COVID-19 Impact Plan

Our ability to learn, engage, teach and be free to “be normal” is all predicated on the goal of keeping our campus healthy. Keeping our community healthy is everyone’s responsibility. Our ability to meet face to face, with limited mask wearing, is a privilege we can enjoy as long as there are no cases of COVID-19 on campus. As a member of our community, do your part to protect our community and be safe. Part of being safe is taking your temperature daily, wearing a mask when required, washing your hands and using hand sanitizers often, and maintaining a social distance whenever possible.

Since March, we have all been in a world of upheaval, change and uncertainty. We have learned how to navigate online teaching and learning, new terms like social distancing, which mask we like and those we don’t, and have become way more familiar with Zoom and Go to Meeting than we could ever have imagined. I know we are all simply looking forward to getting “back to normal”.

I have been one of the biggest proponents of normalcy and have been anxiously waiting for this thing to pass us by. Effective August 1, the Southwest District Public Health Department was moved to phase 4. Phase 4 allows us to open buffet serving lines in the dining hall, be less restrictive on mask wearing, and provide for fewer restrictions for class sizes. Ours is the third district to move to phase 4 as we continue to be one of the districts with the fewest number of cases reported.

As part of the NU system, NCTA tries to follow the guidelines and recommendations put out by President Carter and Vice President Boehm, while still maintaining our own independence based on local and regional conditions. As you are likely aware, UNL has adopted a face covering policy that will require everyone to wear face covering when indoors with a few exceptions. This is basically the same policy our Vet Tech Division has been practicing all summer.

Please understand this, that the most important thing is the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff, as well as the entire Curtis community. We also are very intentional in having our classes meet in person in every situation possible. I offer this thought – how important is it that we meet face to face as opposed to the online option we experienced this spring? Is it worth a little inconvenience for the ability to maintain an in-person educational experience for our campus?

If we lived in a bubble with every one of our students living in Frontier County, we could look at things differently. However, we have students joining us this fall from across the state and from other states. Many of our students will likely travel home on weekends and we will not expect them to self-isolate for 10 days before they return to their classes. Because of the vast geographical region of our students, we must choose other alternatives. I believe the lesser evil is to continue to follow CDC health guidelines, maintain social distancing where possible, recommend masks where possible and require in a few situations.

Realize that these plans are strictly for the immediate future, heading into the fall semester, and are subject to change. If our health district moves back to phase 3 for any reason, then we will revisit these policies. It is important that we all do our part to keep moving the needle in the right direction.
2020-21 NCTA Health and Safety Plan:

- Signage regarding washing hands, social distancing, using hand sanitizer, and other suggested health measures will continue to be posted.
- Hand sanitizing stations will continue to be provided for all buildings.
- All high-touch surfaces will continue to be sanitized and logs kept as is current practice.
- Current classroom cleaning policy will continue to be followed; when the class is leaving, assign someone(s) to:
  - Wipe off desks/chairs/tables
  - Wipe doorknobs
  - Wipe off light switch
  - Wipe down equipment used
  - Fill out cleaning log located in the classroom
- All students, faculty and staff should self-check their temperature each morning prior to their first class or reporting to work.
- Anyone with a temperature of 100.4°F/38°C or feeling ill must stay home/in their room and self-isolate until the temperature is back to normal for 24 hours; if symptoms persist, contact your doctor or health care professional.
- Dining hall: Buffet line can be open
  - Students must wear a mask and use hand sanitizer or clean gloves each time they visit the buffet
  - Masks will be provided if the student does not have one.
- Classroom sizes: limited to 75% of rated occupancy; recommended to practice social distancing within each classroom.
- Outdoor gatherings are allowed at 100% occupancy; social distancing recommended.
- Face masks will be recommended but not required to be worn on campus and in class settings.
- Face masks or shields can be required by individual faculty members in lab settings where social distancing cannot be achieved (within ADA guidelines).
- Instructors that consider themselves high risk can require students without masks or face shields to sit a minimum of 16 feet from the instructor.
  - Otherwise a Plexiglas or plastic shield will be installed in the classroom for the instructor to stand behind.
  - Faculty and staff can require masks or shields be worn in their individual offices.
- Any student, staff or faculty that has been diagnosed with COVID-19 will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days and will only be allowed to return to campus with a negative test done by a qualified health professional.
  - Contact tracing will be implemented, and all confirmed contacts will be required to self-isolate until they are deemed to be COVID free.
  - An isolation policy has been created by Residence Life to monitor quarantined students.
- Arrangements will be considered on a case-by-case basis for students that are uncomfortable with these policies to take courses virtually when possible. (contact Kevin Martin in Student Services)
- Faculty will include an accommodation statement in course syllabi to accommodate students with documented disabilities.
- As a common courtesy and out of respect for the other person, if you are speaking to/working with someone wearing a mask, put on a mask and/or maintain an appropriate distance.