

2021

## COVID-19 Campus Update, January 12, 2021

Eastern Michigan University

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COVID-19 Campus Update – Jan. 12, 2021

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

To the Eastern Michigan University community:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the winter semester of 2021! Despite the challenges around us, I hope you are as filled with optimism as I am about what the future holds in terms of the increasing rollout of vaccines to stop the spread of COVID-19.

I am proud of how our campus community has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hard to believe that we are approaching the one year mark, in mid-March, when the pandemic forced a major upheaval in the education process for students, faculty and staff at Eastern Michigan University and at schools and colleges across the nation. We indeed now see “the light at the end of the tunnel” as they say.

Despite that optimism, it is not the time to let our guard down. In that spirit, this email contains important updates:

- COVID-19 vaccination update – survey responses needed
- Health & safety reminders
- Modifications to the winter semester schedule
- Winter semester registration remains open
- Looking ahead

COVID-19 vaccination update – survey responses needed

Because there are limited supplies of vaccine available, it will likely be several months before vaccines will become available to everyone. I strongly encourage everyone who is eligible to receive a vaccination to do so as soon as permitted. The state of Michigan, using guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [has developed a prioritization](#) for vaccination eligibility.

We are working closely with the Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) to share information about the availability and scheduling of vaccinations. First and most important, all members of the campus community should have received a vaccine survey designed to help assess individual placement into the vaccination priority groups. Invitations to register for open vaccination appointments will be driven in part by survey information. Please complete the survey if you have not done so.

Specific information about the scheduling of vaccinations for students and employees will be communicated with you individually once it is determined. The availability of vaccine appointments is impacted by a wide array of local, state and national factors so

please be patient with WCHD and with us as we communicate on their behalf in the coming weeks. We are very early in this process and as I shared earlier, for most of us, vaccinations are likely two to three months away.

It is important to remain patient and to wait for notification.

In the coming weeks and months, WCHD will use the University's Convocation Center as a community mass vaccination site. We are pleased to collaborate with the County in support of this critical public health effort. Individuals should not visit the location to receive a vaccine without an appointment. You will not be permitted to enter for that purpose. As noted above, you will receive an email about scheduling your vaccine pursuant to Michigan Department of Health and Human Services protocols.

Important health and safety reminders for the winter semester

- Face coverings are **required to be worn on campus grounds**, both indoors and outdoors, with few exceptions. The covering must cover your nose and mouth.
- All members of the campus community must complete the **COVID PASS Daily Health Screening** each day they are on campus. This requirement also applies to students who live in on-campus housing.
- All members of the campus community must complete the University's **COVID-19 Report Form** if you test positive for COVID-19, have close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19, or experience symptoms of COVID-19.
- Monitor your emich.edu email for updates on campus testing and other important information.
- Practice physical distancing. Stay at least six (6) feet from other people who are not from your household. It is important to do this everywhere, both indoors and outdoors.
- Wash your hands often for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer when hand washing is not possible.
- Watch your health and check for symptoms of COVID-19, including taking your temperature twice a day.

## Modifications to the winter semester schedule

As you know, we delayed the start of winter semester classes to tomorrow, Wednesday, Jan. 13, in order to reduce the number of people returning directly from the break with possible exposure to the COVID-19 virus. When courses begin tomorrow, virtually all of them will be held in fully online/remote formats through Sunday, Jan. 24. Beginning Monday, Jan. 25, a limited number of classes (approximately 10 percent) will transition to in-person formats as indicated on course schedules.

### Winter semester registration remains open

For students who have not registered for classes yet, there's still time. Please visit the [winter registration appointments page](#) to start or complete the registration process. Advisers are available to assist students in determining their classes and meeting program requirements. Information about how to contact an adviser and other details are available on the winter registration site.

Eligible registered students will again receive Federal Emergency Relief Funds under last spring's CARES Act. Eligibility, timing and other details can be found on the [EMU CARES Act website](#). Last fall, an estimated 11,240 EMU students received direct grants of \$446 under this program.

### Looking ahead

I look forward to continuing to work together with students, faculty and staff to ensure we are doing everything in our power to ensure a safe and successful environment this semester.

Later this week, we will share more details about the University's [35<sup>th</sup> annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration](#), "We the People Speak: No Justice, No Peace," which begins this Friday, Jan. 15. Our keynote speaker is White House correspondent for PBS NewsHour and NBC and MSNBC Political Contributor, Yamiche Alcindor. The keynote takes place on Monday, Jan. 18, from 1 – 2:30 p.m. Registration is required on the link above.

Please continue to monitor the University's [COVID-19 Planning and Preparedness website](#) for ongoing information and updates.

James Smith, Ph.D.