Installed plexiglass shields in heavy traffic offices and departments.

- Increased the cleaning of high touch areas throughout the day.
- We have procured ample supplies of our cleaning chemical, equipment and public area hand sanitizer.
- Teamwork – Faculty and staff will work collectively to maintain enhancing cleaning protocols.
  - Staff and faculty will be asked to clean work areas frequently—phones, computer keyboards, desks, door knobs, pens and pencils; as well as shared equipment including copiers and other devices used by multiple individuals. These items and equipment should be wiped down after use.
  - Each department will be given an Owl’s Care Package. The Owl’s Care Package contains cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer to help supplement the efforts of the maintainer staff. Each package will come with instructions for use. It will also contain an emergency supply of masks and other PPE in case a staff member forgets one from home.
- WSU response to the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to be aligned and consistent with the CDC guidelines and the Massachusetts mandates.
- The Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity & Equity (OHRIDE) has developed the [WSU Returning to the Workplace Guide](#). The goals are to protect the health of employees, ensure the well-being of the campus community and carefully and deliberately prepare for the return to on-ground working and learning environments. OHRIDE has based this plan on the guideline from the CDC and Massachusetts DPH, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, and other best practices to support the safe and healthy return to campus. As knowledge and understating of COVID-19 continues to evolve, institutional plans and guidance will be updated as appropriate. The guide contains information regarding Training for Physical Distancing and Hygiene Protocol, Mental and Emotional Wellbeing, Returning to the Workplace, Health and Safety Guidance, Personal Safety Practices, Workplace Considerations, and Available resources with COVID-19 additional resources.

## **Return to Work**

For the health and safety of all Westfield State community members, the Returning to the Workplace Guide provided information, expectations and guidelines that all Westfield State employees are expected to follow. The safe and gradual return of the workforce is a responsibility that we all share and complying with these protocols and guidelines will help make the gradual return as safe as possible for all Westfield State constituents.

## **Building Access**

Westfield State University will continue to operate with restricted access on campus throughout the summer and fall semester. Restricted access means that access to academic and administrative campus buildings is restricted to students, faculty, and staff through use of their University-issued identification. Building access by permissible contractor and vendors must be organized through department directors or otherwise referred to Public Safety (413-572-5262).



# Academics

Westfield State is committed to providing a high-quality education in an environment that seeks to continually address challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we prepare for the reopening of our campus, Academic Affairs is making adjustments to meet the academic, physical, and personal needs of our students, faculty, and staff. Fall planning relies on the valuable input received from 900 students, faculty, and staff. Academic continuity and engagement will be ensured through a variety of instructional modalities (Table 1). Westfield State’s Academic Guiding Principles will inform our decisions during the planning process and throughout our fall semester.

## Academic Guiding Principles

- An adherence to federal, state, and local public health guidelines.
- A commitment to providing an excellent academic experience designed to help students achieve their goals.
- Westfield State will offer a variety of online and limited and appropriately physical distanced in-person academic engagement opportunities that are aligned to the University’s mission, vision, and values. In collaboration with faculty and staff, these engagement activities will be provided by via the Westfield State Experience and the University colleges--Arts, Humanities and Physical Sciences; Education, Health, and Human Services; Mathematics and Sciences; and Graduate and Continuing Education.
- A recognition of the high-impact learning activities associated with experiential education and a commitment to work with community partners to ensure students are appropriately supported for internships, clinicals, practica, and field placements.
- We respect academic freedom and faculty members’ identification of the appropriate instructional modality for course instruction.
- Instructional spaces will be assessed to identify the appropriate capacity that meets physical distancing requirements per CDC and state guidelines.

All faculty considered the nature of the course, learning outcomes, and student engagement as they identified the appropriate modality of instruction. Modalities range from fully online to partially online (hybrid) and in-person. The courses that intend to meet in-person will be assigned to instructional spaces that follow state and federal guidelines for physical distancing.

Table 1. Student schedules annotated to reflect the appropriate modality. The modality is listed along with the code that is viewed on students’ schedules (in parentheses). On Tuesday, Sept. 29, the delivery of fall courses will revert to the originally intended mode of instruction.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODALITY	EXPECTATION
In-person (NORMAL)	The class meets in-person at a specific time and location.
Remote (RMSYNC)	The class meets entirely online and there are required synchronous meetings.
Online (ONLINE)	The class meets entirely online and there are no required synchronous class meetings.
Hybrid (HYBRID)	The class will meet in-person and online with varying in-person and remote meetings. The course instructor will communicate the schedule for class meetings.

## **Experiential Education**

The University takes pride in its high-impact practices that include hands-on, inquiry-based and skill-based instruction. Technology advances have allowed for some of these courses to shift to a remote or hybrid modality, and while others will provide in-person experiences with established safety protocols that follow CDC guidelines. For off-campus experiences, such as internships and clinicals, students and their advisors will communicate with their on-site supervisor to ensure that the course outcomes are met while following CDC guidelines.

## **Building the NEST (Novel Engagements for Students and Teachers)**

The importance of pre-college orientation and physicalization experiences prior to the start of the first-year of college have been found to be instrumental in enhancing student engagement and learning in the first-year of college. This diverse program connects incoming students to the faculty of the institution in unique ways.

## **Academic Resources**

Whether in-person or virtually, academic support for all students, will be continued. This semester will require us to shift to scheduling remote appointments and drop-in sessions to emulate the University's open door policies. This will allow students to receive the same level of support they receive during other semesters. Support staff continue to be responsive to student needs via phone, email and virtual sessions. As classrooms and buildings are de-densified, areas that can be safely set aside as student study space are being identified.

### **Advising**

All students have an assigned faculty advisor who will provide mentorship throughout the student's academic career. Advisors will connect with their advisees in a virtual and/or in-person format.

### **Bookstore**

Students can search and purchase textbooks online and also have the ability to ship books to their homes. The bookstore will also provide store hours when students arrive on-campus.

### **Tutoring**

Tutoring through Banacos and the STEM Tutoring program will offer both in-person and virtual sessions. Students will be able to schedule a session or attend an open virtual session. The schedule, along with instructions for making an appointment, will be advertised to all students at the beginning of the semester. In addition, the Reading & Writing Center will continue to offer one-on-one appointments, also held virtually.

### **Student Support Services**

Individual support services have developed plans for continuity of student services through remote interactions. Students enrolled in programs such as Learning Disability Services, Urban Education, TRiO, and Honors will schedule appointments with their advisors as usual.

### **Library**

The library will be open in the fall, though with reduced hours. In accordance with guidelines, and to ensure student, faculty, librarian, and staff safety, occupancy will be limited to 25% of usual capacity. The stacks will be closed. Books and media items will be reserved online, paged from the stacks, pre-issued, and made available for pickup. Most collections will remain available in digital format through the library's website. Course reserves will be provided digitally.



## **Technology**

A myriad of technologies that will support student engagement and learning, will be utilized in the fall semester:

- Site licensing of Zoom, statistical, and discipline-specific software
- Mobile lab studio carts
- Go-Pros
- In-person technology help will be available by appointment only
- Computer labs will remain open and available on a modified schedule and with physical distancing protocols in place

## **Professional Development**

To support faculty and staff professional development, a series of remote opportunities have been planned throughout the summer, and will continue throughout the fall semester. These opportunities are available through Westfield State or through other organizations. The sessions focus on all aspects of teaching and learning as best practices, student engagement, and connections to societal issues are promoted.

## **Student Life**

The Division of Student Affairs is committed to providing students with a robust and creative co-curricular experience during the fall 2020 semester. As the University prioritizes the health and safety of all students, faculty, and staff, departments are establishing plans to ensure their services continue to be available to all enrolled students.

## **Residential Life**

The residence halls will be open in the fall 2020 semester with a modified move-in process, cleaning and sanitization, and residence hall policy changes.

### **The Move-In Process**

The move-in dates for the residential students will be Friday, Sept. 25 (12-4 p.m.), Saturday, Sept. 26, and Sunday, Sept. 27. Residential students will be provided a predetermined date and time to move into their assigned rooms. Housing Operations and Residential Engagement will organize the move-in schedule to ensure social distancing and safety for students and champions that assist with move-in. There is no limit to the number of individuals who accompany the students to assist with move in; however, each student will be permitted only one guest in the residence halls at a time during this process.

### **Cleaning and Sanitization**

Enhanced cleaning and sanitization of the residence halls will take place on a daily basis. This will take place for all touch surfaces in entrances, hallways, stairwells, common areas, and traditional hall bathrooms. Garbage and recycling receptacles will be available for students to use within each residence hall.

## **Residence Hall Policy Changes**

Based on recommendations from the state and other agencies, additional policies will be in place for the fall 2020 semester. These additional policies will be covered in a Housing Agreement Addendum that all students living on campus for fall 2020 will agree to prior to being able to move into housing. They will include:

- Face masks will be required when students are outside of their room, apartment, and suite.
- No guests will be permitted in the residence halls. This includes residential students from other residence halls, commuting students, non-students, and family.
- Room changes will not be permitted to limit contact between students assigned to different areas of housing.
- Study lounges and kitchens will have seating reduced and in some instances may be unavailable for use.
- Students living in traditional halls will be assigned to one bathroom within their residence hall and will not be able to access any other bathroom facilities.

## **Dining Services**

Dining Services is preparing for fall with two guiding principles at the forefront of all planning:

- Follow safety guidance as provided by the CDC, FDA, Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker, and local regulatory authorities.
- Provide a nourishing, engaging, and safe experience for our students as we interact with them in our facilities.

All seating in our dining locations will be closed and Dining Services will be providing food to-go only and individually packaged or wrapped items when possible. This is consistent with the practices at other dining programs both regionally and nationally.

To ensure all students will be able to access Dining in a manner that allows them to follow course and activity schedules, we are opening several additional locations: two additional serving lines (one designed for students with food sensitivities or allergies) in the Dining Commons, a pop-up locations in both Scanlon Banquet Hall Ely Campus Center. There will be additional outdoor pop-up locations adjacent to the campus green and other campus buildings, as needs require. All students with a meal plan will be encouraged to utilize the GET App via their phones to preorder meals for contactless pickup at Wilson Café, Marketplace, TJ Bistro, Scanlon Banquet Hall, and the Ely pop-up.

Dunkin Donuts, located in the Ely Campus Center, has established its safe opening plan and will be open Monday–Friday, 7 a.m.–6 p.m. and Saturday–Sunday, 9 a.m.–6 p.m.

## **Athletics and Recreation**

The Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference (MASCAC) announced on July 16, 2020 its difficult decision to suspend the fall 2020 athletic season, including all indoor and outdoor athletic competition, due to the highly contagious nature of the COVID-19 virus and the risk of community spread through conference competition. Following this decision, the University decided club sports will also not be held during the fall semester, and intramurals will be held on a limited basis.

### **Athletics**

Although there was a statewide announcement of the suspension of fall contests, Massachusetts state universities, including Westfield State, plan to provide student-athletes with on-campus, in-person practices, and conditioning and training opportunities during the fall semester to support their physical and mental well-being. Winter sports are being evaluated and will be addressed in the fall.



Westfield State Athletics will provide practice/training opportunities under the NCAA Sports Science Institute (SSI) Resocialization of College Sports guidelines. The guidelines are composed of three successive phases based on a sustained downward trajectory of COVID-19 cases, continued physical distancing, and limited in-person gatherings.

### **Club Sports**

Club sports will not be held during the fall semester. Athletics will reassess the Club sports status for the spring semester at a later date.

### **Intramural Sports**

Intramural sports may be held on a limited basis. Contact activities will not be held during the fall semester. Athletics will reassess the intramural sports status for the spring semester at a later date.

### **The Fitness Center - Ely Campus Center**

The University will be operating under Massachusetts State Guidelines for operating fitness centers. The Fitness Center in the Ely Campus Center will open October 1 and will be available for students only during the fall semester.

## **Student Activities**

The Office of Student Activities, Involvement, and Leadership, in collaboration with Student Government Association and Campus Activities Board, will be working hard to ensure that there are student programming opportunities available this fall. Plans are being developed to intentionally balance both the important impact that creating community has on student physical and emotional wellbeing, with the necessity to protect the health and safety of our campus community during this ongoing pandemic. Programs and activities sponsored by University departments and student organizations will be permitted; however, the scope, capacities, and event set-ups will be significantly adjusted to maintain the health and safety of our campus community. While some in-person programming will be offered, many events will have a hybrid or virtual component.

Students are encouraged to continue check email and the SAIL Physical Media pages for updates on programming.

## **Career Center**

The Career Center staff team is committed to continuing to support students and alumni in accessing resources and expertise to assist in their career goals and activities. The Career Center team will be working with students and alumni this coming fall 2020 virtually, via phone or in person, in limited numbers while maintaining social distancing guidelines.

Some changes include an outdoor tent reception area, a maximum of 45 minute meetings, and staggered appointments to maintain a low density of students or staff within the Career Center offices. Additionally, to increase efficiency, students and alumni with appointments will be required to provide all of the career related documents they are seeking support with, to be emailed prior to their appointments.

## Campus Visits

Given the University's continued restricted access through the fall semester, only visitors with business with the University will be permitted on campus. These visits will be allowed by appointment only. Appointments and access to campus buildings for visitors will be coordinated by the respective department or division. All campus visitors must be logged by the respective department or division.

## Community Engagement

As a campus community, Westfield State continues to navigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of our students, faculty, staff, alumni and the greater community. An integral part of the Westfield State community involves our external partners. As one of the largest employers and providers of public educational opportunities in the area, we are committed to strengthening our regional partnerships with a continued focus on student placement opportunities including internships, student teaching, field placement for our social work, health services, and under-graduate research opportunities and beyond.

At Westfield State, an important component of the learning experience involves our relationships with external partners and alumni. The University's commitment to ongoing communication with our constituents, neighbors, community partners and business stakeholders continues. A variety of communication channels will be employed to ensure this—phone calls, text messages, videos and emails. Collaboration with local and state governments, regional school districts, local hospitals, area Chamber of Commerce, and Westfield Education to Business Alliance, will continue. In addition, the University will maintain its access to non-traditional learners, dual enrollment and early college programs; its connection to PreK-12 school districts and the Pioneer Valley STEM Network; as well as its continued administration of The Westfield Promise.

## Contingency Plan

Local and statewide public health data will continue to guide University decisions throughout the fall semester. The University will be prepared to shift to a fully remote semester should conditions deem it necessary. Westfield State's contingency planning involves:

- Protocols for de-densifying the campus (local students, residential students)
- A plan to move faculty and staff to a de-densified work place and/or remote work
- Coordination with the Westfield Department of Health to keep the COVID-19 positive students and quarantined students on campus.
- Activation of the plan to shift academic courses to a fully remote environment.
- Coordination with University partners regarding students who are participating in off-campus experiential education.

## Appendix A – Social Contract

### Protecting the Nest

As Owls, we keep learning and we keep going; always flying to the next level, together. Today, as the effects of this pandemic impact our friends, our families, and our world, we must work to protect the health and safety of every member of our campus community. We will protect ourselves. We will protect others. We will protect our Owl community.

#### The Pledge

Being a part of the Owl community means that each of us must take extraordinary steps to stay well and persistently protect others. Therefore, each person will take responsibility for their own health and to help keep the Westfield State University community safe by stopping the spread of COVID-19 and other infections as identified and instructed by the University.

- I pledge to protect myself:
  - Monitor for the symptoms of COVID-19 and report to a medical professional if I experience: a fever of 100.4 F (36 C) or higher, dry cough, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell.
  - Wash my hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.
  - Consider receiving appropriate vaccinations each fall.
- I pledge to protect others:
  - Maintain appropriate physical distancing, especially in classrooms, offices, and physical settings.
  - Stay home if I feel ill or have been exposed to someone who is ill or has tested positive for COVID-19.
  - Wear an appropriate face mask and other protective gear as directed by the University.
  - If anyone seems either troubled or struggling, engage with them in a positive, sensitive, and caring way.
- I pledge to protect our community:
  - Keep my clothing, belongings, personal spaces, and shared common spaces clean.
  - Participate in appropriate testing and contact tracing strategies, and isolate or quarantine as needed to preserve the wellness of the Owl Community.
  - Carefully observe instructional signs and follow directions.
  - Remind others who act in unhealthy or unsafe ways that we ALL have a responsibility to protect our community.



## Appendix B - References

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[City of Westfield COVID-19 Information & Bulletins](#)

[MA Department of Higher Education](#)

[MA Department of Public Health](#)

[Reopening Massachusetts](#)

[Westfield State University COVID-19 Updates](#)

[Westfield State University Safe Fall Opening](#)







**Westfield State University's Notice of Non-Discrimination** Westfield State University does not unlawfully discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its educational programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, marital or parental status, or veteran status.

Human Resources has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies. They may be contacted at: 577 Western Avenue, Westfield, MA 01086-1630, or by phone at (413) 572-8730.