



PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas A&M University System

MEMORANDUM

To: PVAMU Students

From: Timothy E. Sams, PhD, Vice President for Student Affairs

Date: June 12, 2020

Re: **WHAT TO EXPECT THIS COMING FALL SEMESTER**

I hope you and your family are staying safe. This time of considerable uncertainty is forcing many of us to reflect on our lives, our relationships, and our purpose. I hope that you are taking the time to think about who you are, what you mean to others, and the impact that you alone will have on the world when you graduate from PV. I hope this reflection is leading you to recommit to being the best version of yourself possible.

Many of you (and your parents) are anxious about how the campus is preparing for your return in August 2020. Although all of our locations will be open (main campus, Northwest Houston Center, and the College of Nursing), life at Prairie View be dramatically different. With the safety of our community members being our chief concern, you should expect our expectations of you, and the layout of physical spaces around campus sites, to be significantly different. We cannot realize our mission of providing an excellent education unless we maintain a safe learning environment. Therefore, it is vital that we have your full commitment in keeping our community safe, and we will be firm in expecting your strict adherence to our COVID-19 related procedures and processes.

As previously announced, classes this fall will be a mix of online, face-to-face, and hybrid. You will learn more about course delivery in the coming weeks as our Academic Affairs leaders work with the faculty to prepare for fall instruction.

We are expecting on campus housing to be full and all campus services to be available. For everyone's safety, across the university, we will be observing the physical distancing guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). We are rearranging classrooms, laboratories and all other student spaces (MSC, Rec. Center, dining facilities, athletics Facilities, The Chapel, etc..) to safely maximize occupancy. We are adjusting large scale events like career fairs, pageants and athletics contest to ensure safe participation. While these changes will make your college experience different from what you were expecting, more importantly, they will help keep our community safe during this pandemic.

Some preparations for this coming fall include:

Physical Distancing, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Cleaning/Sanitization

- 1) There will be signs throughout campus that detail proper hygiene techniques, physical distancing requirements, maximum occupancy levels (within specific areas), the appropriate use of protective equipment (e.g., masks, thermometers), and other safety items.
- 2) Like all faculty and staff, you will be required to wear facemasks in the classroom and all public settings. Failure to do so will result in conduct sanctions. So swag out your facemasks and show us your Panther Pride.
- 3) For your safety, we are expecting to provide each student with a complimentary reusable mask and hand sanitizer. Students are to arrive with their own PPE for their and our community's protection. There will be sanitization stations located throughout the three campus sites.
- 4) As is the case for faculty and staff, while in public spaces you must adhere to the physical distancing signs posted, stay behind sneeze guards, and keep your business transactions brief. Unfortunately, this holds for all Student Affairs offices as well.
- 5) There will be inaccessible areas and requirements for scheduling appointments with staff whose locations are too small for even the smallest gatherings. In fact, the campus culture is quickly moving to a model whereby most of the university's business is conducted online or virtually. It will be best to complete paperwork online and to hold meetings in a virtual format.
- 6) Large gatherings will be strongly discouraged unless they are part of an approved and managed program. The approval process for large gatherings will be presented to you this fall.
- 7) There will be disinfecting protocols for workspaces, restrooms, classrooms, dining halls, gathering spaces, and housing common areas.

On-campus housing and dining

- 8) There will be a coordinated move in and move out of residential properties to maximize physical distancing. Details will come from the Housing and Residence Life Office.
- 9) On-campus residents will arrive to a clean and sanitized apartment when you arrive this fall. However, each resident is expected to bring their own supplies for ongoing cleaning and sanitization. Student's sharing a space, and especially a kitchen and bathroom, will be expected to devise a shared cleaning/sanitization schedule.
- 10) On-campus residents will have restricted movement in and among housing units, which includes limitations of visitors/visitations.
- 11) On-campus residents will be strongly discouraged from leaving the university area for the duration of the semester to limit exposure to those they visit elsewhere and limit the exposure they may bring back to the residential communities.
- 12) If students leave campus and suspect they have been exposed to COVID-19, that student will be required to report their exposure to the university and follow required quarantine guidance.
- 13) There will be strict, but caring, quarantine and isolation guidance for those found to have COVID-19, and those found to have made contact.

- 14) On-campus dining will involve a mix of sit-down and to-go options, including expanded hours and food locations.

Other adjustments

- 15) We are devising a training model that will orient students the adjustments listed above.
- 16) All Study Abroad for the fall is postponed and expected to resume in the spring semester.
- 17) The Student Health Center and Counseling Center will provide adapted services designed to respond to COVID-19 related matters. Details will be provided in the coming weeks.

I know that you are worried about the loss of our highly engaging student experience, especially on the main campus. Many of you stay on, or near, the main campus because it provides for a complete college experience. However, because of safety adjustments, very few activities will look as they have in the past. Our goal is to have activities feel as they have in the past, while maintaining a high level of safety. We are working with student leaders to look for ways to keep the academic year exciting while “protecting The Hill.” Your safety is of utmost importance. The worst-case scenario would involve the spread of the virus during a fun-filled activity, like sporting events, activities in the MSC auditorium, Hump Day, and Homecoming. We will strive to maintain our traditions while maintaining safe practices. Because we are all in this together, if you have suggestions, please reach out to your SGA and CAB leaders. We certainly want, and value, student input.

Finally, I advise students at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19-to consider your risk before deciding whether to return to campus. Although the decision is solely yours to make, I advise you to consider remaining at your permanent residence and take fall courses remotely.

We miss the vibrancy of having you on campus and are taking steps for you to have a safe and productive year when you return. We ask that you embrace your responsibility to keeping yourself and your fellow Panthers safe by abiding by our new campus standards. Please continue to have a safe summer, and please be on alert for future updates.