Return of Pirate Nation™
The Plan to Reopen ECU
August 2020
July 30, 2020
Background

COVID-19 is a severe respiratory disease caused by a virus that is frequently transmitted through airborne particles. In the USA, COVID-19 is still actively circulating, with over 2 million cases diagnosed and over 115,000 deaths (as of June 15, 2020). In North Carolina, more than 45,000 cases have been diagnosed and in the 29-county region of eastern North Carolina, more than 6,000 cases have been diagnosed since reporting began in early March 2020. Clearly, this is a serious disease, and the pandemic is ongoing.

Starting the fall term under the current circumstances is breaking new ground — there is little directly applicable evidence to inform choices about how to secure the campus environment from the impact of the disease. In the absence of guarantees, there are measures the Pirate™ community can take to increase everyone’s safety without compromising the fundamental mission of the institution. ECU and all institutions that endeavor to reopen for the fall 2020 term need to take this challenge seriously, keep track of activities and outcomes, and monitor and adapt to the unexpected.

ECU’s mission places clear focus on the success of our students and the success of our region. We are servants to these greater goods. Servire! From time to time, COVID-19 has limited our capacity to achieve the mission. ECU must maximize the success of our students and the region we call home. Face-to-face collaboration is the fundamental driver in ECU’s very positive posture when it comes to reopening our campus for fall semester 2020. We have too much teaching, research and service that fundamentally requires us to be together, which is why it is important to return to campus in August.

The Pirate return to work, to learn and to play this coming fall will be unlike any fall in ECU’s 113-year history. In the simplest of terms, in order for us to return safely there will be less independence, more rules, more guidelines, and several key community expectations. Some of these changes will be very difficult for some Pirates to cope with, but cope we must. Our collective safety will largely be determined by our collective citizenship and willingness to put aside individual preference to achieve the greater good. That is a huge responsibility for each and every Pirate. Most of those expectations are laid out in the pages that follow.

Return of Pirate Nation provides a set of norms, a plan for reopening, and this plan will align and be consistent with federal, North Carolina, Pitt County, Greenville, and UNC System laws, regulations and mandates. This planning certainly requires us to be innovative, compassionate and nimble in the face of uncertainty. Knowledge and understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to evolve. ECU is committed to staying abreast of the current research and to monitoring data trends from global to local scales. As a result, this plan is a living document and will be updated as new information becomes available. This plan is subject to change without notice. Our plan provides analytic statements and expectations on the following topics: testing and tracing, personal protective equipment, facility use and maintenance, academic calendar and programming, external interactions, and human resources.

Guiding Principles

In planning to reopen in the fall semester of 2020, Pirate (employees, students, visitors) health and well-being are a priority, and a few guiding principles secure that fundamental orientation.

1. In balancing our need to achieve the mission of student and regional success against other factors, health and safety are paramount.
2. Our decision-making is based on the best known data and science available to the university’s administration. Expect this plan to change in accordance with our rapidly developing knowledge of COVID-19.
3. ECU remains enthusiastically committed to its mission of student and regional success despite the challenges we face together.
4. ECU will continue to promote and prioritize a diverse, equitable, and inclusive working, living, and learning community.
5. As NC’s leader in online education, we will leverage that expertise to provide nimble and hybrid approaches within the face-to-face modality. In all cases, students will have superior academic choices.
6. ECU’s “student experience” must be supported fully and creatively so that engagement and a sense of belonging are achieved.
7. ECU is keenly aware of the need for effective communications with our students, our employees, the community we call home, and other external stakeholders.
8. ECU plans a gradual return of Pirates to campus during the months of June and July and in accordance with federal guidelines and state laws.

**Universal Campus Expectations**

1. Face coverings are to be worn in public spaces and in face-to-face meetings while on campus.
2. Require social distancing of at least 6 feet whenever possible while on campus.
3. Complete the daily health screening, using the dedicated Return of Pirate Nation website, and important updates will be posted via email, or if a health care provider tells you that you are presumed positive, you should notify the university by completing the self-reporting form.
4. For all students: If you test positive for COVID-19 or if a health care provider tells you that you are presumed positive, you should notify the university by completing the self-reporting form.
5. Wash your hands often! Everyone should practice regular hand hygiene following the CDC guidelines.

**University Communications**

Given the level of uncertainty associated with COVID-19 and the behavioral changes that we must achieve in order to cope with the continued presence of this coronavirus in our midst, the quality of our communication efforts must be at the highest possible levels and for a sustained period of time. We are designing an appropriate communication plan with all channels effectively engaged.

1. This document will be updated on a regular basis, and important updates will be posted via email, dedicated Return of Pirate Nation website, and social media.
2. Return-to-work, Return-to-school, and Welcome visitor documents (PDFs) have been produced that summarize community expectations. These documents are available online and information is being shared through social media links.

**Planning Process**

ECU established eight planning teams to consider the public health requirements needed to reopen on campus in fall 2020. This return of employees and students fundamentally involves bringing approximately 35,000 people onto a campus with 7.2 million square feet of building space. While portrayed as mutually exclusive, the categories of planning overlap and intersect in many ways. In addition, any “return” requirements will be informed by federal, state and UNC guidance/restrictions. Each team included at least one member from University Communications, Office of University Counsel, and Institutional Planning, Assessment, and Research.

Each team was charged with producing a document that includes two key components: (a) review of the data (international, national, state, ECU), regulations, and relevant literature and (b) a set of recommendations that derive (as best practices) from the review contained in part (a). This format makes explicit ECU’s commitment to base our reopening on the best data and research available. These eight reports form the raw material for this comprehensive statement which was reviewed and then recommended to the chancellor by Executive Council. Drafts of team reports were submitted on Friday, May 22, 2020.

Planning teams are indicated in the following chart.
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**Notes:**
- COVID-19 Tracing topics include contact tracing, labor-intensive approaches, and technological approaches involving temperature surveillance.
- Privacy issues include HIPAA and FERPA.
- Reporting and communications are also covered.
- External Engagement topics cover CDC guidance, UNC guidance, and university-sponsored travel.
- Personal Protective Equipment focuses on health and safety guidelines, including environmental health from CDC and OSHA.
- HR and Risk Management deals with federal regulations and guidance from NC and UNC for regulatory reform.
Regular health screening is required, such as
If practical, students are encouraged to have a
unit, division or university guidance is for a higher level
Students and faculty involved in health care will
wellness and prevention will aid in mitigation efforts .
Technology . Pitt County Public Health Department,
and contact tracing using both human resources and
the chain of virus transmission in the shortest amount
for positive cases occurring on campus and develop
set of expectations . ECU will be proactive in planning
for positive cases occurring on campus and develop
for positive cases occurring on campus and develop
for positive cases occurring on campus and develop

ECU Community Expectations for Testing and Tracing
follow .

Students and faculty involved in health care will
comply with the COVID-19 safety guidance, including
diagnostic testing, for their clinical setting unless the
unit, division or university guidance is for a higher level
of testing or more frequent testing .

1 . If practical, students are encouraged to have a
COVID-19 test for active virus either before
arriving on campus or before engaging in activities
on campus . If tested positive, students should
quarantine for 14 days and complete the self-
reporting notification form go.ecu.edu/screening .

2 . Regular health screening is required, such as
the screening questions recommended by the
CDC or those in use in medical clinics to screen
for COVID-19 risk . Complete the daily health
screening, using the CDC’s COVID-19 symptoms
list available at go.ecu.edu/screening . If you are
experiencing symptoms, you should not report to
work or class and should contact your health care
provider .

3 . The university should use best efforts to employ
contact tracing, when possible, for every individual
diagnosed with COVID-19 who is a part of the
campus community . Infected individuals should
be isolated, and exposed individuals should be
quarantined .

4 . Prior to the start of the term, to the extent possible
the university should identify, review and, if possible,
mitigate exposure risk from internal and external
close contact for planned campus activities .

5 . The university should require people on campus to
receive training on the risks of COVID-19, including
the risks of disease transmission in close contact,
testing and interpreting test results, and the details of
and rationale for isolation and quarantine .

6 . The university should maintain throughout the
crisis a task force (including Pitt County Health
Department and V nidant Health) on contact tracing
to review and advise on the university’s approach to
contact tracing .

7 . The university will develop a voluntary random
testing sample as a foundation for surveillance of
COVID-19 .

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
The outbreak of COVID-19, the novel coronavirus,
presents a constantly shifting landscape of risk
assessment for higher education . The community
expectations presented below are informed by guidelines
from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
(CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health
Administration (OSHA), as well as NC governmental
guidance . While these organizations and agencies already
enforce regulations, new and proposed guidelines are
implemented to further help employers, and institutions
like our own, open our doors again .

1 . Face coverings are to be worn in public spaces and
in face-to-face meetings while on campus, including
classrooms and labs .

2 . Face coverings are required when using the ECU
Transit System .

3 . Clinical spaces will follow their own infection control
policies for the clinics (not limited to but including
ECU Physicians, Student Health Services, College of
Allied Health Sciences clinics, Dental Medicine) .

4 . A limited supply of disposable masks will be provided
by ECU to employees, students and visitors, if
needed . Students, employees and visitors may provide
their own cloth face covering . Disposable masks will
be available on campus from a variety of sources .

5 . Wearing, care and laundering instructions should be
provided with face coverings .

6 . Persons who do not follow ECU’s policy will be
1) advised of the face covering requirement by the
person in charge of the event/course/activity, 2) informed of where/how to obtain a face covering
if they do not have one, and 3) may be deemed ineligible to participate in campus activities if they
do not comply .

7 . Housekeeping should use PPE and follow CDC
guidelines for appropriate techniques for cleaning
and disinfecting .

8 . The university does not require the use of gowns,
face shields and gloves, unless job duties or position
requires, such as in clinical settings .

9 . The university should install office shields and
plexiglass in high traffic areas, where deemed
appropriate by Environmental Health and Safety .
Installation of plexiglass barriers is not recommended
for classrooms .

Facility Use
As we prepare for students and employees to return to
campus in the fall, it will be important that necessary
facility-related protocols and safety measures are in
place . Individuals will need to be responsible for
safely navigating their interactions among the campus
spaces — indoors and outdoors . The recommendations
included in this report seek to prioritize the health
and safety of each member of our campus community
as well as for families, visitors and external partners/constituents/supporters .

Based on several sources (identified below), there are
some consistent best practices and recommendations
that will provide a strong foundation for each campus
area . A focus on de-densifying public/gathering spaces
and promoting safety is stated through all these points .
For the purposes of this report, “location” refers to
open and enclosed spaces, including transit, offices,
classrooms, libraries and public spaces . Community
expectations are categorized below with universal
(regardless of location) expectations preceding those for
specialized spaces .

Universal Facility Use Expectations
1 . Require social distancing, defined as 6 feet apart (3–6
feet in classrooms) and face coverings in all public areas of campus .

2 . The university continues to encourage the use of
approved platforms to conduct meetings virtually .
If approved by the supervisor, teleworking may
continue for performing job duties .

3 . Follow approved guidelines for space/room capacity
requirements and pre-function queuing .

4 . Provide ongoing cleaning/sanitizing of high-touch
surfaces and utilize disinfecting wipes in between
scheduled cleanings by building occupants
(OSHA, 2020) .

5 . Install hand-sanitizing stations in all public areas as
well as hand-washing signage .

6 . Implement easily identifiable social distancing
signage and decals of a universal nature in or near
campus areas .

7 . Install plastic/plexiglass safety barriers for persons
who have frequent, in-person contact with the public,
e.g., reception/checkout locations, waiting areas, cash
registers, bus drivers (OSHA, 2020) .

8 . Water fountains should be used only for bottle
refilling . Signage should be posted at all water
fountains as to denote other water options .

9 . Position additional trash receptacles (with a large
opening) specifically near sanitizing stations to
accommodate the increase of disposable items .

10 . Minimize opportunity for gatherings during
employee shift changes (CDC, 2020) .

11 . Identify and clearly label traffic flow patterns for
all internal/external pathways (hallways, entrances,
exits, buses, outdoor paths, etc .) (Cushman & Wakefield, 2020) .

12 . Limit access to elevators and post new/reduced
load capacities .

13 . Provide training to all students and employees
on facility sanitation strategies
(ACHA Guidelines, 2020) .

14 . Implement an appropriate plan for each facility
and bus to have seating/standing adjusted to
comply with social distancing . Markings should be
explicitly clear .

15 . Adjust all HVAC systems to increase outside air
intake and inspect filter banks for by-pass
(OSHA, 2020) .

16 . Limit the scale of meetings and events to comply
with NC and UNC System guidance .
Expectations Within Academic Spaces

Academic facilities on campus comprise a variety of educational spaces including typical didactic lecture halls and classrooms, clinical teaching labs, basic science labs, computer labs, library resources, health care clinics with student providers, offices, reception areas and conference rooms. For academic buildings that also serve clinical functions, each clinic should defer to clinical professional practice management guidelines. Facilities that are involved in these dual functions must follow the same guidelines and should refer to the Brody School of Medicine’s Reopening Guidelines and CDC Guidelines. The expectations that follow are in addition to the Universal Recommendations listed above.

1. As indicated by the UNC System Office guidance, access to academic spaces should be limited to those required to be present, and those individuals should limit their presence as much as possible to perform the required duties.

2. Capacity (number of users at a single time) of academic spaces should be revised based on the social distancing guidance. Classroom capacity is determined by 6 feet of separation where possible. Academic laboratory spaces should be limited to one person per 16 square feet. Other academic spaces are limited to 6 feet of separation where possible.

3. Facilities are required to post new room capacities in academic spaces, and departments and building managers should limit the occupancy of classrooms applying the UNC-SO guidance of 6 feet of separation where possible. Departments and building managers should limit the occupancy of classrooms to the posted maximum capacities following the UNC-SO guidelines. Facilities should post the signage with the new occupancy limitations.

4. In order to meet the required social distancing within classrooms, all courses with enrollments of 50 students or greater will normally be delivered online. Hybrid modes of instruction should be developed in all other cases when physical presence is not required. In hybrid (FTF and online) designs, online delivery should be less than 50% of the class time and should follow the Faculty Calendar Implementation Taskforce recommendations. Assigned seating and attendance records are encouraged to facilitate contact tracing when needed.

5. When classrooms have two or more access points, the areas for entrance and exit should be explicitly indicated. When possible, designate paths of entrance and exit to minimize physical contact.

6. Departments and faculty should develop attendance and absence policies that acknowledge and support students who become ill without creating barriers or requiring unnecessary visits to health facilities for documentation of illness.

7. Provide alternative delivery of instruction for students in quarantine or isolation.

8. Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to wipe clean spaces before and after their own uses of those spaces (desks, tables, chairs, keyboards).

Residential Expectations

1. Campus Living will operate at normal capacity with additional single rooms (possibly 100–200) for students with documented health issues.

2. Move-in process will be completed earlier and staged properly to accommodate fewer people in each residence hall per floor per day. This will require a refined reservation system.

3. Establish preferred room configuration to set furniture, especially beds, at maximum social distance.

4. There should be no in-person residential hall programming requiring large groups.

5. Roommates are considered to be the equivalent of a household, and face coverings are not required in the room. Residents are encouraged not to share items, such as dishes, office supplies, clothing, etc. (OSHA, 2020).

6. Follow updated guest policy for campus residents, which may restrict or eliminate access by non-residents (ACHA, 2020).

7. For all students: If you test positive for COVID-19 or if a health care provider tells you that you are presumed positive, you should notify the university by completing the self-reporting form.

8. Students in suites with shared bathrooms and/or living areas must follow university recommended cleaning guidelines and furniture/appliance usage. Personal bins and labeling are recommended (CDC, 2020).

9. Housekeeping will increase cleaning throughout the day. Students will be educated/encouraged to clean their rooms more often.

10. Hand-sanitizing stations should be available on every floor and in every main lobby, fitness and computer lab area.

11. Restrict the capacity in laundry rooms, recreational areas, and kitchens (other gathering areas), and provide proper sanitation supplies in such spaces (ACHA, 2020).

12. Align outdoor and indoor housing recreation policies and procedures consistent with Campus Recreation and Wellness (CRW) (NIRSA, 2020).

13. Provide communication for use of shared bathroom spaces including proper signage for entry/exit as well as proper hand-washing, overall safety/health messaging and contact information for when supplies are limited or out.

14. Reserve small inventory of rooms off-campus for residential students who need quarantining or isolation.

Dining Expectations

1. Modify meal plan parameters to maximize efficiency while maintaining social distancing.

2. Reduce seating capacity in West End and Todd dining halls between 25–50% of occupancy with clearly defined 6 feet distancing between all seating.

3. Reduce some retail dining options.

4. Establish mobile app that allows for ordering food in furniture, especially beds, at maximum social distance.

5. Open one dining option and Starbucks (both grab and go) in the Health Sciences Student Center.

6. In Main Campus Student Center, expand seating options for dining and instruction into the second-floor ballrooms.

7. Takeout and prepackaged food options should always be available at retail operations (General Mills, 2020).

8. Utilize sanitation stations at each exercise site for handwashing.

9. Locker room is restricted to restroom use; no showering or locker use (ACHA, 2020).

10. Coordinate delivery of food to quarantined residential students (CDC, 2019).

11. Individually pass out silverware in dining halls to minimize the risk of germ spread. Silverware will be placed in a throw cup and handed to each student as they enter the dining hall.

Theaters and Large Spaces

1. Reduce fixed seating to ensure people maintain social distancing (OSHA, 2020).

2. Utilize equipment to ensure appropriate distancing so that people are controlled safely (OSHA, 2020).

3. Place signage to create entry/exit access and walking paths to limit contact and spread.

Recreation

1. Offer in-person custom training by appointment only (ACHA, 2020).

2. Minimize static (i.e., classroom) and dynamic (i.e., lab) activities using social distancing on courts and outside settings (ACHA, 2020).

3. Discontinue areas and services that have direct body contact, i.e., towel service and equipment rental (NIRSA 2020).

4. Scheduled appointments and classes for group fitness and workouts (ACHA, 2020).

5. Utilize sanitation stations at each exercise site for patrons to clean services before and after each use (ACHA, 2020).

6. Use racquetball/squash/handball courts for individual or doubles activities only.

7. Offer virtual recreation classes (ACHA, 2020).

8. Intramural sports will be assessed individually for fall 2020 semester.

Research and Research Facilities

This guidance refers to activities conducted in research spaces, including the physical campus and campus owned/leased spaces, field stations and nature reserves, or with direct contact with individuals (human subjects) anywhere. The document does not cover research that can be done entirely remotely. On-campus research includes physical presence in campus libraries, archives and museums to access any university material that cannot be accessed remotely, as well as performance work (arts) or other studio access that must be done on campus.

Research varies by discipline, and unit administrators in consultation with the Division of Research, Economic Development, and Engagement are best positioned to make decisions on priority of activities and when different activities can be safely resumed or should be suspended. The following principles apply in making decisions.
1. Follow local, state, and national public health authority directives.
2. Protect the emotional and physical health and safety of the research workforce, including students.
3. Protect the health and safety of clinical patients and human research subjects.
4. Protect careers of early stage researchers and progression of students through their academic programs.
5. Ensure fair and transparent access to resources and facilities.
6. Ensure as rapid a research restart as the public health conditions permit.
7. Plan for ramping down research activities if public health conditions dictate.
8. Participate in finding cures and prevention for COVID-19, while increasing safe access to participants for research studies and clinical trials.

In addition to the social distancing, physical controls, and hygiene behaviors described elsewhere in this plan, the following are required before engaging in research activities on campus or at field sites.

1. Research activities must be prioritized and approved by the department and college based on the status of COVID-19 cases as defined in the table below.
2. Research personnel must be identified and approved by the department and college for return to campus or field site.
3. Research groups must compile and implement COVID-19 safety plans based on the risk level of the activities as defined by OSHA COVID-19 guidance.
4. Facilities log must be maintained to document occupancy of laboratories.

### Relationship Between Research Activities and Public Health Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>External Conditions</th>
<th>Summary and Metrics</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Situation unknown and changing. COVID-19 hospitalizations on the rise, testing limited, PPE shortages.</td>
<td>Only research deemed critical is allowed. Researchers must be designated as Critical or Essential to be on-site. On-site research activity estimated at 5-10% of normal.</td>
<td>Research facilities and field stations are closed, except where personnel are required to protect life safety and critical research infrastructure/capability (maintaining cell lines, animal health, instrumentation, etc.). Minimum staffing. Authorization for one-time access to faculty offices to pick up books and materials, shut down instrumentation, etc., delegated to deans.</td>
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</table>

### Relationship Between Research Activities and Public Health Conditions

1. COVID-19 hospitalizations on the rise, but managed, testing limited, PPE shortages.
2. Initial Stay Home/Stay Healthy directive in place.
3. On-campus access allowed to maintain research capability or prevent catastrophic disruption.
4. COVID-19 related research encouraged.
5. Researchers must be designated as Critical or Essential to be on-site.
6. On-site research activity transitions to an estimated 15-35% of normal.
7. Research access limited to social-distanced essential personnel only for priority research activities:
   - Life safety and critical research (as stated above).
   - “Critical research,” where a delay would have significant financial impacts or catastrophically disrupt the project or protocol.
   - Field research: Prioritize seasonal data collection.
   - Student participation must be approved and cannot be mandatory.

Preparations for next phase: Social distancing, temperature monitoring, facial coverings, cleaning measures understood and in place (e.g., face coverings for all on-campus personnel required).
Phase 3

External Conditions

- Local COVID-19 hospitalizations flatten, then drop.
- COVID-19 testing capacity increases.
- PPE shortages still exist.
- Public health authorities and governor relax restrictions on “essential workers.”
- Local schools still closed/teaching remotely for rest of academic year.

Summary and Metrics

- Definition of “critical” relaxed to include time-sensitive research.
- Explore options for humanities and social sciences.
- All research that can be done remotely should continue remotely.
- On-site research activity transitions to an estimated 35–50% of normal.
- Plans for sudden return to Phase 1 in place.

Criteria

- Deadline-driven research activities:
  - Seasonal data collection and deadline driven, whose pause or deferral would lead to costly delay or loss of research results.
  - Animal experiments where a delay would result in euthanasia or loss of a colony.
  - Graduate students and postdocs close to completing their degree/term of appointment.
  - Completion of grants with end dates within three months.
  - Core facilities to meet “customer” demand (approved projects) where work cannot be done remotely.
  - HumSoSci: Utilize existing library services that promote social distancing (e.g., paging services, ordering books and other materials for pickup). Prioritize researchers with deadlines (tenure, book contracts, etc.) for access to general, special and microfilm collections on a limited basis. Some monitored access to offices for those at critical career points (tenure, promotion).
  - Field research: Expand approvals based on current restrictions are in the states and counties where field research is to be conducted.

Phase 4

External Conditions

- Gradually expand number of people on campus while maintaining social distancing.
- Critical new on-campus research allowed, but labs/groups only allowed to operate at 50–70% total personnel capacity, with social distancing.

Summary and Metrics

- Humanities and social sciences: Allow use of libraries to limited numbers of researchers using hygiene and social distancing protocols. Access to offices can be allowed with social distancing practices in place.

Criteria

- Low- and medium-risk human subjects research restarted allowed with approval of COVID-19 safety plans.
- Field research: Expand depending on local conditions/restrictions at field sites, travel restrictions, ability to travel safely and ability to social distance at field sites.
- Humanities and social sciences: Allow use of libraries to limited numbers of researchers using hygiene and social distancing protocols. Access to offices can be allowed with social distancing practices in place.

Athletic Facilities

In order to resume athletic activities, including practices and competition, the Athletics Department will begin operating through phases in order to ensure the safety and well-being of our student-athletes, coaches and staff. The university will monitor NCAA and The American Athletic Conference guidance along with North Carolina executive orders. The university will provide guidance and updates, including for attendees, as the situation unfolds. ECU Athletics Department must also demonstrate certain criteria and requirements. The expectations are as follows:

1. Have adequate PPE, cleaning supplies, medical protocols, and facility and operational guidelines in place.
2. Be able to conduct daily operations while still using current CDC guidelines.
3. Test for COVID-19 when needed and appropriate.
4. Have quarantine and isolation protocols in place for ill or exposed student-athletes.
5. Establish appropriate protocols to protect individuals with increased vulnerability or at high risk of COVID complications.

6. Provide proper education and accommodations for staff, coaches and student-athletes.
7. Adapt with best practices to promote safety and emphasize healthy decision-making as they evolve, including demonstrate appropriate symptom monitoring and testing.

At the time this guidance was published and in compliance with Phase 2 of North Carolina’s Reopening, the following statements are relevant:

**Sporiting Events Exception to the Rule Intent.** Permit venues to hold sporting or entertainment events, for the recording of and broadcast to the public, if the venue is of sufficient size to allow people to flow in and out of the venue in a way that would avoid creating a risk of spreading COVID-19.

**Exception.** As an exception to the closure of entertainment and fitness facilities, an entertainment or sporting venue with at least two entrances and exits and a stated fire capacity of at least 500 may hold a performance by entertainers, performers or athletes. The venue must control the flow of people through lobbies and other common spaces to allow social distancing and avoid the spread of COVID-19.
Treatement under Mass Gathering limit. In this situation, and only in this situation: (1) entertainers, performers, and athletes, along with coaches, training, support and broadcast staff, shall not count toward the Mass Gathering limit and (2) employees and other workers at facilities where entertainment and sporting events occur also shall not count toward the Mass Gathering limit.

Restrictions on spectators. Spectators or other attendees at any sporting or entertainment events allowed under this section must be no more than the Mass Gathering limit of 10 people indoors or more than 25 people outdoors. Moreover, any entertainers or athletes must stay 6 feet away from spectators.

Requirements for large venue operators. Any venue operator subject to this section allowing an event permitted by this section shall: (a) maintain appropriate signage and reminders at the venue and throughout the premises, (b) ensure clear signage is visible to all visitors, and (c) a COVID-19 information office will be provided by Student Health Services or the Office of Prospective Health.

External Engagement
ECU has developed clear expectations in order to engage safely with visitors coming to campus or gathering under the name of ECU. Such groups include prospective students and their families touring our campus; parents visiting their child informally or through a formal ECU program; fans attending sporting events; alumni returning to campus for organized tailgates; homecoming or other alumni events; boards, councils and other formal volunteer groups seeking and needing to meet; and international and domestic visitors in our offices, classrooms, studios and labs.

The primary mission of the institution is educational; thus, the ability to continue education in person as long as possible should be prioritized. Decisions that are made regarding external engagement must be evaluated and approved based on the impact that the activity could have on the educational experience of ECU students.

Visitors to campus will be screened using self-assessment instrument used by students and employees. Those who have prolonged close contact with ECU faculty, staff, students and clinical operations will be required to register with ECU’s Office of Prospective Health (OPH).

Affected individuals include, but are not limited to, guest lecturers and guest speakers, research collaborators, visiting scientists, and other administrative visitors. Such visitors will be screened daily with screening procedures coordinated by OPH. This may include taking the visitor’s temperature and asking a series of questions related to common COVID-19 symptoms. The use of personal protective equipment for visitors may be mandated by the OPH in accordance with ongoing CDC, NCDHHS and PCHD guidance.

Given these considerations, ECU’s expectations for engagement with the outside world are described below.

1. As much as possible, activities that are nonessential for the education of current students should go virtual and/or limit student exposures.
2. Gatherings of visitors must comply with NC and UNC System guidance. All visitors must be screened using CDC guidelines (available at www.ecu.edu/screening). Such an event will require approval by the appropriate divisional vice chancellor or director of athletics. Exceptions may be approved by the chancellor.
3. In the absence of a published best-practice, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions is creating a proposal based on the most recent public health guidelines. The goal of Undergraduate Admissions is to be able to safely offer small-group tours beginning in mid-to-late August.
4. If current social distancing measures stay in place, traditional in-person Open House events must be redesigned.
5. The Graduate School currently offers very personalized campus tours for prospective students, and the school’s current model is easily adaptable to social distancing standards. The Graduate School supports the safety measures suggested for undergraduate campus tours and the implementation of similar measures (i.e., masks, sanitizer).
6. The Graduate School will modify the October Open House event as needed in order to adapt to social distancing regulations. This could include holding two events to decrease the number of tables/people in the room or possibly a live virtual event as described earlier in this document for Undergraduate Open House.
7. Special events housed within Student Affairs including Family Weekend and specific aspects of Homecoming, e.g., parade, will require approval by the vice chancellor. Careful attention and planning to comply with all primary expectations, PPE and distancing, are expected.

Boards
Boards, foundations and councils play a vital role in the governance, oversight, advisory and advancement functions at East Carolina University. That role will only increase as ECU begins to recover from the impact of COVID-19. These groups include: Board of Trustees, Board of Visitors, various ECU Foundation boards (Alumni, Pirate Club, Medical & Health Sciences Foundation, college-specific advancement councils, and a host of unit-specific advisory boards/councils).

Please note that many of these groups possess specific meeting standards set by legislation, system policy, or other governing documents (bylaws).

1. All groups listed above are expected to comply with their specific governance standards while using the flexibility that has been authorized regarding meetings and gatherings.
2. For groups that are considered public bodies, that flexibility is included in SB/SH 454 Section 3.31 (a), which amends Article IA of Chapter 134 A of the North Carolina General Statutes to allow remote meetings during certain declarations of emergency, such as Executive Order No. 125, issued April 1, 2020.
3. For groups that are not considered public bodies, it is a recommended good practice to review the body’s bylaws or governing documents and, where applicable, revise the documents to include the allowance for remote/electronic meetings and voting.

International Student Activity
All international activity will comply with NC and UNC System guidance. At the time of this writing, the CDC has a blanket Level 3 Travel Health Alert for all international travel. Under REG02.30.01 no university-affiliated international travel is currently permitted by ECU students. These restrictions will remain in place until the CDC travel alert levels and UNCSO guidance changes.

ECU has suspended all study abroad activities for full semester and until further notice.

1. Once reinstated, the Office of Global Affairs (OGA) will require students, regardless of destination, to participate in online or face-to-face training on general public health practices, with a module provided by Student Health Services or the Office of Prospective Health.

3. OGA will also provide prospective study abroad students, and prospective directors of proposed faculty-led programs with a list of items to consider when deciding to and preparing to study abroad. These items will include the current status of the local recovery, travel considerations, local health system capacity, and public infrastructure and economic conditions in the destination country.

Faculty/Staff Mobility
By standard practice, all university-sponsored travel by faculty and staff must be approved by the traveler’s departmental administrator, dean (for faculty), and the relevant vice chancellor (two levels of approval are required). In addition to these approvals for domestic travel, all international travel must also be reviewed by the assistant vice chancellor for global affairs and the appropriate vice chancellor.

During this time of operating in the best interest of the health and safety of all members of the university community, the following guidelines will be in place:

1. Until further notice, all university domestic and international travel is suspended. Exceptions require approval by the chancellor.
2. Essential domestic university travel will be processed with a modified approval process after the travel suspension is lifted. Mode of travel and destination will be included as risk elements within the existing approval process. Risk levels will be established and have three tiers (low, moderate, high).
3. After the international travel suspension is lifted and upon the advice of the university’s Global Affairs Committee, the general risk categories for international travel by students will also apply to faculty/staff travel. Travel to lower risk destinations (DOS Level 1 and lower) may be permitted. Travel to elevated risk countries (DOS Level 3, and/or CDC Level 2) may be allowed at the discretion of the traveler’s supervisors and the appropriate vice chancellor. Travel to the highest risk destinations (DOS Level 4 and/or CDC Level 3) countries will remain prohibited.
In the case of all incoming international visitors, ECU will follow CDC guidance regarding individuals coming directly from affected international locations. These individuals include but are not limited to new international students, visiting scholars and employees, as well as students, faculty and staff returning from travel abroad. ECU will monitor the guidance provided by the CDC and communicate these guidelines to incoming/returning students, faculty and staff.

1. CDC guidance for those entering/returning to the U.S. from international locations suggests staying home (quarantining) for 14 days from the time of arrival. Individuals are asked to avoid contact with others, avoid public transportation, maintain social distance, and self-monitor for fever, cough and trouble breathing.

While the university is not in a position to regulate or prohibit private personal travel, any form of travel that exposes the campus community to heightened risk, e.g., travel by plane to a current “hot spot,” is strongly discouraged and may result in campus restrictions on the individual after return.

Local Community Relations

Communications and collaborations with key local government entities and Vidant Health are essential to a safe and effective reopening. With focus on public health, key offices at ECU charged with building and maintaining these important lines of communication and coordination include but are not limited to the Student Health Services, the Office of Prospective Health, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, and University Communications. Those channels are focused on maintaining strong connectivity with Pitt County Health Department and other local government offices.

In addition, ECU maintains a strong and important partnership with Vidant Health System and its Vidant Medical Center. These relationships are built through the Brody School of Medicine and are multidimensional in nature.

**Academic Calendar**

For the academic year 2020–21, ECU will move to block scheduling (8 week blocks) within the semester framework (15 weeks). ECU will begin fall semester earlier than normal and will begin spring semester later than normal. Opportunities for extended departures from campus (fall break, spring break) are removed from the calendar.

Given the uncertainties of the current public health climate, the case for transitioning to the block schedule is strong. As Glanzer (2020) and Maloney & Kim (2020) noted, transitioning to a block schedule provides a university with flexibility in deciding when students return to campus, allows a university to pivot in the instance of a resurgence of a public health dilemma, reduces student-to-student contact, and reduces faculty-to-student contact in a given term.

The benefits of moving to block scheduling for the 2020–21 academic year are detailed below. Two broad sets of expectations are highlighted with regard to block scheduling and the adjustment to semester start and finish dates.

1. Fall 2020 and spring 2021 will each be organized into two 8 week blocks. Normal student class loads (15 credit hours) will be distributed across the two blocks, e.g., two courses in the first block and three courses in the second or vice versa.

2. Course design will include online (hybrid) components in all 8 week classes.

3. Most large courses will migrate to online formats (and be coded as DE) with the threshold being 50 students.

4. ECU’s Office of Faculty Excellence will continue to support faculty with superior professional development opportunities throughout the summer to assist with improved online approaches and course design.

5. The resulting modifications to fall and spring semesters are summarized below.

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**Fall Semester 2020 Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>AUGUST</th>
<th>SEPTEMBER</th>
<th>OCTOBER</th>
<th>NOVEMBER</th>
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<tr>
<td>2020 – 21 Academic Year</td>
<td>Full Session (15 week) (8/10 – 11/25)</td>
<td>Fall 1st 8-week Block (8W1) 08/10- 09/25</td>
<td>Fall 2nd 8-week Block (8W2) 09/25 – 11/18</td>
<td>Fall 2nd 8-week Block (8W4) 11/18 – 01/19</td>
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**Spring Semester 2021 Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spring 2021</th>
<th>FEBRUARY</th>
<th>MARCH</th>
<th>APRIL</th>
<th>MAY</th>
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<tr>
<td>2021 – 21 Academic Year</td>
<td>Full Session (15 week) (01/19 – 05/06)</td>
<td>Spring 1st 8-week Block (8W1) 01/19 – 03/09</td>
<td>Spring 2nd 8-week Block (8W2) 03/09 – 05/06</td>
<td>Spring 2nd 8-week Block (8W3) 05/06 – 07/17</td>
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**Note for fall and spring terms:**

- **Full Session:** FDOC = First Day of Classes
- **First 8-week block:** LDWD = Last Day to Withdraw
- **Second 8-week block:** LDOC = Last Day of Classes
Human Resources and Risk Management

All staff and faculty are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines for returning to the workplace. Our expectations must be clearly articulated, illustrated and modeled by all levels of university leadership. Thus, our first and preferred approach to ensure compliance will be through education as we intentionally build a culture of compliance. If necessary, the university and other governmental authorities will institute applicable enforcement measures (including disciplinary, legal or other appropriate actions) to address disregard for or intentional violations of these standards.

1. Generally, employees who can work remotely should continue to do so to reduce the number of individuals on campus and the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus.

2. However, the needs of university operations will require that certain positions be designated as a “Required On-Site Employee” (ROSE). A ROSE designation is appropriate where the position is required to perform on-site work for a documented, nondiscriminatory and legitimate business need.

3. As part of planning for a phased reopening of campus, departments should immediately categorize positions as ROSE where position duties can only be fully performed at the worksite and there is a legitimate, nondiscriminatory and legitimate business need for the employee to work on campus. It may be a full-time or part-time (duties-specific) designation. Additionally, as reopening progresses, additional employees will be considered ROSE. Departments should maintain documentation of this determination.

4. The return of individuals designated as ROSE will be phased, will involve increased density throughout the summer months, and will be monitored carefully for the presence of COVID-19.

5. The university should immediately send an employee home from a worksite who appears to have or is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

6. Departments should strongly consider amending employee work schedules by alternating days on campus and staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes to reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements.

7. Employees should maintain at least 6 feet of distance from coworkers.

8. Departments should assess open work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to physically separate and increase distance between employees, other coworkers and customers.

9. Cloth face coverings must be worn in public spaces and in face-to-face meetings while on campus.

10. Meetings should be held in whole or part using the extensive range of available collaboration tools.

11. When on-site, communicate with colleagues and supervision needed by email, instant message, telephone, or other available technology; rather than face-to-face.

12. Except in the case of ROSE-designated positions, employees at higher risk should generally be permitted to perform their work duties remotely whenever possible, and limit, if not eliminate, their presence on campus. Employees should follow CDC recommendations for self-identifying whether they are at higher risk.

13. Requests for workplace accommodation from any employee should be directed to the university’s ADA coordinator for analysis under the Americans with Disability Act. Confidential health information should not be addressed or handled directly by individual supervisors or departmental personnel, nor should these personnel be tasking with making assessments of employee medical information or physician notes.

14. All employees are responsible for creating and sustaining an inclusive workplace and campus community. Violations of university policy, including incidents of harassment or discrimination, will not be tolerated. The effects of COVID-19 will not be permitted to allow employees to violate university policy.

15. Employees are encouraged to tend to their physical and mental well-being. For assistance, ComPsych through Guidance Resources is available to employees and their immediate families. Call 833-743-8183 for counseling services, or visit www.guidanceresources.com (ID: ECUFASAP).

Experiential Learning

For the purpose of coping with the COVID-19 pandemic, experiential learning refers to academic program requirements which bridge the classroom and professional work environments and which cannot be easily met through virtual or alternative means of instruction. Exemptions of experiential learning include but are not limited to laboratory and simulation exercises, clinical rotations, internships and field experiences.

Experiential learning occurs on campus in the form of laboratory and simulation exercises, internships with campus agencies, and clinical experiences in patient care clinics. In the off-campus setting, experiential learning occurs when students participate in field experiences, internships and clinical placements. ECU provides an abundance of programs with experiential learning requirements. While these programs share many commonalities, there are considerable variations in the resources needed to continue meeting educational and professional requirements.

The Experiential Learning Working Group developed recommendations for reinstating experiential learning activities on the ECU campus during the summer 2020 session.

First, two sets of gating criteria were developed. The first set of criteria establish that the activity cannot be completed virtually and that the activity is a program requirement with no alternative mode of completion. The second set of criteria establish that if the activity is not completed, either 1) 2020 graduation will be delayed or 2) the next cohort of students will be delayed. In addition, this set of criteria allows for participation in on-campus patient care clinics.

From there, programs must satisfy various return requirements and receive approval by the department chair, dean and Facilities Services. The return requirements were derived from CDC, UNC System and ACHA guidance. Examples of return procedures include health screening, PPE use, social distancing measures, and COVID-19 student training.

Fall 2020, On-Campus Recommendations

1. On-campus experiential learning should continue.

All programs should implement the procedures recommended in the Public Health Plan for facilities use and PPE.

2. COVID-19 training module and assumption of risk and liability release should be required for any student participating in experiential learning.

3. Should conditions worsen and campus access be restricted, the summer 2020 on-campus experiential learning request process should be reinstated with modest adjustments to gating criteria.

4. If the on-campus experiential learning request process is reinstated, departments should plan for increased administrative oversight of requests and tracking and potential need to prioritize requests if volume is too great.

Fall 2020, Off-Campus Recommendations

Historically, ECU has used site affiliation agreements and memoranda of understanding to govern off-campus student placements. As restrictions are eased, shelter-in-place guidelines expire, and students are reintroduced to off-campus placements, it is possible to resume using standard affiliation agreements or memoranda for student placements.

It should be noted that site agreements vary from program to program; in general, agreements should include information about the university’s role in preparing students for their off-campus experience (i.e., infection control training, universal precaution training, the need for liability insurance, etc.) and the off-campus facility’s obligations to the student and university (i.e., providing adequate equipment for the experience, providing orientation and training, being available to meet with university faculty and staff about the experience, etc.).

1. Programs using standard site agreements (i.e., affiliation agreements, memoranda of understanding) should ensure all documents have been reviewed by the Office of University Counsel and approved accordingly.

2. Programs using affiliation agreements or memoranda of understanding which have been preapproved by the Office of University Counsel may resume standard operating procedures for fall 2020 placements.

3. Programs that do not currently use a formal site agreement or that cannot amend existing site agreements or implement new agreements should follow the summer 2020 off-campus experiential learning request process.

4. Should conditions worsen, students should be given the choice to follow the training site’s policies and procedures for continued participation. Other than potential delays in program completion, programs should not penalize students who choose not to participate in experience. Each student and program must closely monitor state and local regulations where experience is being completed. Program coordinators should increase level of communication with training sites.

5. Programs using the off-campus experiential learning process must temporarily suspend student placement if the training site risk level changes (i.e., due to changes in conditions; training site must show evidence of appropriate workplace controls for new risk level).