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Joan Ferrini-Mundy

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Friday Futurecast — November 13

1 message

UMaine President's Office <umaine.president@maine.edu>
Reply-To: UMaine President's Office <umaine.president@maine.edu>
To: UM-EMPLOYEES@lists.maine.edu

Fri, Nov 13, 2020 at 5:18 PM



Friday Futurecast

Health and safety update for university community members

Welcome to this week's Friday Futurecast.

These updates are archived on the UMaine [Fall '20–Spring '21 website](#). The University of Maine at Machias also has a [Fall '20–Spring '21 website](#).

Message from President Joan Ferrini-Mundy:

Dear members of the UMaine and UMM communities,

As we come to the last full week of in-person classes in the fall 2020 semester, I want to thank everyone in our communities — students, faculty and staff — for all that you've done to make it possible for us to be on campus and to be successful in remote learning. We have been

conscientious, vigilant and caring about our individual health and safety, the well-being of those we love, and the welfare of those we live and work with in our communities.

For all of your efforts, thank you.

The incidence of COVID-19 cases statewide and nationwide is on the rise. As we approach the remaining weeks of the semester and the holiday season, no matter where you are spending this time — on campus, in Maine and beyond — please take all the precautions you can to stay safe with face coverings and social distancing.

We will get through this and continue to be there for each other.

Sincerely,

Joan Ferrini-Mundy

Partnering to address health

- Next week, upward of 5,000 members of the UMaine community will participate in COVID-19 testing on campus, Nov. 17–19, either as part of phase three randomized testing or departure testing for residential and out-of-state students living off-campus. All participants have been notified by email.
- At UMM, COVID-19 testing will be offered to all students, faculty and staff noon–4 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 16, in Sennett Hall. The university also will allow UMM community members to invite a member of their family or household to participate in testing; those interested in doing so must contact Marnie Kaler, marnie.kaler@maine.edu.
- The UMaine Counseling Center has a new [website](#) and wants to hear from you. Click this [link](#) to provide feedback in a center survey.

Transparent and continuing communication

- Reminder: Join President Ferrini-Mundy and other leaders for an informal virtual town hall for UMaine and UMM students to discuss the last weeks of the semester, including the transition to remote learning, winter break and the spring 2021 semester. The event will be held from 2:30–4 p.m. Nov. 17. The link to the livestream: <https://youtu.be/1eYqWTVjFNs>. Send questions for the town hall to umaine.alerts@maine.edu. We will answer as many questions as possible during the live broadcast.

In-person, on-campus experiences and other learning modes

- The Maine Center for Research in STEM Education (the RiSE Center) is accepting applications for undergraduate student employment as Maine Learning Assistants (MLAs) in the [Faculty Course Modification Incentive Grant – Maine Learning Assistant \(FIG-MLA\) Program](#) for spring 2021. MLAs serve as peer instructors in classes, facilitating group work and assisting faculty as they transform their courses to incorporate more interactive-engagement and student-centered instruction. An MLA Open House will be held via Zoom at 3 p.m. Nov. 18. Registration is required: <http://bit.ly/MLA-OpenHouse>. The application, along with more information, is [online](#). Application review begins Nov. 30. For more information, email erin.vinson@maine.edu.
- The Dirigo Leadership Conference, coordinated by the UMaine Center for Student Involvement, will be held virtually over Zoom on Dec. 5. The free event is open to all students, faculty and staff at UMaine, UMM and other Maine universities. To present at the conference, fill out [this application](#) by Nov. 16. To register, fill out [this short form](#) by Dec. 2.

Flexibility, responsiveness, empathy, and science

- Fogler Library reference librarians will be available for drop-in service after Thanksgiving, when campus transitions to remote learning. The contact information for

Fogler's Ask-a-Librarian Service is [online](#). Beginning Nov. 30, assistance will be offered in-person, through chat and by email from 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Mondays–Thursdays and from 10 a.m.–1 p.m. on Fridays; and solely via email and chat from 3–5 p.m. Mondays–Thursdays and from 1–2 p.m. on Fridays. Students are encouraged to contact [subject librarians](#) with any questions about research for their assignments.

- At UMM, Merrill Library also will maintain in-person hours for students after Thanksgiving. Beginning Nov. 30: Mondays–Thursday, 8 a.m.–10 p.m.; Fridays, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.; weekends to be determined, but check the [website](#) for the latest. Please feel free to contact librarians for assistance.
- The UMM Office of Admissions will host a live, virtual open house event for prospective students at 6 p.m. Nov. 18. More information is [online](#). [UMaine virtual open houses](#) begin Nov. 16.

Continuing our missions for Maine

- UMS Scientific Advisory Board has a [fact sheet](#) online about wastewater testing and its role in COVID-19 monitoring efforts.
- In a Nov. 10 [news release](#), the University of Maine System provided examples of initiatives occurring in response to the rise in community transmission and case counts statewide and nationwide. Those initiatives include:
 - **Emphasizing remote work:** Existing UMS [return to work guidance](#) encourages employees to be on campus only when necessary or substantially advantageous for academic purposes or other job duties. In-person instruction remains a priority. Supervisors and academic administrators will be asked to revisit and emphasize remote working options for employees within their units or departments whenever possible.
 - **Limiting community access to campus facilities:** Access to campus facilities used by the public (e.g. recreation facilities and libraries) will be adjusted at the discretion of university and program leaders to reduce activity on campus.
 - **Two-week pause on appointments and nonessential activities:** Scheduling of new appointments for admission tours will prioritize dates and times coming after the Thanksgiving break with possible differences by campus. Previously scheduled tours may proceed with strict adherence to group size and face covering requirements or occur virtually. University leaders also are being asked to consider delaying any nonessential work or activity that requires a campus presence until after the Thanksgiving holiday. UMaine is Maine's research university and this work is vital to the mission of public higher education in Maine. Guidance on continuing this work safely in the 2020–21 academic year has been posted all semester [at this link](#).
 - **Reduce time on campus for commuter students:** Nonresidential students are being asked to limit their trips and time on campus to only essential academic or health-related activities.
 - **Staying safe on campus:** Residence hall students are being urged to stay on campus for the final two weeks of the semester, to avoid travel beyond campus boundaries and to reduce their personal bubble of interactions as feasible.
 - **Virtual focus on Student Life activities and events:** To the extent possible, student organizations and activities will be transitioned to virtual events.