

# FALCON *FORWARD!*

## A Culture of Safety

Planning for the Fall Semester



UNIVERSITY *of*  
MONTEVALLO

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

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Dear Montevallo family,

We are looking forward to welcoming you back to campus in the coming months. With all of the uncertainty surrounding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, I want to take this opportunity to update you on our plans for the fall semester.

The amount of dedication and resiliency shown by everyone at Montevallo over the past few months is inspiring and we have all navigated this unprecedented situation together. I would like to thank everyone who has worked tirelessly to help the University manage these trying times and develop a plan to continue to deliver a world-class education while ensuring the health and safety of everyone on campus.

UM administration has formed the Roadmap to Fall Opening Task Force. This very capable group developed the Falcon Forward plan to guide the University as it prepares for the upcoming semester. The Task Force used guidelines provided by the American College Health Association couched in a framework developed by Johns Hopkins University to establish a plan for critical areas. In addition, the task force developed a communication plan with educational and training resources for the campus community in order to prepare all constituents for fall opening. We drew from federal, state, local and professional resources to develop this plan.

I would like to thank Dr. Tammi Dahle, Dean of Students and Vice President of Enrollment and Student Affairs, for her thoughtful leadership and industry as chair of the task force and for leading the development of the *Falcon Forward* plan.

The University of Montevallo has long held a reputation as one of the safest college campuses in Alabama. The health and safety of everyone on campus is paramount and UM is planning to enhance cleaning efforts, utilize personal protective equipment and potentially modify traditional classroom settings, among other steps. These measures are detailed in this document, which serves as an overview of a larger plan and outlines Montevallo's commitment to safety as it prepares for the fall.

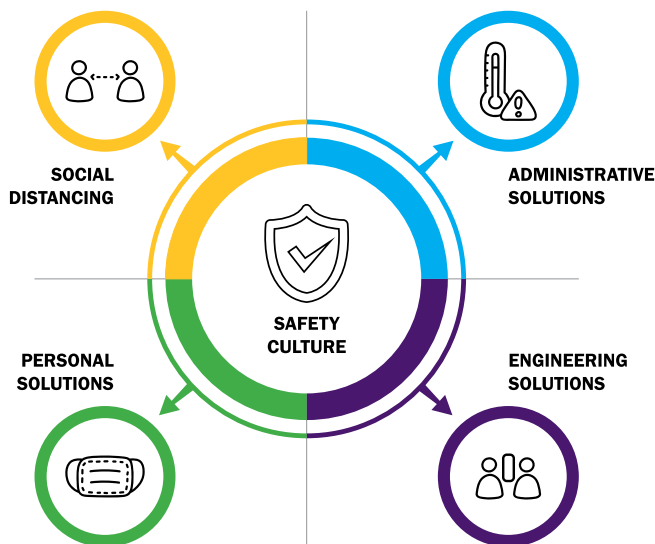
Dr. John W. Stewart III

## CULTURE OF SAFETY

This year, the world has been dramatically affected by a novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic necessitating extraordinary actions across the globe. Under the direction of the University of Montevallo Board of Trustees, President John Stewart assembled a task force chaired by Dr. Tammi Dahle. The task force is comprised of students, faculty, and staff from all University divisions and community representatives.

In this unprecedented time, campus health and safety is of primary importance. Thus, the University of Montevallo will adhere to a culture of safety wherein the well-being of the UM campus community is the top priority. Since elimination of the virus is not likely prior to fall opening, new protocols for campus functions must be developed and implemented with ongoing assessment and revisions in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 on campus. UM will base decisions on guidance from the American College Health Association, Johns Hopkins University, Centers for Disease Control, Alabama Department of Public Health, U.S. Department of State, local emergency management representatives, and local medical professionals. A framework developed by Johns Hopkins University will be used to base all decisions and protocols related to modifications, restrictions, and limitations. Within that framework, social distancing along with engineering, administrative, and personal solutions will be utilized.

These guidelines apply to all students, faculty, and staff at the University of Montevallo and will be phased in as guided by the University administration. Due to the evolving COVID-19 situation, this plan may be modified.



## SAFETY CULTURE APPROACH

It will take a commitment from everyone on campus to ensure the University is adhering to a culture of safety. In order to achieve this, everyone at UM should know their own risks, such as underlying health conditions, and should understand how their actions could put others at risk. Each one of us must take responsibility for knowing how to protect ourselves and others, and we all must hold each other accountable for upholding our safety culture. Due to the evolving situation, we all must work to stay educated on the latest guidance from the CDC, ADPH, and others.

### 1. Social Distancing — Examples include:

- a. Lower density in classrooms
- b. Adjust capacity limits for events
- c. Optimize class schedules and modalities to lower density and ease capacity

### 2. Engineering Solutions — Examples include:

- a. Install physical divides — clear plastic shields and distance barriers
- b. Design pathways and stairways to reduce foot traffic in high-density areas
- c. Control entry/exit to facilities where feasible
- d. Lock facilities so access can only be gained with UM ID where feasible
  - Temporarily restrict visitors to campus
- e. No-contact transactions
  - Cashless wherever possible

### 3. Administrative Solutions — Examples include:

- a. Optimize the class schedule for low-density classrooms
- b. Set capacity limits for large spaces
- c. Conduct wellness checks and screenings if possible
- d. Allow work from home/flex schedules
- e. Increase cleaning protocols
- f. Clear communications — including educational signage
- g. Replace face-to-face meetings with virtual meetings
- h. Restrict non-essential travel

- i. Active monitoring of the situation
- j. COVID-19 testing (being evaluated)

**4. Personal Solutions — Examples include:**

- a. Use Personal Protection Equipment — wear non-medical cloth masks on and off campus
- b. Practice good hygiene (i.e. washing hands and using University-provided sanitation products in restrooms)
- c. Take responsibility for your own behavior
- d. Stay home if you are sick
- e. Remind others to follow safety rules
  - Hold each other accountable
- f. Education

**WHAT WE CAN & CAN'T DO**

**What We Can Do**

- Leverage our safety culture
- Plan to mitigate the risk
- Conduct wellness screenings
- Perform contact tracing
- Clear, transparent communication
- Learn together
- Adapt our plan as needed



**What We Can't Do**

- Stand by and wait
- Eradicate the virus
- Participate in high-risk behaviors
- Let our guard down
- Change how contagious COVID-19 is
- Stop practicing proper hygiene — washing our hands



**WHAT WE DO & DON'T KNOW**

**What We Know**

- The virus is not going away
- Most Montevallo students are at lower risk
- Faculty and staff are at a higher risk than students
- We have a strong safety culture
- How to lead through challenges
- How to solve complex problems
- We can prepare



**What We Don't Know**

- Who has underlying conditions/risks
- If there will be a spike in our area or how bad it will be
- When the local, state, and federal government will change restrictions
- If there will be a vaccine
- What type of immunity anyone has



**AREAS OF FOCUS**

These areas of focus, which were extrapolated from the American College Health Association's guidelines, include accommodations and modifications in the critical areas of campus. This roadmap will outline those critical areas and provide guidance and instruction for the campus community, including students, faculty, and staff.

**Health and Safety**

The University is preparing for multiple fall 2020 opening scenarios in an effort to continue its mission and promote the health and safety of everyone on campus. The most likely scenario at this time involves modified operations with hybrid learning, and limited access and restrictions on campus.

UM is planning to enact multiple health and testing protocols, including maintaining at least 6 feet of social distancing whenever possible, utilizing telehealth visits

with Health Services, and enacting engineering solutions, such as defined foot traffic flow pathways and entry/exit points throughout campus where other social distancing measures cannot be implemented.

**Testing and Health Protocols**

Testing of members of the University community upon return to campus and sentinel testing during the fall semester is currently being considered. Details related to this testing, if feasible, will be sent at a later date in the summer. Diagnostic testing and other health monitoring including protocols for isolation and quarantine are a primary priority.

Student Health Services will facilitate testing and monitoring for students. Human Resources will oversee testing and monitoring for employees. The University will continue to monitor state and local capacity for testing as well as medical guidance related to testing and monitoring in order to adapt our plan accordingly. Monitor your UM email, the UM website, and UM social media outlets for updates.

Current plans include health protocols for testing, isolation, and quarantine as indicated in the table below.

Symptomatic Confirmed Positive	Symptomatic Awaiting Test/Confirmed Negative	Asymptomatic Confirmed Positive	Asymptomatic COVID-19 Close Contact*
<p>Immediate 14-day isolation unless otherwise indicated by a medical professional.</p> <p>Only students who are unable to isolate at home will be assisted with campus accommodations.</p> <p>Self-monitoring required and additional testing may be necessary.</p> <p>Three days with no symptoms before return to campus.</p> <p>Compliance with local and public health quarantine orders.</p> <p>Active monitoring, campus contact tracing, and medical provider attestation to return to campus.</p>	<p>Immediate quarantine while awaiting test results.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to quarantine at home.</p> <p>Self-monitoring required and additional testing may be necessary.</p> <p>Three days with no symptoms before return to campus.</p> <p>Compliance with local and public health quarantine orders.</p> <p>Active monitoring and medical provider attestation to return to campus.</p>	<p>Immediate 14-day isolation unless otherwise indicated by a medical professional.</p> <p>Only students who are unable to isolate at home will be assisted with campus accommodations.</p> <p>Self-monitoring required and additional testing may be necessary.</p> <p>Compliance with local and public health quarantine orders.</p> <p>Active monitoring, campus contact tracing, and medical provider attestation to return to campus.</p>	<p>Immediate 14-day quarantine unless otherwise indicated by a medical professional.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to quarantine at home.</p> <p>Self-monitoring required and testing may be necessary.</p> <p>Compliance with local and public health quarantine orders.</p> <p>Active monitoring and medical provider attestation to return to campus.</p> <p><i>*Being within 6 feet of someone who is positive for COVID-19 for 15+ consecutive minutes regardless of face covering is considered close contact.</i></p>

## Self-monitoring and Education

All members of the campus community are strongly encouraged to educate themselves on COVID-19 and monitor their temperatures and signs of other COVID-19 symptoms daily. An online educational module and an electronic health monitoring application is being considered for use by members of the University community. Details related to the application will be released later in the summer. Monitor your UM email, the UM website, and UM social media outlets for updates. Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough and/or sore throat
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue, muscle, or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

Students should report any symptoms to Student Health Services along with any potential exposure and/or positive COVID-19 test results. Employees should contact their direct supervisor if experiencing symptoms or to report exposure or a positive test result.

All of the University community should follow appropriate hygiene practices, including frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer, use of face coverings, and respiratory etiquette (cover coughs and sneezes). Members of the campus community should refrain from handshaking, hugging, or other types of physical contact during classes, meetings, and other University activities since lessening these types of behaviors helps to mitigate the spread of the disease.

## Face Coverings

As a part of the University's culture of safety, face coverings will be encouraged in all areas of campus and required in specific areas. Appropriate face masks include a cloth face covering or appropriate paper mask that covers both the nose and mouth. These coverings are required:

- At all times when in public areas or shared spaces within buildings, including hallways and classrooms.
- Outdoors when near others where social distancing of

at least 6 feet cannot be maintained (i.e. course transition times).

- When in a University vehicle with other persons, including cars, vans, and buses.

There are situations where a face mask is not required or cannot be worn due to the type of activity or factors related to the environment. Examples include:

- While eating or drinking.
- While in your residence hall room or alone inside a University office or public area.
- Performing physical exertion, such as manual labor, running, and athletics training.
- Outdoors with more than 6 feet continuous separation between all people.

## Disability Accommodations

The University will follow current processes for students with disabilities who request accommodations. Students who would like to request accommodations should contact Disability Support Services at [dss@montevallo.edu](mailto:dss@montevallo.edu) or 205-665-6250.

## Instructional and Learning Spaces

In coordination with the Roadmap Task Force, Academic Affairs will implement a plan in all UM instructional and learning spaces. First, this will include requiring 6 feet of distance between all individuals in instructional and learning spaces. Second, preparing faculty to deliver courses in-person, hybrid, and distance education as the situation warrants, and having plans to communicate those teaching methods to students. Finally, requiring all full-time faculty to be certified for distance education.

Several engineering, personal, and administrative solutions will also be enacted in instructional and learning spaces. These include traffic patterning in academic building hallways where feasible, replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual meetings whenever possible, and encouraging regular faculty-student communication about health status and any changes that might affect student success. Amended absenteeism policies along with other strategies to mitigate the spread of disease are also under consideration.

The 2020-2021 academic calendar will remain unchanged with fall classes beginning on Aug. 24, 2020, and concluding with degree conferral on Dec. 11, 2020.

After the Thanksgiving holiday, the University will transition to a distance education model beginning on Nov. 30, 2020. However, residence halls will remain open for the remainder of the semester. Plans for December Commencement will be determined at a later date. University officials will continue to monitor the progression of the COVID-19 outbreak and will determine any future calendar modifications based on community spread of the disease and sound medical and professional advice. The University's academic calendar is available at [montevallo.edu/university-calendar](http://montevallo.edu/university-calendar).

### **Housing and Dining**

Modifications, restrictions, and limitations will be applied within dining facilities and residence halls to promote the health and safety of residential students and employees. Waivers of the requirement for specific student populations to live on campus will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Social distancing will be enacted throughout all residence and dining areas, including staggered move-in days to lower the number of students and families on campus at the same time, amended visitation policies in residence halls, closure of residence hall game rooms, and additional space between all tables in dining halls. Additional outdoor dining seating will also be added. Further, more restrictive modifications to both housing and dining services will be enacted if the need arises.

Hand sanitizer will be available throughout residence and dining areas. Housing and Residence Life and Chartwells staff will be required to wear face masks. Falcon Foods will become a cashless operation and more frequent cleaning and sanitation protocols will be enacted.

Move-in day for new students will be on Aug. 21, 2020. The process for move-in day as well as information about move-in dates for returning students and special groups is listed below. Housing and Residence Life will send more details about the move-in process later in the summer.

Pre-season Athletes — Aug. 15, 2020

M.A.D.E. Program students — Aug. 19, 2020

Honors Program students — Aug. 20, 2020

Greek Organizations — Aug. 19-20, 2020

Returning students — Aug. 22-23, 2020

New students — Aug. 21, 2020

New students should arrive on Aug. 21 at the assigned time as follows:

Last names A-H between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.

Last names I-Q between 10 a.m. and noon

Last names R-Z between noon and 2 p.m.

New students who are not able to arrive at the assigned time should move in between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Aug. 21, 2020.

Move-in dates and times may have to be modified. Monitor your UM email, the UM website, and UM social media outlets for updates throughout the summer.

### **Student Life**

Under the University's plan for the fall semester, Student Life events and organizations will follow appropriate social distancing guidelines, including holding meetings and events in virtual formats if possible. Socially distanced student organization meetings will be allowed. Organizations will be required to submit their social distancing plan for meetings and events to Student Life at least two weeks prior to the event date. Student Life staff will work with national Greek representatives to develop and implement fall recruitment activities that adhere to new national protocols and our culture of safety.

### **Athletics and Recreation**

Athletics will follow all guidelines as directed by the NCAA along with federal, state, and local authorities and will adhere to social distancing guidelines for campus training and weight rooms.

These guidelines will include reduced occupancy in the training and weight rooms and enhanced cleaning protocols of equipment. All Athletics staff will be required to wear masks and gloves when in the training and weight rooms.

### **Cleaning and Facilities**

In order to maintain a clean and healthy campus, Custodial Services will increase cleaning and sanitation frequency in high-traffic areas, will add electrostatic ionization sanitizing to daily cleaning routines, and will adjust its operational schedule to limit interaction between its staff and customers. All Custodial Services staff will wear a mask when entering into any building.



The Physical Plant will provide CDC-approved sanitation products to all faculty and staff for office cleanings and any extra cleaning that a department wishes to do. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be added at all entries to campus buildings.

### **Employee and Human Resources Considerations**

In addition to area-specific directives, certain policies and protocols will be in place for all University employees. These include conducting business and meetings via electronic means when possible, following social distancing guidelines when in-person meetings are required, and adjusting work schedules so all employees are not entering a building at the same time other employees or students are arriving if social distance cannot be maintained.

Managers and supervisors will also be trained and empowered to adjust and apply health and safety protocols specific to their areas of responsibility and will be equipped to address work-related COVID-19 information and concerns. Managers and supervisors will communicate all applicable return-to-campus information to members of their teams. Employees will return to work as needed and as safeguards and other protective mechanisms are in place. The University will follow current processes for employees who may request work modifications or accommodations.

### **TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES**

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Given the volatile nature of the COVID-19 situation, modifications of this plan or the implementation of additional policies and procedures may be necessary to adhere to our campus culture of safety. Therefore, the Roadmap to Fall Opening Task Force will remain intact and will continue to monitor all areas set forth within this plan, and to analyze and adapt the plan as necessary.

All members of the University community are asked to regularly monitor their UM email, the UM website, and UM social media outlets for updates as this plan is subject to modification.

### **TASK FORCE MEMBERS**

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Dr. John W. Stewart III, President

Dr. Mary Beth Armstrong, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Tammi Dahle, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Affairs

Scott Dillard, Vice President for Advancement and External Affairs

Dr. Kristy Lee, Vice President for Administrative Affairs

Susan Hayes, Chief Financial Officer

Mark Richard, Director of Athletics

Victoria Long, Assistant Chief Information Officer

Dr. Tiffany Wang, Faculty Senate President

Emily Gill, Faculty Senate President-Elect

Dawn Makofski, Staff Senate President

Thomas Dillard, SGA President

Barbara Forrest, Director of Human Resources/  
Risk Management

Kim Moon, Director of Health Services

Kira Thomas, Director of University Marketing  
and Communications

Coty Jones, Director of the Physical Plant

John Denson, Director of Housing and Residence Life

Jason Quarles, Director of Dining Services

Chief Tim Alexander, Director of Public Safety

Jenny Bell, Director of Student Life

Hub Harvey, Shelby County EMA Director

Mindy Nash, Shelby County EMA

### **REFERENCES**

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Alabama Department of Public Health

American College Health Association

Centers for Disease Control

Johns Hopkins University

The University of Alabama at Birmingham

U.S. Department of State

World Health Organization

Some parts of this plan were adapted from Embry-Riddle University.