

Frequently Asked Questions COVID-19 and the Spring 21 Semester

The Basics

WHAT ARE LIVING & LEARNING PODS?

These small groups of students, ranging from 7 to 18 students in size, will share a residence hall, dine together, study the same package of courses together, and likely work together. Each Living & Learning Pod (LLP) will be dedicated to specific areas of study and supported by a small team of dedicated faculty and staff. Most students will participate in two different LLPs each semester.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

The advantages of LLPs are multiple. They allow students to have close, meaningful interactions in a low-risk environment, which also creates a healthy space that our faculty and staff will be able to work within. Should someone on campus test positive, disruption of instruction will only be experienced among those in the same LLP, rather than the whole campus. LLPs will stay together, as a unit, for a five-week academic block, with appropriate safety/hygiene methods taken for the interim transition from one pod to another.

[RETURN TO CAMPUS GUIDELINES FOR SPRING 2021](#)

I'VE ALREADY HAD COVID OR I'VE ALREADY BEEN VACCINATED, DO I STILL NEED TO FOLLOW THE RETURN TO CAMPUS GUIDELINES?

Yes, you do!

MASKS, MASKS, MASKS!

Face coverings are required to be worn by all faculty, staff, students, and visitors when on campus and in the presence of others at all times, except:

- When eating meals at a minimum of 6 feet away from others.
- When actively participating in strenuous exercise at a minimum of 6 feet away from others.
- When in your residential hall in the presence of your household unit.

In all these instances, a face covering should be readily available to put on quickly in the event that distancing becomes impossible during interpersonal interactions, or when occupying shared spaces.

SURVEILLANCE TESTING:

Sterling College will conduct weekly surveillance testing of all students, faculty, and staff that participate in on-campus activities. The numbers tested and frequency of testing will be determined in response to the level of COVID-19 activity in the local community and region. This testing requirement does not eliminate the need for quarantine. In addition to surveillance, symptomatic, and contact tracing COVID-19 testing, Sterling College will administer the following testings:

1. All students (including Vermonters) will receive a 'day zero' test conducted within 48 hours of arrival at campus.
2. All students (including Vermonters) must have a second test done at day 7.

HOW WILL BLOCKS WORK?

There will be two five week blocks within the Spring semester during which time you belong to one LLP. Spring Block 1 is from February 15 to March 22. Spring Block 2 runs from March 29 to April 30. Students will change LLPs from Block 1 to Block 2 depending on their course choice. Spring Block 3

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runs from May 6 - May 21 and is an intensive. Online-only courses are running on a slightly different schedule. For an overview, [refer to this chart](#).

I'M A COMMUTER STUDENT, WILL I STILL BE IN A POD?

Yes! Just select your top three choices of pods for each block in the same way as residential students. Do note that commuting may not be able to be accommodated for off-campus pods.

HOW MANY STUDENTS WILL BE IN THE SAME POD?

LLP size will vary depending on curricular and residential needs, estimated size is 7-18 students.

COULD SOMEONE LIVE OFF CAMPUS FOR ONE OF THE 5-WEEK BLOCKS AND THEN MOVE ON CAMPUS FOR A 5 WEEK POD?

Yes! Please keep in mind that there may be a need to quarantine separate from your pod, depending on where you are coming from and the Vermont Department of Health travel guidelines.

Academics

WHAT WILL THE ACADEMIC SCHEDULE LOOK LIKE?

Within a pod, the day-to-day schedule of academics and work will be determined by the pod instructor(s). Because all students in a pod will be studying together as a cohort, instructors will be creative with the scheduling, adapting it to best meet the needs of the curriculum. For example, field trips may not need to be constrained by other class schedules and chores. Faculty may choose to incorporate overnight or multi-day trips into the schedules. However, Wednesday afternoons are to be reserved for work, and Friday afternoons are reserved for online classes.

WILL THERE BE GLOBAL FIELD STUDIES AND FIELD SEMESTERS THIS YEAR?

Global Field Studies are suspended for the foreseeable future until stated, national and international COVID-19 related restrictions are relaxed. The Southwest Field Semester will, however, be going ahead. All campus and field-based programs will follow health and safety best practices pertaining to COVID-19 as outlined by state and federal authorities and will fully comply with policies as required by Governor Scott.

WILL I BE ABLE TO GO HOME FOR SPRING BREAK?

We are asking that students remain within Vermont throughout the semester, including spring break. If you need to leave the state, you will need to coordinate your travels and conditions of your return with the Dean of Student Life and the campus nurse. Returning to campus might include a self-quarantine for 7 days and a COVID-19 test or a self-monitoring of symptoms to be reported to the campus nurse and the Department of Health. We will be making these decisions based on the guidance of the CDC and the Vermont Department of Health.

I'M A GRADUATING SENIOR, WILL I BE ABLE TO TAKE THE CLASSES I NEED?

Sterling has prioritized graduating seniors when developing the block schedule to ensure that all graduating seniors can complete their degree requirements on time. If there are any concerns about meeting your requirements, check in with your advisor who can discuss all the different options for you to graduate on time as planned.

The academic office will be flexible in a number of different ways. It will start with a conversation with your advisor. Possible options include:

- Substitute a class that is on the major checklist with a different one to meet the required competencies. It could be one you already have taken or one that you can take in the coming year.
- Independent study.
- Take an online class from another institution.

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- Develop a portfolio on how you have met the particular competencies.

ARE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS GOING TO BE MADE MORE FLEXIBLE?

Potentially. As always, start with a conversation with your advisor to make the best plan. If there appear to be roadblocks or barriers, work with your advisor to consider one of the following possibilities:

- Substitution for the requirement with a different course you have already taken or will be taking.
- An independent study that will allow you to meet that requirement.
- Waiving that requirement due to prior experience such as work.
- Adding on or modifying assignments within classes you will be taking to try and meet a particular competency.

WHAT DOES 'HYBRID CLASS' MEAN?

Hybrid refers to part of the class being delivered in-person and part of the class delivered online.

HOW WILL I BE ABLE TO INTERACT WITH MY ADVISOR, IF NOT IN MY POD?

Advisors will be available to meet with their advisees as frequently as usual either over the telephone or via Zoom. In addition, you may be able to meet in person out-of-doors. Advisors will also be hosting weekly group advising meetings which will be an opportunity for students to participate in goal-setting and reflection exercises with a small group of students from across pods.

WHAT WILL MY INTERACTION WITH THE FACULTY LOOK LIKE?

Students will interact with the faculty instructors of their pods on an almost daily basis, both in-person and online. These interactions will be in the classroom and in the field as usual.

GUEST PRESENTERS

For faculty and staff, if you deem it necessary to host a visitor on campus, you must receive permission from a member of the President's Cabinet. Before arriving to campus, the visitor must respond no to all the following questions:

- Have you traveled outside of the state within the past 14 days?
- Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
- In the past 24 hours, have you experienced any of the following symptoms: fever (temperature of 100.4F or higher), runny nose, sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath, new muscle aches or chills, new change in your sense of taste or smell?

WILL I CONTINUE TO BE ABLE TO UTILIZE THE WOOD SHOP, FORGE, LAB, AND COMPUTER LAB?

Most spaces on campus will have their access restricted to just one pod. Students who need a particular space to pursue their Senior Year Research Project or an independent study will have to seek permission from the Dean of Academics.

WILL THE LIBRARY BE OPEN?

The library will be open in the evenings for two hours, by sign up only. A weekly sign-up will be emailed to students on Fridays with a maximum 6 students for each two-hour time slot. Only one student per table, even if students are from the same pod. Social distancing of at least 6 ft and masks must be maintained at all times. No food but beverages are permitted. Students may check out books; books used and not checked out should be placed in the basket under the front desk. Two computers in the loft will be available to students; computers and tables should be wiped down after use. Only the back door will be unlocked for access. The Work Program will support the cleaning of the space as well as help enforce the above protocols.

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The library will be functioning, but will not be open for general access by students, faculty or the public. Petra, our librarian, will help students access the books and resources they need - offering a "curbside delivery service"! Books reserved for particular courses will be accessible for students within the classroom space allocated to their pod.

HOW WILL ONLINE CLASSES OPERATE?

Online classes may be conducted either asynchronously, or synchronously, or a combination. In each pod description in the course catalog it is indicated whether there will be space in the schedule for a student to take an online course while also fully participating in that pod. Synchronous sessions will be scheduled either on Friday afternoons or in the evening.

HOW WILL I ACCESS LEARNING SUPPORT?

John Zaber, Director of Learning Support, will continue to offer learning support for all students who seek it. If you are not in the LLP in which John is instructing then you will be able to meet with John via Zoom.

HOW DO I MANAGE POD LIFE AND MY SYRP THAT REQUIRES ME TO TRAVEL (IN VERMONT)?

We ask that students remain on campus during the first 2 weeks (or 7 days and a negative test) of block one. Afterwhich, we ask that you keep a record of the dates you leave campus and where you go, in case there is a need to trace your close contacts due to exposure to COVID-19. Please communicate directly with the Dean of Student Life if you will require you to leave campus during the first 2 weeks of the semester.

CAN I STILL DO AN INDEPENDENT STUDY?

Yes, although the timing of when you can pursue your independent study will depend on which LLP you have chosen. In the course catalog it is made clear in the description of each pod whether there will be space for students to also pursue an independent study during that five-week block or not. If students sign-up for two successive pods that do not allow space for independent study, then they could time their IS work for the May intensive.

CAN I NOT SIGN UP FOR A POD BUT STILL LIVE ON CAMPUS DOING INDEPENDENT WORK?

You will most likely be assigned to a pod for living and dining arrangements, though you would not participate in the classes with the other pod residents.

CAN I ONLY TAKE ONE CLASS WITHIN A POD, NOT ALL OF THEM?

Potentially. For some pods, the two classes are listed as co-requisites. This means the curriculum of the two classes will be interdependent and woven together. In other pods, you may opt to take just one of the two courses paired and take an online class or do an independent study instead. Whether or not courses within a pod are co-requisites is noted in the course catalog description.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM ONE CLASS WITHIN A POD AND STILL PARTICIPATE IN THE OTHER?

This is decided on a case-by-case basis. As always, start with a conversation with your advisor!

HOW WILL PLACES IN PODS BE ASSIGNED?

The assignment of students to pods takes into account multiple factors: student preference, student seniority, student major requirements (including self-design majors), course enrollment caps, pod housing limitations, and classroom size limitations.

We have already communicated with you about which pod you are in and a roster of the other students in your pod. We hope this addresses one concern that has been communicated where folks might not feel comfortable in the pod they have been assigned to. By providing a roster of the pod participants, folks can have a conversation if they want to move to another pod. Favor will be

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looking at your accommodation documents as well and be in direct communication about dorm selection and your accommodation needs.

WHAT IF I HAVE ALREADY TAKEN ONE OF THE CLASSES IN A POD BUT REALLY WANT TO TAKE THE OTHER ONE?

There could be the opportunity to act as a Teaching Assistant for the one course in the pod that you have already taken - contact the instructor to inquire. Alternatively, it may be a pod where the classes are not listed as co-requisites and you can opt to take just the one class while also pursuing an online class or independent study.

CAN I TA A CLASS IN A POD?

Yes, if you have taken a class before and are interested in joining it again in a teaching assistant capacity you may be able to join that pod. Students could potentially TA both courses in a pod, or just one of them, while taking the other as a regular student. First steps in this are to contact the pod instructor(s)!

CAN I DO AN INTERNSHIP FOR 5 WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER?

Yes!

TO FULFILL THE F-1 VISA REQUIREMENTS: BECAUSE INTENSIVES ARE NOT RUNNING AS NORMAL AND INTERNSHIPS ARE TYPICALLY 6 CREDITS, DOES IT SOUND REALISTIC TO DO AN INTERNSHIP PLUS AN INDEPENDENT STUDY TO REACH 12 CREDITS (MINIMUM)?

Yes that might be possible, start with a conversation with your advisor, and then Carol Dickson who is internship coordinator.

IF PEOPLE DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE BEING ON CAMPUS IS THERE AN OPTION TO DO A SEMESTER OF ONLINE/INDEPENDENT STUDIES?

Yes! Please talk first with your advisor about the possibility of this option.

Wendell Berry Farming Program

WENDELL BERRY FARMING PROGRAM: PORT ROYAL CAMPUS

The Brown Farm will serve as the primary (outdoor) classroom for the WBFP. Limited occupancy indoor class sessions may be held at the Port Royal Bank Building. The bank also has employee office space, and students may access study space and a printer at the bank, adhering to social distancing guidelines. The Brown Farm house serves as residential housing and limited-use student center. Residents and commuters will follow the same social distancing and Healthy at Work guidelines as outlined by the College and by the Kentucky Department of Public Health.

HOW WILL LIVING, LEARNING PODS BE INCORPORATED INTO THE WBFP STRUCTURE?

The Wendell Berry Farming Program has been living the "Learning Pod" life in Henry County since its inception. The WBFP's learning pod structure is similar to that of the VT campus. However, because most enrolled students are commuters, coursework more heavily depends upon a hybrid model of instruction, maximizing in-person instructional time for field-based activities and providing distance learning options for didactic and discussion-based sessions.

WHAT ARE KENTUCKY'S CURRENT QUARANTINE AND TRAVEL GUIDELINES?

As of December 14, 2020, there is a travel advisory in effect in Kentucky. The most up-to-date information can be found here: <https://govstatus.egov.com/ky-travel-advisory>. Public health officials and the governor's office advise that there be no out-of-state leisure travel until further notice. For WBFP students, all out-of-state travel beyond essential travel within border states will

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require a 14 day quarantine on return to Kentucky or adherence to [CDC guidance](#) for a shortened quarantine period.

Student & Resident Life

WILL WE HAVE TO MOVE EVERY FIVE WEEKS?

Potentially, yes. As we have experienced, COVID-19 restrictions will most likely change and evolve over the course of the semester. We will gauge our campus environment and regional environment throughout the first block and come to a decision as soon as we feel confident in doing so. Our goal will be to make sure students are feeling comfortable and safe within their living arrangements.

AM I ABLE TO REQUEST TO MOVE TO ANOTHER RESIDENTIAL HALL?

No. Because we are adopting the new cohort model, residential halls will be designated to specified pods. Please work directly with the Dean of Student Life if you have any particular concerns or issues and they will be able to assist you to the best of their ability.

WILL REQUESTS FOR SINGLE ROOMS/PRIVATE BATHROOMS STILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WITH HOUSING?

We will work our hardest to do so; folks with medical documentation will receive priority on these efforts. The number of students signed up for each pod will most likely determine where folks will be housed. Private bathrooms will not be able to be accommodated for folks in Kestrel. Favor has a number of accommodation requests and will be working closely with Laura Lea and Laura Spence. If Favor identifies a potential conflict between the pod preferences of a student and their housing accommodations, she will communicate directly to the student to talk about options.

WHAT IS A COMMITMENT TO SHARED RESPONSIBILITY?

WHY DO I NEED TO SIGN IT?

In order for us to maintain a low risk campus environment, all community members - students, faculty, and staff- will need to commit to the shared responsibility of keeping ourselves and others safe. The Commitment to Shared Responsibility is a list of required behaviors that will decrease potential spread of COVID-19 and will be established under the guidance of the CDC, the VT & KY Departments of Health, and other regional colleges. By signing it, you are indicating that you have read and understand them and are agreeing to follow the new set of guidelines.

WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE BREAKS THE COMMITMENT TO SHARED RESPONSIBILITY?

The Commitment to Shared Responsibility will be an added addendum to our College's Policy of Dangerous and Disruptive Behavior. When a student's behavior constitutes a serious disruption or danger to the living, working, or learning environment that the College seeks to create, the College may respond in a number of ways, from providing needed supplies to mediation to separating the student from the institution, if necessary.

SUBSTANCES & RESIDENCE HALLS

While Sterling is not offering any designated substance free residences, each house/pod will establish their own rules in the first pod meeting.

WILL FOLKS BE ABLE TO GO TO THE SMOKE SPOT IF THEY KEEP 6 FEET APART?

Yes, though students may only congregate with individuals from their household unit.

AM I GOING TO BE ABLE TO HANG OUT WITH MY FRIENDS THAT ARE NOT IN MY POD?

As of the writing of this, the State of Vermont prohibits multi-household social gatherings ([Addendum 8](#)). Should this change during the semester, this guidance will be amended. Because

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data shows that between October 1, 2020, and November 13th, 2020, 71% of the cases in Vermont associated with an outbreak are associated with a private party or social gathering, attendance at all public and private social, recreational and entertainment gatherings, indoor and outdoor, including large social gatherings incidental to ceremonies, holiday gatherings, parties and celebrations, shall be limited to participation with only members of a single household. Social gatherings do not include dining operations, library operations, in-person classes, religious gatherings, college affiliated athletics, and institutional programming that is conducted in a way that restricts interactions between households.

HOW WILL IT WORK IF TWO PEOPLE ARE PARTNERS IN DIFFERENT PODS?

Very important question and one that many student life teams across the world are grappling with! The College has created the following policy to address residential students' need for diverse human interactions.

For residential students, your 'household' unit consists of the individual(s) you choose to be '[close-contacts](#)' with (i.e. not wear face coverings, not maintain social distancing). Because of the high-risk nature of congregate living, you are only able to maintain ONE of the following:

- Be '[close-contacts](#)' with your residential podmates. Do not need to maintain social distance or wear face coverings when interacting with residential pod-mates, who are considered part of your 'household' unit.
- Be '[close-contact](#)' with ONE individual outside of your residential pod. Do not need to maintain social distance or wear face coverings when interacting with the *one individual* outside of your residential pod, as this individual would be considered your 'household' unit.

If you are a residential student who chooses to be a close-contact with ONE individual outside of your residential pod, you need to inform your Community Advisor or Work Advisor AND your instructor(s) so they can make the appropriate arrangements and accommodations to ensure COVID compliance in the residential hall and in the classroom.

WILL IT BE POSSIBLE TO HAVE VISITORS FROM OFF-CAMPUS?

At this time, the answer is no. For arrival day, each residential student will be allowed to have two guests help them move in, though they are unable to enter buildings. Your arrival day guests will need to complete a health screening that will include a temperature check and collection of questions to determine if they have or have been around with individuals who have presented COVID-like symptoms. As stated before, things may change and we will be adapting as our campus and regional environment evolves.

IT INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE!

Sterling invested \$25,000 in technology in the Fall semester to outfit each residence hall with video capability and Smart TVs. Currently there is an active project underway to upgrade the existing wifi infrastructure. Additional Smart TVs are on their way; these and the pre-existing units will all be hardwired, reducing the load on the wifi system. All wifi access points are being replaced and Sterling is installing additional access points to decrease the dead spots on campus.

WHAT DO I DO ON THE WEEKENDS?

WILL I BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE CAMPUS?

Each pod will have different schedules, depending on the classes. During the weekends, some pods will have field trips and others will have weekends to themselves. Students will be able to leave campus after the first two weeks (or 7 days and a negative test), as long as they stay within the state and keep record of where they are going.

WILL I STILL BE ABLE TO WORK OFF CAMPUS?

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We understand many of you have jobs off campus to help pay for your expenses. We ask that students remain on campus during the first 2 weeks (or 7 days + a negative test) of 1st block. Please communicate directly with the Dean of Student Life if your employment will require you to leave campus during the first 2 weeks.

HOW WILL ARRIVAL DAY WORK?

Arrival day will be similar to the Arrival Day this past fall. We will be sending out an Arrival Day schedule for you to fill out your arrival time for COVID testing.

I'M A COMMUTER - WHAT DO I DO?

Commuter students will be able to interact with campus and pods similarly to faculty and staff and will also be required to follow the Commitment to Shared Responsibilities - with masks and keeping 6 feet apart in buildings. Masks are required in all circumstances, inside and outside, unless outside participating in strenuous physical activity when social distancing must occur.

Commuter fees will remain the same as the fall billing cycle.

WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN WITH STUDENT ACTIVITIES?

Student Activities and Community Meeting will be done via Zoom initially. Student Activities will still exist, though the type of activities and purchases will be dependent on if they are along the COVID guidelines. Megan Banner will work closely with Student Activities.

Dining Services

HOW WILL DINING SERVICES OPERATE THIS YEAR?

Dunbar Dining Hall will be open for meal pick-up for students and employees. Residential students can eat meals in their pod's residential hall or outside with pod-mates. Commuter students can eat their meals in the CRC, outside, or in the classroom, six feet apart or more from others. Employees can eat meals in their office. Due to the multi-household gathering ban, meals can not be shared with others outside an individual's household unit.

In addition to the established meal plan, residential students will receive weekly delivery of "snacks and basics". It will be the Community or Work Advisors' responsibility to submit a weekly nourishment form no later than 5pm Sunday evening for requests.

If quarantining, Vermont campus residential students will have their meals delivered three times a day (twice on weekends) to their Living & Learning Pods (LLPs) from the Sterling kitchen. the Meal delivery windows will be:

Breakfast 7am-8am
Lunch 11:45am-1:00pm
Dinner 5:00pm-6:00pm

Note: These are windows. Meals will be delivered within these time frames, not precisely at the beginning of meal time. The responsibility of receiving food deliveries will be directed to the CA or advisory unit of each LLP. Any issues should be directly addressed to the Director of Dining Services.

Each pod will be set up with cutlery, plates, glassware, and space provided for serving and table and chairs for dining. Clear guidelines for students and staff will be established for cleaning, disposal, recycling, and composting. Each pod will need to communicate directly and clearly with the kitchen should any issue arise, or if any item is needed.

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Kentucky residential students will continue to provide their own dining services and will follow strict cleaning protocols for kitchen facilities.

WILL THERE BE OPTIONS FOR ME TO CHOOSE FROM FOR MY MEALS?

We encourage all students to update their dietary restrictions [here](#), so that Liz and the crew can make meal plans that keep in mind folks preferences and needs!

WILL COMMUTER STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO A LUNCH MEAL PLAN?

Yes, Commuter students are able to purchase a meal plan that will include lunch & snacks as a grab and go option.

I HAVE CHANGES TO MY DIETARY RESTRICTIONS, WHO DO I TELL?

Let us know [here](#). If you have any further questions, please contact Liz Chadwick at echadwick@sterlingcollege.edu

I AM A RESIDENTIAL STUDENT AND WOULD LIKE TO OPT OUT OF THE MEAL PROGRAM, CAN I DO THAT?

Students are only able to opt out of the meal program if they provide a written letter from a healthcare provider stating the individual's dietary needs are unable to be met by campus services. As a small institution, our campus services depend on the support of all students.

Work Program

HOW WILL THE WORK PROGRAM OPERATE UNDER THE POD SYSTEM?

Work will be assigned to students based on their pod assignments. Work that supports and enriches students' coursework will be prioritized within each pod assignment.

WHAT ABOUT CHORES?

All residential students will participate in dorm cleaning chores.

WHAT ABOUT WORK ADVISORS & COMMUNITY ADVISORS?

A robust team of student leaders will be rolling up their sleeves and getting to work in the Spring.

I'M A COMMUTER STUDENT, WILL I BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK PROGRAM?

You will not be required to participate in the work program. If funds are available, you may be able to sign up for a contract in consultation with the Associate Dean of Work-Learning.

WHAT ABOUT WORK STUDY?

Eligible students can work up to 25 hours each semester.

I'M OPTING TO TAKE REMOTE CLASSES, WILL I BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK PROGRAM?

You will not be required to participate in the work program. If funds are available, you may be able to sign up for a remote work contract in consultation with the Associate Dean of Work-Learning.

WHAT ABOUT ALL COLLEGE WORK DAY?

We are planning a "Work Week" between Spring Block 1 and Block 2 which will incorporate work and service in the spirit of All College Work Day.

Wellness Resources

WILL WE STILL BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE WELLNESS CENTER?

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Students will be able to access the Wellness Center by appointment with the campus nurse. Each pod will have robust first aid kits that will be maintained by CAs to make sure that supplies are replenished.

HOW WILL WE BE ABLE TO MEET WITH THE CAMPUS NURSE?

In most cases, the campus nurse will be able to provide telehealth services via the phone or Zoom. For in person services, they will work with the student to set up an appointment and will screen for possible COVID-19 symptoms.

HOW WILL WE BE ABLE TO ACCESS HEALTH SERVICES?

The Dean of Student Life and campus nurse are currently collaborating with local health and wellness services to provide guidance on how our students will be able to access these services.

WHAT IF A STUDENT'S RELIGION DOESN'T JIVE WITH RECOMMENDED TREATMENT?

There is no treatment other than rest, fluids, nutrition, and monitoring. If a student has moderate to severe COVID-19 symptoms, they may need to go to the hospital for further observation and care.

ARE MASKS GOING TO BE PROVIDED?

Students are going to be expected to bring 3-6 washable masks. It is suggested masks are washed daily. Bandanas count as a cloth mask as long as it is folded over and covers both the mouth and nose. We will have back up masks. These can be provided at cost. We are also asking students to bring a thermometer to self-track temperatures.

WILL WE HAVE A WELLNESS CAR AND VOLUNTEER DRIVES STILL?

Though we have suspended the Wellness Car program, we have created a telehealth space for students to privately meet with their healthcare providers on campus. If you need to go to an appointment and do not have transportation, please be in touch with the Director of Wellness Services, Clare Dolan at cdolan@sterlingcollege.edu

WILL STUDENTS WHO HAVE COVID ANTIBODIES BE HOUSED SEPARATELY?

Currently the Vermont Department of Health suggests that all students, including those who have COVID antibodies, should go through the same amount of screening and be treated the same as a student who has not contracted COVID.

WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE HAS A HIGH TEMPERATURE?

Students with elevated temps (100.4 or higher) will be screened either by our campus nurse and/or through the Department of Health. They may be asked to self-quarantine and get tested for COVID-19.

WHAT IF A STUDENT TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID?

Should this happen, the student will be placed into isolation in South House. Here, they will receive deliveries of meals and will be cared for and monitored on campus in collaboration with the Vermont Department of Health during their illness.

HOW WILL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS BE INCORPORATED INTO THE POD PLAN?

Assistance animals will be accommodated to the best of our ability. If an individual with an ESA contracts COVID, they will need to have someone pick up their animal to care for them while they are in isolation, if their animal requires care outside their isolation room.

HOW WILL FOLKS GET ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ON CAMPUS AND IF THEY ARE OUT IN A FIELD BASED POD?

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Pablo Coddou and the Behavioral Health Center in Morrisville are both available to provide telehealth sessions to all Sterling students. Talk with FAVOR, Megan Banner, or Clare if you need support setting up or paying for these sessions.

Financial Aid & Billing

WILL THERE BE CHANGES TO THE WAY BILLING WORKS?

We will continue to bill by the semester. Our tuition will still be billed per credit. Room and Board will be calculated by the blocks you reside on Campus. For example, if you are present for 2 blocks, you will be charged for 10 weeks of room & board.

WHEN WILL WE FIND OUT ABOUT FINANCIAL AID?

Student billing for the spring will be on or around January 15.

COVID-19 Campus Changes

WHAT ARE VERMONT'S CURRENT QUARANTINE AND TRAVEL GUIDELINES?

Vermont Department of Health's website will have [the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 restrictions](#) regarding traveling to and within Vermont. We will be communicating directly with students who will be coming back to campus for the Spring Semester to go over these guidelines and Arrival Day protocols.

I'M AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, WILL I HAVE TO QUARANTINE LONGER?

We will work closely with each international student who is currently abroad to look at each country's regulations in regard to travel and quarantine.

AM I REQUIRED TO BRING CLOTH MASKS AND A THERMOMETER WITH ME?

Yes! If you arrive on campus without these items, we will be able to provide them at cost.

WILL COVID-19 TESTING BE PROVIDED BY THE COLLEGE?

Sterling will provide symptomatic, surveillance, contact-tracing, and arrival COVID-19 testing.

WILL WE BE REQUIRED TO DO A QUARANTINE WHEN WE ARRIVE TO CAMPUS?

At this time, we will be asking students to quarantine within their pod as a household group. This means that you will not be restricted to stay in your room and will be able to interact amongst your housemates within your residents.

HOW WILL COMMON SPACES, PUBLIC BATHROOMS, AND CLASSROOMS BE CLEANED AND SANITIZED?

We are still creating a system where these spaces will be cleaned daily by campus staff. We will be asking that with each use, the individual disinfects the areas they touch before and after use. There will be communication, signage, and discussion about this at a further date.

WILL I BE ABLE TO LEAVE CAMPUS OR THE STATE DURING THE SEMESTER?

At this time, we will be asking that students remain within Vermont throughout the semester. If you need to leave the state, you will need to coordinate your travels and conditions of your return with the Dean of Student Life and the campus nurse. Returning to campus might include a self-quarantine for 7 days and a COVID-19 test or a self-monitoring of symptoms to be reported to the campus nurse of the Department of Health. As stated before, We will gauge our campus environment and regional environment throughout the first block and adjust regulations accordingly.

WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE TESTS COVID-19 POSITIVE ON CAMPUS?

We are working closely with the Vermont Department of Health and other Vermont colleges to create guidelines and protocols for if this occurs. Given the organization of our pod system, there will likely be limited disruption to the entire campus community. We will be going over these protocols in detail with each student before they arrive on campus.

WITH THE SWITCHING OF THE PODS THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER, ARE WE JUST CONSTANTLY BEING EXPOSED TO NEW PEOPLE EVERY 5 WEEKS?

Great question! The reasoning behind moving to our new pod cohort for the second block is to ensure minimal interactions amongst our student population. If there is a COVID case, an individual's close contacts would hopefully only be the individuals in their pod, so it would make tracing close contacts easier and decrease the chance of campus-wide disruption. Moving the pods will be the most conservative approach. If we are feeling confident with the regional environment and that our Commitment to Shared Responsibility is being respected then, we may not have individuals move and only continue the living and eating aspect of pod life, but have students attend classes throughout campus with appropriate PPE and social distancing.

I AM IMMUNO-COMPROMISED AND AM CONSIDERED 'HIGH RISK', WILL IT BE SAFE FOR ME TO COME TO CAMPUS?

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. All students, faculty and staff are advised to perform the following steps to determine if they are considered to be at higher risk and review CDC guidance on how to mitigate that risk. Regardless of one's health status, engaging in this process will inform all on how to best help individuals at risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Links to CDC webpages are used to ensure that you receive the most up-to-date information.

Step 1: Assess your risk by reviewing CDC's [People Who Are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness](#) and [Other-at-Risk Populations](#) webpages, and/ or watching the CDC video [COVID-19: Are you at higher risk for severe illness?](#)

Step 2: Learn how to reduce the risk of getting sick with COVID-19, by reviewing the CDC's [Groups at Higher Risk for Severe Illness](#), including action steps for specific medical conditions.

Step 3: Create a personal health plan. Sterling College will follow CDC and Vermont Department of Health guidance related to COVID-19. Individuals at high risk should consider how they will live and /or work at Sterling College during the COVID-19 outbreak, and what actions, including working or learning remotely, might be necessary to reduce COVID-19 exposure risk.

Step 4: Contact your treating physician or health care provider if you are considered to be at higher risk for severe illness. Discuss your medical condition, health risk, and personal health plan. Together, you will be able to adjust your individual plan, identify actions that might be necessary to reduce your COVID-19 exposure risk, and have an action plan in the event that you do become sick.

Step 5: Request Adjustments/ Accommodations for any measures you may need to reduce your COVID-19 exposure risk. Students should notify the Dean of Student Life and employees should notify their supervisor. They will work with Sterling administration to provide reasonable adjustments and accommodations. Sterling College has policies to protect the privacy of people at higher risk for severe illness regarding underlying medical conditions in compliance with applicable federal and state privacy and confidentiality laws.

Individuals who are not considered to be at higher risk for severe illness, but are concerned about someone in their home or family, can review the CDC guidance [Prevent Getting Sick](#) and [If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone](#) to create plans to reduce COVID-19 exposure risk.

Sterling College

WORKING HANDS. WORKING MINDS.

CDC links:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/what-you-can-do.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/groups-at-higher-risk.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.htm>

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Still have questions?

I AM A MATRICULATED STUDENT WITH QUESTIONS! WHO DO I ASK?

Start with the website! If you are still not clear after exploring the questions and answers there then talk to your advisor. They will direct you to the person who can best help you find answers.

I'M AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND I HAVE QUESTIONS! WHO DO I ASK?

Start with the website. Next try your advisor, but also feel free to check in with either Charlotte Rosendahl, International Students coordinator, or Laura Lea Berry, the designated school official (DSO) for Homeland Security.

I AM A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT HAVE QUESTIONS! WHO DO I ASK?

Start with the website! If you are still not clear after exploring the questions and answers there then talk to your newly allocated advisor or your Admission counselor. They will either answer your questions, or direct you to the person who can best help you find answers.