Return to Campus
Fall 2021
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Florida Tech’s Pandemic Response Team, working collaboratively across campus units, developed Return-to-Learn recommendations to facilitate the university’s safe and efficient return to campus-based living and learning in the fall and spring of 2020–2021. Operations across campus—from the student experience to the work environment for faculty and staff—were evaluated for risk, assessed for opportunities and challenges and modified to ensure the health and safety of all Panthers. Central to this work was the development of the Florida Tech Safe initiative, an evaluation of the university’s safety culture, establishment of a safety pledge and implementation of policies and procedures to mitigate the risk posed by COVID-19. Due to the dedication and policy adherence from our students, faculty and staff, we were able to successfully complete a hybrid 2020–2021 academic year. We hope the move back to in-person learning is the first step back to normalcy.

OUR PLEDGE: SAFE STUDENTS–SAFE CAMPUS–SAFE COMMUNITY

We look forward to providing our student body with a traditional campus experience in the fall. Having the vast majority of the Florida Tech community vaccinated against COVID-19 will be one of the keys to allowing an increase in activities on campus. Until that time, our pledge for safe students, safe campus and safe community remains. We will continue to carefully monitor public health conditions and maintain regular communication with health officials. Although we hope it won’t be necessary, we have the experience and capacity to rapidly pivot to remote or hybrid instruction if necessary. Florida Tech’s plan aligns with local orders and ordinances of the city of Melbourne and Brevard County, as well as the state of Florida. It also follows recommendations from the federal government, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Florida Tech’s Holzer Health Center.
FLORIDA TECH SAFE PLEDGE

Being a part of the Panther family means that each of us must take extraordinary steps to stay well and persistently protect each other. Therefore, I will take responsibility for my own health and help keep the Florida Tech community safe by stopping the spread of COVID-19 and other infections as identified and instructed by the university.

I PLEDGE TO:

1 Protect Myself

- Monitor for the symptoms of COVID-19 and report to a medical professional if I experience fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, dry cough, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat or loss of taste or smell.
- Wash my hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.
- Get vaccinated and/or continue to wear face coverings in accordance with university health and safety guidelines.

2 Protect Others

- Stay home if I feel ill.
- Wear an appropriate face mask and other protective gear as directed by the university.
- Be positive, sensitive and helpful to anyone around who may be troubled or struggling.

3 Protect our Community

- Get vaccinated and/or continue to wear face coverings in accordance with university health and safety guidelines.
- Report close contact exposure or positive test to the COVID-19 case manager and follow quarantine/isolation protocols.
- Adhere to all university quarantine and isolation regulations if identified as a close contact or testing positive.
COVID-ERA POLICIES WILL REVERT

All academic policies that may have been waived during the 2020–2021 academic year will return to full effect during the 2021–22 academic year.

We reached this decision after careful planning and consultation with our health care and operational professionals to ensure that we can return to a healthy campus with appropriate safety precautions while also having the flexibility to implement new guidelines as necessary. As such, we will continue to follow CDC guidelines and our existing rules (modified as appropriate) based on those guidelines and advice from our own medical professionals and public health experts.

Due to the increase in spread of the Delta variant, the rise in hospitalizations and in accordance with recent CDC guidance, Florida Tech has reinstated our indoor face covering mandate that was in effect for both the fall and spring semesters.

Strong evidence indicates that most of the spread and hospitalizations are occurring in our unvaccinated population. Although being vaccinated does not guarantee immunity from infection, it does remain the best defense against contracting a severe case of COVID-19. For this reason, Florida Tech continues to strongly recommend that our students, faculty and staff get vaccinated.

In the Classroom
Florida Tech will resume a full schedule of in-person instruction this fall. There will not be a remote option for courses scheduled to meet in person except for those who receive a special exemption from their college dean. Students in isolation and quarantine will be provided a remote option for the term of their restriction from the dean of students. Courses will continue to be recorded and made available throughout the semester and will be deleted once the course is completed.

Academic Calendar
The first day of the fall term is Aug. 23, 2021. The academic calendar will reflect traditional Fall and Thanksgiving breaks.

Guest Policy
For the safety of our campus community, public access to the campus will remain restricted, and Florida Tech will continue to require university guests to check in at the Welcome Center or at the Office of Enrollment Management (for campus tours). For safety and security, visitors will be required to display their university-provided visitor pass. Faculty and staff will continue to display their campus-issued ID at all times when on campus.

Campus Dining
Panther Dining Hall, the Rathskeller and the newly added dining options in the Denius Student Center will be open for our campus community. Restrictions for employees and a to-go only option may be imposed depending on advice from our Pandemic Response Team. Limited seating capacity will remain in effect.

Travel
Any individual or group participating in university-related travel will need approval and may require a negative COVID-19 test pre-and post-travel or a completed vaccination pending related travel advisories.

Events
Given the effectiveness of our mitigation strategies and the prioritization of in-person interactions, workplace events and meetings of up to 50 people are permitted. Attendees must comply with all protocols, and rooms must be booked in advance through Florida Tech’s Event Management System.

Florida Tech is committed to the health, safety and welfare of every member of the Panther community. Large university events and student events (more that 50 people) will require approval and will be reviewed on an individual basis. Workplace meetings,
organization and club meetings are permitted as long as they adhere to university safety protocols. The holding of events or meetings outside are highly encouraged whenever feasible.

Our Student Life division is working hard to offer the safest experience we can for our student body. We look forward to welcoming students back and reigniting the college experience outside the classroom.

**Isolation and Quarantine**

The university will continue to require isolation and quarantine protocols to be followed by all students. Florida Tech has assigned isolation space on campus but reserves the right to ask any positive students to isolate at home or off campus at their own expense.

If you do not adhere to the isolation protocols and procedures, you may be referred to the dean of students and/or removed from campus. Contact tracing will continue, and students will be required to follow quarantine protocols if identified as a close contact unless fully vaccinated.

**COVID-19 Vaccination**

Florida Tech expects that everyone who is able to receive the COVID-19 vaccination will be vaccinated to protect themselves, their families and the community. In partnership with Brevard County Department of Health, Florida Tech will host our second vaccine drive on Thursday, Aug. 26, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., in the Clemente Center. Both the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines will be offered. This service is free with a valid ID with date of birth. Unless you have health or religious reasons prohibiting vaccination, please join your friends and colleagues and sign up for the vaccine. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 prevents severe illness, hospitalization and death and reduces transmission. With the Delta variant, this is more urgent than ever!

Any employee who is not fully vaccinated will be required to provide a negative COVID-19 test within a 10-day period throughout the fall semester.

**WHY GET VACCINATED?**

Once you are fully vaccinated, you ...

- do not need to quarantine if exposed to someone positive for COVID-19 (if you have no symptoms).
- do not need to regularly test (even athletes and high-risk groups).
- do not need to quarantine upon returning to the U.S. after travel.
- will enable Florida Tech to open up more and more options!

**QUARANTINING AND TESTING FOR VACCINATED INDIVIDUALS:**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on July 27, 2021, updated quarantine and testing guidelines for COVID-19 fully vaccinated individuals. These recommendations apply to non-health care settings.

**FULLY VACCINATED PEOPLE MAY:**

- Participate in many of the activities they did before the pandemic; for some of these activities, they may choose to wear a mask.
- Resume domestic travel and refrain from testing before or after travel and from self-quarantine after travel.
- Refrain from testing before leaving the United States for international travel (unless required by the destination) and refrain from self-quarantine after arriving back in the United States.
- Refrain from routine screening testing if feasible.

Infections happen in only a small proportion of people who are fully vaccinated, even with the Delta variant. However, preliminary evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people who do become infected with the Delta variant can spread the virus to others. To reduce their risk of becoming infected with the Delta variant and potentially spreading it to others, vaccinated members of our campus community need to continue to adhere to our Florida Tech Safe protocols.
Face Covering Policy

Due in part to local and national COVID-19 trends and new CDC recommendations, Florida Tech revised the campus facial coverings policy in accordance with the latest CDC guidance issued July 27.

The following guidance is provided in order to ensure clarity for all our campus community:

**MASKS ARE REQUIRED IN ALL INDOOR GATHERINGS OR GROUP MEETINGS, REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS.**

A reminder that masks are, and have been, required at Florida Tech with the following exceptions:

- Outside, when you are eating or when you are by yourself in your residential room, apartment or office.

Not required:

- Inside your own residence hall room (alone and with door closed)
- Inside your individual, non-shared office (alone and with door closed)
- Outside (we still strongly encourage social distancing)

Required in:

- All classrooms
- All shared offices
- All indoor events, common areas and shared offices

Symptom Monitoring

Florida Tech will again be using the Campus Clear app for daily health screening. If you are cleared for campus access by Campus Clear, you will receive a green “Good to Go” certificate via the app, and you may be asked to show this certificate upon your arrival on campus, when you engage in group activities with others or when you access certain buildings on campus.

If you are not cleared for campus access, you will receive a red “NOT CLEARED for campus access” certificate via the app, and you will be provided with instructions. If you have tested positive or have been in close contact with a positive individual, you must contact Human Resources to provide further guidance, which may include suggesting that you consult with a health care provider and/or scheduling a COVID-19 test.

**PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING PROTOCOLS:**

**IF YOU HAVE TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 AND ARE EXPERIENCING SYMPTOMS, YOU MAY NOT RETURN TO CAMPUS ON CAMPUS UNTIL:**

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication

**IF YOU HAVE TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 BUT HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED SYMPTOMS, YOU MAY NOT RETURN TO CAMPUS ON CAMPUS UNTIL:**

- 10 days have passed since your test

**IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT (WITHIN 6 FEET OF SOMEONE FOR A CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF 15 MINUTES OR MORE OVER A 24-HOUR PERIOD) WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 AND YOU HAVE NOT BEEN FULLY VACCINATED, YOU MAY NOT RETURN TO CAMPUS ON CAMPUS UNTIL:**

- 10 days have passed since you were last exposed (if no COVID-19 test is taken)
- 7 days have passed (must have negative COVID-19 test result)
IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT (WITHIN 6 FEET OF SOMEONE FOR A CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF 15 MINUTES OR MORE OVER A 24-HOUR PERIOD) WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 AND YOU HAVE BEEN FULLY VACCINATED:

- You do not need to quarantine.
- Wear a mask around others and monitor for symptoms for 14 days.
- If symptoms develop, it is recommended to get tested.
- It is recommended to get tested five days after exposure even if you are not experiencing any symptoms.

IN THE EVENT YOU HAVE ONE OR MORE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19:

- Stay home.
- Employee: Notify and consult with HR about using PTO or work-from-home arrangements.
- Consult with a health care provider and/or scheduling a COVID-19 test.

 Occasionally, an employee may not follow protocols exactly as prescribed. It is the duty of all supervisors to be fully versed in our COVID-19 protocols and to contact HR in any instance where an employee notifies them of feeling ill or shares the result of a positive test.

Questions

We encourage all faculty, staff and students to refamiliarize yourself our Florida Tech Safe website. The curated list of FAQ provides an overview of our protocols and is an excellent resource.

FLORIDATECH.EDU/CORONAVIRUS/QUESTIONS-AND-ANSWERS

If faculty and staff have questions or concerns about COVID-19 protocols related to the workplace, please contact the Office of Human Resources. Students should contact the Office of the Dean of Students.