COVID-19 health and safety guidance

Plans and resources

Friday Futurecasts and Updates from Campus Leaders

Friday Futurecast — December 10
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Friday Futurecast — December 3
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Friday Futurecast — November 18
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Friday Futurecast — November 5
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Maine Memo — Faculty and Staff Community update July 23

July 23, 2021 | Friday Futurecasts and Updates from Campus Leaders

Dear University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias faculty and staff colleagues,

I hope that all of you are having a wonderful summer and are able to find time for rest, fun, and family and friends. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to dominate so much of our world, but here in Maine we are seeing some very positive indicators, including the latest news reports of CDC data that of all states, we are the fifth highest in percentage of fully vaccinated people of those eligible. And while we closely watch the numbers of COVID-19 cases and the prevalence of the delta variant, we are getting back to what was once our normal in so many ways.

Five weeks from now, we will be welcoming first- and second-year students enrolled in our new Research Learning Experience program at the University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias. Their first week of immersion learning in and out of the classroom will dovetail into Maine Hello, when our residential students move into their residence halls prior to the start of classes Aug. 30.

We are excited about the return of UMaine and UMaine Machias to in-person, vibrant campus communities, all while continuing to heed the latest civil and University of Maine System COVID-19-related health and safety guidance. We have faculty and staff welcome events planned on both campuses and look forward to the great variety of informal interactions with one another that create bonds and shape our community — a community that will be strong and committed in part because of our collective challenging experience over the past many months.

In this run-up period to the start of the fall semester, faculty, staff and students are increasingly on campus as we return to pre-pandemic operations. Community members who have been working remotely should plan to return to campus on or around Aug. 2, or whenever their normal schedule would have them on-site. The latest UMS guidance regarding remote work, including remote work guidelines and a decision tree document, is now available. Employees who have been working remotely are encouraged to discuss questions and arrangements related to returning to campus work locations with their managers or supervisors. Remote work arrangements must be approved by the respective management team and documented using the online Remote Work Agreement tool.

Next week, we will change our face coverings requirements in university facilities on and off campus. Face coverings are optional in UMaine and UMaine Machias buildings for fully vaccinated faculty, staff, students and visitors. Employees who are vaccinated may choose to continue to wear a face covering; one should not assume that someone wearing a face covering is unvaccinated. Employees are not required to disclose their vaccination status to their manager or colleagues. And managers, colleagues and students should not ask others to share their vaccination status or place others in a position in which they are compelled to disclose that status.

UMS continues to strongly encourage all community members — students, staff and faculty — to be fully vaccinated when returning to campus and to record their vaccination information on our secure campus portal. You will need your MaineStreet username and password to log on. Detailed instructions can be found online. PointNClick's information security protocols and measures were thoroughly reviewed by the University of Maine System and deemed to be fully compliant with all university policies and federal regulations, including HIPPA protection of individual health records. Please note that there will be COVID-19 testing requirements for faculty, staff and students who have not registered.

A series of public COVID-19 vaccination clinics, offered in partnership with Penobscot Community Health Center, will be held at UMaine in August and September offering the two-shot Pfizer vaccine. Clinic dates and locations are online.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in the coming weeks, both in the rhythm of our on-site work and in our planned employee and student events. Know that we are ever-mindful that we are in a pandemic and will continue to be vigilant, monitoring the latest health and safety guidance for the well-being of our UMaine and UMaine Machias communities.

Enjoy your summer!

Joan Ferrini-Mundy
President

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