



Colleagues –

Please [click here for my most recent video update](#).

At NDSCS, we continue to look forward, as we adapt and change to the ever-evolving COVID-19 situation, and as we recognize the need for change with the renewed focus on racial inequality and injustice in our communities. It has been a challenging time for all of us.

Amid all of this unrest and change, a bright spot is welcoming all students back to campus in August, and to celebrate our graduating students on August 21. NDSCS intends to offer a full curriculum with face-to-face instruction throughout the fall semester and beyond. To continue to minimize risk and the spread of COVID-19, we will be making many modifications and need your support to help keep our Wildcat family healthy.

We believe the following modifications and requirements will go far in minimizing the risk to the College community while allowing our students and employees to participate in many of the academic experiences and traditions that make NDSCS so unique. Current and incoming students will receive a similar message from me this afternoon. Students and employees will be held accountable to these expectations as allowed through our employee policies and through the Code of Student Conduct.

Testing: NDSCS current students, incoming students, faculty and staff are encouraged to be tested for COVID-19. The North Dakota University System, in collaboration with the North Dakota Department of Health, is scheduling mass testing events throughout North Dakota. These tests will be available, free of charge, to all current and new students, faculty and staff at NDSCS. Individuals can be tested at the site nearest to their current place of residence, with the goal of receiving the results prior to coming to NDSCS. NDSCS is **not** requiring documentation of negative test results. If your result is positive, we ask you to follow public health guidelines and contact your supervisor. Students and employees who live outside North Dakota may be tested by travelling to the nearest NDUS testing site. However, testing closer to home is encouraged if it is available and distance prohibits travelling to North Dakota.

Initial testing events are scheduled for August 3-25; information about exact testing dates, times and locations will be available closer to the start of the testing events. Watch ndscs.edu/COVID-19 for updates.

Personal Responsibility: Testing is just one piece to help keep our Wildcat family healthy. We will require everyone to adhere to the procedure related to face coverings, physical distancing, hand washing and monitoring of their own health for COVID-19 symptoms. Every student and employee will receive two cloth NDSCS facemasks. Please review our [Face Covering Procedure that is effective August 3 by clicking here](#).

Students and employees are expected to notify the College through this [online reporting form](#) if they have tested positive for COVID-19, been notified by a state health department official that they have been identified as a close contact to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or are experiencing [symptoms consistent](#) with COVID-19.



Academic Experiences: Our classes, shops, and labs will take place in person if they were scheduled that way. Some may be in larger classrooms or spaces than in the past to allow for physical distancing between students. Cleaning supplies will be available for use in the classroom and we will be requiring all students to wear face coverings in most academic settings. We recognize that for some of you this may cause concern, but this will be one of our best protective efforts keep the college operational. You may review our face covering procedure [here](#).

Housing and Dining: NDSCS residence halls will be fully operational this fall, with enhanced cleaning protocols for shared spaces and a focus on establishing "family units" for roommates and/or suitemates. Dining facilities will operate differently, with the same focus on quality but more distance between tables and enhanced grab-and-go food options. This message and specifics will be provided to our students during move-in and during New Student Orientation on August 23.

Help and Assistance: We know that some students may be unable or unwilling to come to campus this fall. Please direct these students to the Student Success Center to discuss their personal situations and distance learning opportunities. It is essential that you take care of yourself and your family; our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available through The Village. Information can be found by clicking here: <http://villageeap.com/>. The Village EAP is a confidential, independent counseling program that offers professional guidance in a variety of areas. Services are available 24/7, 365 days a year, with nationwide accessibility. There is no cost to your household, within certain limits.

Workspaces: Most offices and work spaces have returned to face-to-face operations; however, some will be operating in different ways. Some workspaces will be rearranged to enable physical distancing. There are enhanced cleaning protocols of workspaces, and for some employees remote working and/or staggered hours may be utilized in shared workspaces.

The NDSCS family has always looked out for each other. This fall, we will be asking for even greater levels of cooperation, care and thoughtfulness in our interactions. This past spring, I saw how all of us approached every challenge with flexibility, strength and resilience. I am confident that together we will rise to these new challenges, too.

For updated and more detailed information related to COVID-19 modifications, expectations, and requirements, visit [NDSCS.edu/COVID-19](https://ndscs.edu/COVID-19) or connect with your supervisor.

Finally, a note of appreciation to all of you. This time has been challenging for everyone, from students and their families to our faculty and staff. We want everything to return to normal, but things will be different in this coming year. I appreciate your commitment to our community and to the behaviors that will help keep our Wildcat family healthy. We will get through this strange time, and we can continue to look ahead with great optimism and enthusiasm.

In Appreciation –

John Richman, Ph.D.
President | North Dakota State College of Science