Dear UW-River Falls Students,

We are nearing the end of the two-week shelter in place and temporary transition to all online learning announced on Sept. 18. These efforts have allowed us to slow the spread of COVID-19 and our indicators are showing positivity rates at a much more manageable level. The UW-River Falls administration has also used this time to further refine our already robust plans for mitigating risks associated with the pandemic. We are now taking additional steps to better ensure the health and safety of our community.

The most important point we wish to make is that we need everyone to follow all of our existing guidance and to comply with these new, extended measures and recommendations. Failure to do so will result in our returning to online-only delivery and/or future shelter-in-place directives. I am sure we all want to avoid that.

Following is a summary of our new mitigation steps:

**Gradual return to face-to-face**

- Instructors who were previously teaching in a face-to-face or hybrid format are being given the option to remain in an online-only delivery format for one additional week at their discretion. Your face-to-face activity *may* resume on Monday, Oct. 5. Your instructors are to notify you of any schedule updates or changes. If you do not hear from your instructor or have any questions, please reach out to them.
- As of Monday, Oct. 5, building hours will return to what they were before shelter-in-place, including the Falcon Center with all of our existing safety precautions. University Center dining locations may remain modified, but *dining hours of operation* will return to what they were at the start of the semester.

**Mandatory testing for residence hall students**

- From Oct. 1-6, all students currently living on campus will be required to be tested before they can continue living in their residence hall room.
- From Oct. 7-12, students who chose to shelter in place somewhere other than in their on-campus room will need to be tested as a condition of their return to campus. All students who left campus during the shelter-in-place and wish to return to the residence hall will need to do one of the following:
  - Schedule an appointment to be tested on campus *go.uwrf.edu/gettested*. The result of that test must be negative. (Students testing positive will be instructed on our isolation process).
  - Submit documentation of a negative test result from an accredited health care provider or county health department dated within 7 days of the established return date.
  - Submit documentation of a positive test result from an accredited health care provider or county health department dated within 90 days of the established return date.
  - Anyone currently under orders to isolate or quarantine will not be allowed to return to their campus residence until they have officially been released.
- Subsequent to this effort to test all residence hall students in early October, all students living on campus will then begin a mandatory test protocol every two weeks.
- Residence Life will be providing additional details on the testing signup process and how to submit documentation. Watch your email for that information.
- See our policy *AP 01-128* for more information.
Testing continues to be available for all students

- Students living off campus are strongly encouraged to be tested as well. Please continue to allow and respond to the daily health check texts. Any student experiencing symptoms still needs to make an appointment and must get tested as soon as possible.

Improved quarantine and isolation process

- We have more than doubled our capacity to handle cases of students who test positive, including adding new disease investigation and contact tracing staff trained by and working under the supervision of Pierce County Public Health.
- We are expanding and refining our inventory of available quarantine and isolation spaces for students, including preparation of dedicated isolation spaces in buildings on campus with no other non-positive residents.

Limiting community spread

- As a precaution against the spread of the COVID-19 virus, and until further notice, students living in on-campus residence halls or using other on-campus facilities are prohibited from hosting or attending gatherings on or off campus that may spread the virus. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, attendance at indoor gatherings of 10 or more people, or outdoor gatherings of 25 or more. (This obviously does not apply to instructional or classroom settings, which must continue to follow UWRF-specific guidance on capacity limits, physical distancing, etc.)
- Students living off campus should not host gatherings that will be or could be attended by students who live or are regularly in close contact with others on campus.

Student conduct and discipline

- A student who violates our health and safety directives may be subject to disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion. The university may discipline students for such nonacademic conduct off campus under Wis. Admin. Code Chapter UWS 17 provisions, more specifically, if a student’s conduct presented or may present a danger or threat to the health and safety of themselves or others.

Recommendations and common sense

- For the remainder of the semester, in order to stem any spread of the virus from campus to the River Falls community and elsewhere, we recommend that students limit their movements and travel to the extent possible, including to their home communities.
- Students living on campus or regularly using on-campus facilities should acknowledge that they may be at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19. Those who have jobs working with vulnerable populations (elderly, those in long-term care, immunocompromised individuals, etc.) should discuss their potential risk with their supervisors.
- Similarly, students who work in environments where face coverings are not required for everyone entering the facility and physical distancing cannot be maintained may be at risk both of spreading the virus into the community, or of contracting the virus and bringing it to campus. Those students are asked to thoughtfully consider these risks and discuss any available options with their supervisors.
I can promise you that UWRF will continue to prioritize the health and safety of students and employees, but we can’t do it alone. Getting through the COVID-19 pandemic requires a partnership with you, students. Do your part, Falcons, and we will overcome the challenges we’re facing together.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Connie