

2021

## COVID-19 Campus Update, January 21, 2021

Eastern Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.emich.edu/covid19>

---

### Recommended Citation

Eastern Michigan University, "COVID-19 Campus Update, January 21, 2021" (2021). *COVID-19*. 114.  
<https://commons.emich.edu/covid19/114>

This Update is brought to you for free and open access by the University Archives at DigitalCommons@EMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in COVID-19 by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@EMU. For more information, please contact [lib-ir@emich.edu](mailto:lib-ir@emich.edu).

COVID-19 Campus Update – Jan. 21, 2021

Thursday, January 21, 2021

To the Eastern Michigan University community:

With the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines underway, albeit somewhat haltingly due to supply and distribution issues, we can now see a future in which a return to expanded in-person classes and limited public gatherings can resume. We also know that the new administration in Washington, D.C. is making vaccine distribution an urgent priority. For certain, we are months away from having a majority of citizens vaccinated, but there is comfort in knowing a return to some level of our past routines is on the distant horizon. This gives me great hope and optimism as we enter the new year and a new semester.

This Monday, Jan. 25, we will transition from the fully online course delivery model in place for the start of the semester to the course schedules as noted in the syllabus, which include a small number of in-person classes (approximately 10 percent). This is consistent with the course delivery model last fall, and reflects our ongoing institutional commitment to slow the spread of COVID-19, reduce the number of positive cases among our campus community, and keep everyone as safe as possible.

I am proud of our efforts in this regard, which are the result of extensive planning, the expertise and work of our faculty and staff, a commitment to an inclusive team approach to problem solving, and our flexibility in adapting to the ever-changing pandemic landscape. Our overall number of COVID-19 cases remains quite low in comparison to state and national averages. Our efforts were documented in an MLive story this week: [Testing, telehealth, teamwork: How Eastern Michigan University kept COVID-19 cases low](#) (readers will need an MLive subscription to read the story in full).

Despite the optimism for the future, now is not the time to let our guard down:

- 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.

We have several items to cover in this week's message:

- COVID-19 Dashboard
- Preliminary Summer Semester Planning
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

- Center for Jewish Studies to Host Antisemitism Author
- Swoop's Food Pantry Update
- Celebrating Eastern Michigan University Excellence
- Health and Safety Reminder

## COVID-19 Dashboard

We continue to support the free testing effort for students and employees. In the seven days ending Jan. 19, the University administered 1,648 tests that resulted in 18 positive cases, for a positivity rate of 1.09 percent. During this time period, we confirmed a total of 28 positive cases. Of those, 18 were students who live off-campus and had no contact with campus prior to the time they tested positive; seven were on-campus students – defined as a student who was living on campus or had visited campus during the applicable time period prior to the time they tested positive. Three cases were reported among University employees.

Since Aug. 12, the University has administered a total of 18,332 tests that resulted in 178 positive results for a positivity rate of 0.97 percent. Complete details can be found on the University's [COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

## Preliminary Summer Semester Planning

Summer classes begin on May 5. Now is a good time for students to plan to take advantage of the summer semester to catch up or get ahead on credit hours. Our current plan is for Summer “A” to be fully online as it was last summer, with Summer “B” to offer a small number of in-person classes as occurred last summer as well. This information is preliminary and will be finalized with our University community's input in the weeks ahead.

## Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

This year's virtual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, “We the People Speak: No Justice, No Peace,” may have been modified to accommodate the pandemic, but it was certainly no less powerful and meaningful.

From the scholarship awards, to the CloseUP Theatre performance, to the academic programs, to the keynote speech and following panel discussion, the celebration reflected Eastern at its finest. As an institution dedicated to opportunity – our MLK Celebration helps contextualize our rich diversity and ongoing efforts to

establish a more inclusive environment and is committed to creating broader awareness and understanding of systemic racism.

Keynote speaker Yamiche Alcindor, PBS White House Correspondent, provided sound and heartfelt advice in these challenging times. EMU Today provided a thorough [overview](#) of her remarks. This year, our keynote address reflected the collaboration between Eastern and The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit. The collaboration expanded awareness and visibility of the event. It is our hope to build on the relationship with the Museum in the weeks and months ahead.

Two students, Maliyah McGowan and D'Anna Hayes, and Professor Rema Reynolds, were honored for their community and campus service that honors the legacy of Dr. King. Three students were awarded scholarships for their creative efforts: Lawrence Smith, Alexandria McCormick and Kennede Thomas. I encourage you to read more about their accomplishments and achievements, as well as review a list of student honorable mention recipients, in this [EMU Today story](#).

Please join me in thanking everyone who worked on this year's Celebration, in particular Steering Committee members Ellen Gold, Steve Bryant, Doris Fields, and Tray McGuire. A complete list of the Planning Committee can be found on the [Planning Committee website](#).

The Committee is thankful for our community's participation, and asks that you complete an [evaluation](#) of this year's Celebration.

#### Center for Jewish Studies to Host Antisemitism Author

Next Tuesday, Jan. 26, which is the eve of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Holly Huffnagle, the U.S. Director for Combating Antisemitism for the American Jewish Committee (AJC), will give a special lecture: "After Auschwitz: Antisemitism in America." The presentation, which is hosted by the Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies, is scheduled for 7 p.m. The talk will offer insights from Huffnagle's efforts to spearhead her global organization's response to antisemitism in the United States and its efforts to better protect the Jewish community. There is no cost to attend. Details and registration information can be found in the [EMU Today story](#).

#### Swoop's Food Pantry Update

The winter hours for the John and Angie Sabo Swoop's Food Pantry Room are Mondays 12 – 5 p.m., Wednesdays 12 – 6:30 p.m., and Thursdays 12 – 5 p.m. Shoppers are requested to complete an [Online Shopping Request Form](#) before arriving. Items will be bagged by staff and brought out to clients when they arrive. Visitors to

Swoop's can enter through the main entrance on the north side of Pierce Hall near the elevator. Swoop's requires any student who has not used the pantry this year to complete the new [2020-21 Swoop's Food Pantry Intake Form](#).

Items most needed at this time: Ramen, rice, large snacks, salad dressing and grape jelly.

If you wish to donate items, please email [swoops\\_pantry@emich.edu](mailto:swoops_pantry@emich.edu) in advance to make sure someone is present to handle your delivery. Please maintain physical distancing when picking up or delivering items to the Pantry.

### Celebrating Eastern Michigan University Excellence

I am pleased to begin the new year by highlighting these examples of Eastern excellence:

- Susan Schanne, Eastern Michigan University College of Business Writing Center consultant and lecturer of management, has been named [The Association for Business Communication's \(ABC\) 2020 Rising Star](#). ABC's Rising Star Award recognizes the meaningful contributions to the mission and membership of the Association and to the business communication field at large through excellent teaching, research, and/or practical applications. The international award recognizes only one recipient each year.
- Graduate and undergraduate programs in human resources received grand prize honors and first place rankings in [awards announced by HR.com](#). The Master of Science in Human Resources and Organizational Development (MSHROD) was ranked first in the category of "Master's Programs with Emphasis in Human Resources," and, our BBA-Management Major/HR Concentration was also ranked first in "Diploma Program with Emphasis on HR." Congratulations to the College of Business, its faculty and Graduate Coordinator for the MSHROD program, Dr. Fraya Wagner-Marsh.
- A new book by Eastern Michigan University Professor of English Language and Literature [Christine Hume](#), "Saturation Project," was featured in a recent review in The New York Times. "Saturation Project" is Hume's fourth book. While the review is too lengthy to include in its entirety, I do want to share the reviewer's concluding sentence: "When Hume's thematic connections and redemptive insights arrive, it's with the force of a hurricane." The full [review](#) is posted on EMU Today.

Congratulations to everyone involved in these fine efforts!

## Health and Safety Reminder

An important reminder as I conclude. Please continue to:

- Practice effective hand washing and the use of hand sanitizers;
- Wear face coverings; and,
- Observe physical distancing.

These actions, when taken together, dramatically reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19.

I thank you for your work on behalf of the University and your ongoing support of our #EMUSafe initiatives. Please continue to follow the [University's COVID-19 Planning and Preparedness website](#) for ongoing updates.

James Smith, Ph.D.