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**Subject:** Provost's Notes: Fall 2020 Safety Protocols at the College  
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Good afternoon, Faculty –

Last Monday, I communicated with you about OTC's operational plans for the fall 2020 semester. Those were the basics; now it's time for the specifics.

There is a lot of information to share, so to keep from overwhelming you, I'll be emailing you every Monday between now and the beginning of the semester on August 24 to discuss a different topic. Today, I'll focus on the specifics of safety protocols, then in coming weeks, I'll share about supports in place for you and your students, policies in place for the fall semester, etc. These emails will be archived for future review on the Academic Affairs website: <https://academics.otc.edu/provosts-notes/>

Keep in mind that as we monitor COVID-19 disease progression in the community, plans will likely change. The plans we have today may be different next week. As we have throughout the pandemic, the college will follow the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and our area health experts. OTC has a track record of using data to inform our decisions; this pandemic is no exception. The college's number one goal is to operate as normally as possible while keeping our OTC community safe. I will update you as quickly as possible when plans change.

## **FALL 2020 SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

**Face masks are required.** Face masks will be required of all OTC faculty, staff, students, and visitors this fall. If you are anywhere other than your office or office suite, **you must wear a mask.** They can be uncomfortable and they will no doubt make teaching more difficult, but the research so far tells us they are an effective means of lessening the spread of disease.

- Please provide your own masks. The college does not have enough to supply everyone with masks, but we will provide masks for those who do not have them.
- Please wear a clean mask daily.
- Wear face masks correctly:
  - Wash your hands before touching your mask.
  - Use the ear loops or ties to put your mask on.
  - Make sure the mask covers your mouth and nose at all times.
  - The mask should fit snugly around your face without any gaps, while still allowing you to breathe without restriction.
- A clear face mask will be given to instructors who have a deaf or hard of hearing student registered in their class.

**Face shields will be made available.** If you are teaching a seated class this semester, you have the option of receiving a face shield to use as an extra measure of protection. Several of you have asked if a face shield can be worn in lieu of a mask, and unfortunately, the answer is no. The Springfield-

Greene County Health Department has told us that face shields are an acceptable alternative only if there is a definite reason why a person can't wear a face mask – not just because of personal preference. Because face shields are open on the bottom, they do not provide enough coverage around the nose and mouth to prevent droplets from potentially spreading.

- If you use a face shield, please clean and disinfect it daily.
- If you wish to have a face shield, please email Joanna Kramer ([kramerj@otc.edu](mailto:kramerj@otc.edu)).

**What to do if a student shows up to class without a mask.** Enforcement of the masking rule will be every employee's responsibility. We expect that protocols early in the semester (increased patrols by security officers, staff members in the hallways directing students to classrooms, etc.) will help establish the culture of required masks. However, In the coming weeks, I'll provide you with "scripts" to use with students who come to campus without a mask and also what to say to those who may be exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

**Classroom cleaning protocols.** Our custodial staff will deep clean and sanitize classrooms and labs every morning. Special cleaners which are long-lasting sanitizers are being used at the college. In addition, cleaning supplies will be kept in every classroom for students and faculty to use if they wish to sanitize their area further. Hand sanitizer dispensers are being installed in every classroom.

**Concerns about health and safety due to personal risk factors.** If you are concerned about working at your regular location due to a documented underlying health condition (your own or someone in your immediate care), you should contact Human Resources **and** your chair/director/dean immediately.

**A bit of good news:** Our efforts to minimize the number of students at OTC locations by incentivizing online-only enrollment seem to be working. As of this morning, online enrollment is up 32% over where it was last year at this time (the college remains down 6% overall in enrollment).

This is an uncertain time, and I know you will have many questions. Please feel free to reach out to me anytime.

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