COVID-19_President Friday Futurecast_September 17, 2021

Joan Ferrini-Mundy
Friday Futurecast — September 17
1 message

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Friday Futurecast

Health and safety update for university community members

Welcome to this week’s Friday Futurecast

These updates are archived on the UMaine COVID-19 website. The University of Maine at Machias also has a COVID-19 website.

Message from President Joan Ferrini-Mundy:

Dear members of the UMaine and UMaine Machias communities,

Thank you for all you are doing for the well-being of our communities. This week, we’ve seen an uptick in the number of faculty, staff and students using our online self-report form alerting us to COVID-19 close contact or positive test results. We’ve also had an increase in T3 asymptomatic
testing on both campuses, scheduled via PointnClick. Testing, being fully vaccinated and wearing face coverings continue to be three of the most important health and safety measures we can take during this Delta variant surge.

Our Student Life staff are making a concerted effort to connect with students who have not yet submitted their vaccination documentation. For those we have reached, we have found out that many have simply not uploaded their vaccination cards — go here to do so. We also appreciate the patience of our fully online students and those studying abroad who are being contacted about the vaccination requirement and are confirming their non-on-site status by requesting a remote exemption through the portal. I remind you that any on-campus unvaccinated individual is expected to participate in weekly testing, including students who have exemptions. After Oct. 15, 2021, unvaccinated, non-exempt students will not be permitted in classrooms, residence halls or other university facilities and will not be permitted to participate in on-campus experiences or university activities.

Constant communication is one of our most effective tools. We maintain the latest health and safety updates on our UMaine and UMaine Machias websites. And we have important reminders below, including steps you can take to ensure a viable T3 COVID-19 test.

Still have COVID or other queries related to the fall semester? Email umaine.alerts@maine.edu. We’re here to help.

Sincerely,

Joan Ferrini-Mundy

Partnering to address health

- Members of the UMaine and UMaine Machias communities are encouraged to get flu shots at local health care facilities or pharmacies, or from their primary care physician. Community notice will be provided if we are able to provide flu vaccination clinics on campus, as has occurred in past years.
- Daily, upward of 200 UMaine and UMaine Machias community members combined have participated in testing on our campuses. Everyone who is required to test and or opting into testing should schedule their appointments in PointnClick. To help ensure that your T3 saliva PCR test is successful, please note these important reminders on the day of your on-campus test for how to obtain a readable test result:
  - Water hydration well before the appointment is critical to a successful saliva test. Please attempt to drink 8 ounces of water every hour leading up to your test time and stop drinking water 30 minutes before your test.
  - Drinking soda, coffee or tea within two hours of test time without thoroughly rinsing the mouth with water will make the test unreliable when read by the PCR testing machine. To ensure that your sample can be read, please do not drink soda, coffee, tea or Gatorade one hour before the test, and be sure to rinse with water 30 minutes prior to testing.
  - Eating any type of food or chewing gum within two hours of test time without thoroughly rinsing your mouth with water also will affect the PCR machine’s ability to read your sample. Please do not eat food or chew gum one hour before the test and, again, be sure to rinse with water 30 minutes prior to testing.
  - Any bubbles in the sample will affect the readability of the sample. To help prevent this, it is important to drool (not spit) onto the outer edge of the funnel. This will capture pure saliva without bubbles in the vial.
  - An invalid or rejected test sample means saliva leaked because the cap was not tight on the tube; not enough saliva was captured without bubbles; less than 1
milliliter of saliva in the tube was provided; or food, coffee, tea, Gatorade particles and/or discoloration appeared in the sample.

• The next on-campus public vaccination clinic at UMaine this month is 11 a.m.–3 p.m. Sept. 22 in the Coe Room, Memorial Union, providing the two-shot Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. At UMaine Machias, the next public vaccination clinic is 9 a.m.–3 p.m. on Oct. 7 in the Reynolds Center, providing the one-shot Johnson & Johnson and two-shot Moderna vaccines. At all campus-based clinics, no appointment is necessary and there is no charge for the vaccine. If you are seeking your second dose of a vaccine, please bring your vaccination card to the clinic. More information about the UMaine and UMaine Machias clinics is online.

Transparent and continuing communication

• Community members with an in-person experience on our campuses or in our facilities statewide who have tested positive for COVID-19 or who have been exposed to someone who has tested positive need to submit a self-report form, which initiates university-based contact tracing. Faculty who are told by students that they have tested positive should encourage them to self-report online. COVID FAQs for instructors for fall 2021 are online.

• At UMaine and UMaine Machias, if a community member tests positive and you are identified as a close contact, you will be contacted by a university-based contact tracer. If you are not contacted but continue to be concerned, free on-campus testing is available by scheduling an appointment through PointnClick.

• The University of Maine System will begin issuing daily Together for Maine COVID-19 updates each workday starting on Monday. The updates will include numbers of active known cases of COVID-19 at each of the universities and available isolation and quarantine spaces, as well as aggregate university COVID-19 testing data. The daily updates, posted on the together.maine.edu website, also will include regular updates on vaccination rates, university guidance and other information related to the pandemic. Key Information from yesterday:
  ◦ 57 active known cases of COVID-19 in the University of Maine System identified through university testing and testing outside of the university
  ◦ 97% of university-administered quarantine space and 91% of university-administered isolation space is vacant and available
  ◦ 22,347 members of the university community have verified their vaccination status — 95.4% of residential students have verified their status; 82.8% of full-time employees have verified their status

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

• UMaine Family and Friends Weekend is Sept. 24–26. The full list of events, registration and FAQs are online.

• The UMaine Machias Study Center, 225 Torrey Hall, is open 8 a.m.–8 p.m., Monday–Friday. Among the resources available: time management workshops and peer tutoring, both in person and via Zoom. For more information, contact Study Center coordinator Lori McBrine, lori.mcbrine@maine.edu. UMaine’s Tutor Program offers small group tutoring on campus. View courses and a great list of resources online. For more information, call 207.581.2351, email tutorprogram@maine.edu or stop by 104 Dunn Hall.

• It is a busy weekend in UMaine Athletics with multiple contests at home and away, along with the UMaine Sports Hall of Fame Induction banquet beginning at 6 tonight. Fans can watch the induction ceremony at this link. The weekend begins when field hockey hosts Merrimack at 3 p.m. today. Fans can watch the broadcast of the game live on ESPN3. Football returns home on Saturday to host Merrimack at noon. Tailgate lots open at 9 a.m. Tickets can be purchased by calling 207.581.BEAR or online at GoBlackBears.com/tickets. The game will be televised
on ABC-7 in the Bangor region and WPXT in the Portland market, will be streamed at FloSports, and can be heard on the Black Bears Sports Network, as well as on 103.9 FM, 101.3 FM, 95.1 FM, 100.5 FM, 1450 AM, 1310 AM. Cross country heads to New Hampshire to take on the Wildcats, with the women starting at noon followed by the men’s race at 12:45 p.m. Soccer opens conference play on Sunday when they host UMBC at noon, live on ESPN3. Field hockey closes the weekend when it hosts Northeastern at 1 p.m. on Sunday, live on AmericaEast.TV.

**Flexibility, responsiveness, empathy, and science**

- UMaine Counseling Center offers a workshop, “Working With Students in Distress,” focused on helping participants become more aware and prepared to deal effectively with students who are struggling and in distress. The hour-long in-person workshop is offered at 1 p.m. on Sept. 24 and Oct. 29; 11 a.m. on Oct. 12; and noon on Nov. 9 in the Bumps Room in the Memorial Union. Online registration required. For more information, contact Jessica Browne, jessica.browne@maine.edu.

**Continuing our missions for Maine**

- Provost John Volin will be among higher education leaders nationwide taking part in the first annual conference of the Coalition for Life-Transformative Education (CLTE), Sept. 22–23. In addition to the keynotes, the virtual conference from noon–5 p.m. each day will include reports from faculty and staff from CLTE member universities involved in pilot programs on their campuses intended to improve the long-term well-being of students, with particular attention to their well-being long after they graduate. On Sept. 22 at 2:30 p.m., Provost Volin will co-moderate one of the panels focused on university projects funded by CLTE mini-grants, followed by his presentation at 3:45 p.m., “Gateways to Success, Research Learning Experiences, and Pathways to Careers.” Free registration and more information about the conference is online.

- The Beyond Crisis Schooling project, led by associate professor of educational leadership Catharine Biddle and lecturer in educational leadership Maria Frankland, has a new report out: "Re-opening Schools in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons for Leaders from the 2020–2021 School Year.” It is designed to inform the practices of school leaders who are still dealing with a pandemic with the reopening of schools.