BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN

Tennessee Wesleyan UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

As we continue to monitor the fluid reality of the COVID-19 pandemic, Tennessee Wesleyan remains committed to the safety and well-being of its students, staff, faculty, and many partners. This information is intended to provide guidance as we all plan for the start of school and returning to our campus and instructional sites.

The following pillars will guide TWU decision making during this unprecedented time. While the ever-changing environment makes it difficult to be precise, it does allow for a variety of scenarios which will be evaluated by the COVID-19 Management Team (CMT) as the situation develops.

Pillars that will guide the reopening are the following:

- Place students' and employees' health and safety at the center of decision making
- Careful monitoring of the evolving situation in the region and heeding the advice of health experts and government officials
- Develop a flexible academic plan to accommodate changing trends that ensure student safety and student learning
- Maintain a safe and clean campus for employees, students, and the general public
- Engage campus constituents and share information in a transparent manner
- Urge the campus community regularly to use hygiene practices such as washing hands, wearing masks, utilizing physical distancing, working remotely, and staying home when feeling ill as recommended by the CDC
- Strongly encourage screening, testing and tracing to ensure students, employees, and others have as little exposure as possible to the COVID-19 virus
- Remain understanding regarding employees and their relatives who have underlying health factors that put them at risk.

Please keep and use this information for reference but be aware that guidance may evolve as the pandemic continues. Your health and safety remain the highest importance to everyone at TWU. Thank you for helping keep the TWU family safe.

I. GENERAL UNIVERSITY PRACTICES

All University offices are open and will continue to serve our students, faculty, staff and friends. While recommended safety measures have been implemented, please call, email or schedule a meeting through Microsoft Teams when possible to meet with various people around campus.

Facilities. Facilities has installed electrostatic filters (iWave) on the heat and air systems across campus. This helps to mitigate concerns that the virus will spread via these systems and has been approved to filter the COVID-19 virus helping to keep our building air clean. Additionally, they have placed sixty hand sanitizing stations at major points of entrance into buildings, near high-traffic offices and restrooms.

Surfaces in campus buildings, including classrooms, will be treated with a disinfectant that stays on the surface with a kill time for COVID-19 of at least 60 days. The current plan is to reapply this disinfectant monthly to classroom surfaces and much more frequently on high touch surfaces such as doorknobs or handles.

Face Coverings. Masks or protective face coverings must be worn in all campus buildings and outside when physical distancing (6 feet apart) is not possible. Appropriate accommodations will be made for those unable to wear a mask. Masks will be distributed to all campus members (students and employees). Additionally, campus members and guests can also purchase masks in the campus bookstore.

Communication/Collaboration with Local Health Officials and Other Community Stakeholders. The Vice President for Student Life is the institutional point of contact for liaising with the Tennessee Department of Health, the local health department and our medical partner, Dr. Kim Breeden.

Communication Plans. Routine communication regarding dismissal/shutdown will be provided to campus stakeholders through texts, campus-wide emails, post to the campus app, social media announcements and website posts.

The campus community will receive weekly updates on active cases listed by instructional site. Updates will be distributed in Wesleyan Weekly each Monday morning.

Large Events. Tennessee Wesleyan will comply with the Governor's Executive Orders, State of Tennessee's and local government guidance with respect to gatherings and gathering size. Any event allowed to go forward will be registered through Tennessee Wesleyan's event management software (EMS Lite) which is maintained by the Student Life Office as it will allow for internal advising for safety.

Monitoring Health Conditions to Detect Infection at Tennessee Wesleyan

Health Screening and Monitoring. To maintain a healthy community, Tennessee Wesleyan will encourage students, faculty, staff, and guests to self-monitor their health each day. Routine temperature checks and self-evaluations on physical well-being will help each individual assess whether it is safe to come to campus.
As technology related to advanced screening evolves (software, applications, etc.), Tennessee Wesleyan will continue to explore best practices as well as collaborate with area institutions to maximize resources.

Disease Surveillance. Surveillance within the community will be conducted. The COVID Management Team will lead this effort by monitoring positive cases, spread, isolation, and quarantine. Tennessee Wesleyan will be in close contact with the Tennessee Department of Health to seek guidance and share information as needed. The Vice President for Student Life, Director of Human Resources and other members of the COVID-19 tracking team have developed a spreadsheet to track suspected, confirmed and negative cases on campus. The tracking includes date tested, date quarantine began, date test results (negative or positive) were received and date quarantine ended. Additionally, the tracking spreadsheet will identify program/campus and whether the individual is an employee or student and resident or commuter.

Testing. At this time, the Tennessee Department of Health has stated that campus wide testing is not recommended for persons arriving or departing campus. If anyone in the campus community feels symptomatic or has confirmation of COVID-19 exposure, the individual will be evaluated by the campus Health Center and testing will be ordered if deemed appropriate. The individual may also be referred for outside testing. The Vice President for Student Life will be in close contact with the local health department to collaborate care and contact tracing.

Containment to Prevent Spread of the Disease at TWU

Contact Tracing. TWU, in partnership with Tennessee Health Department and following CDC guidelines, currently conducts manual contact tracing for students, staff and faculty once a positive diagnosis has been determined. Employees are referred to their primary care physician for follow-up and treatment. Employees are asked to communicate with Kyle Fulbright, Director of Human Resources, and students are to notify Scott Mashburn, Vice President for Student Life, if they have been tested or have tested positive for COVID-19. Once notified, these offices will begin campus contact tracing procedures in classes, athletics, and residence halls as needed.

The Tennessee Department of Health has advised TWU that if masks and physical distancing are used in classes and other gathering spaces, then risk for the spread of COVID-19 are significantly reduced and contact tracing may not need to be utilized.

Quarantining and Isolating. If a campus member knows (or suspects) they have been exposed to COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19, immediate measures to remove the person from contact with others will begin. Quarantine will be used for those who were exposed to the disease; isolation will be used for those who have symptoms of the disease.

Tennessee Wesleyan is holding back 12 residence hall rooms for residents of Keith or Fowler. Campus apartments (Miller, Nocatula and Wesley Commons) provide private rooms to use for quarantine and isolation.

Residents with permanent addresses within 3 hours of campus will be instructed that they need to return home during their quarantine/isolation period.

Employees and commuter students will isolate and quarantine at their own residences.

Should a student need to miss classes due to quarantine or isolation, a member of the COVID-19 campus tracking team will instruct the student to notify all their instructors and/or coach. The COVID-19 campus tracking team will notify instructors and/or coach that a student in their course or on their team will not be attending class in-seat or participating in team activities. The reasons for the student's upcoming absence will not be disclosed. Human Resources will notify supervisors of any employee that has been quarantined.

Campus Outbreak Management. The plan for managing an outbreak includes caring for those infected, conducting contact tracing, maintaining campus operations, cleaning/safety protocols, minimizing exposure through social distancing, PPE, and continued good hygiene practices. Appropriate communication through multiple media outlets will inform stakeholders, and the Vice President for Student Life will correspond with the Tennessee Department of Health as needed.

II. ACADEMIC PROTOCOL

Flexible Course Design. The approach to in-seat instruction will rely on synchronous engagement of remote students during the traditional classroom experience. All faculty will use Microsoft Teams to engage remote students and use the lessons tool in SAKAI to manage weekly tasks and course content.

Most courses will remain in-seat, but a limited number of courses have been moved online to free up classroom space. Some classes have been moved to the first or second accelerated term, and hybridization of course content is encouraged as a way to limit large numbers of students for high enrollment classes. Every effort has been made to have no more than 40 students in a single course section.

Steps are being taken to ensure that all faculty/classrooms are equipped for video capture using laptop cameras and microphones including classes taught by adjunct faculty. This will ensure students who are quarantined or identified as an at-risk student are able to join class during the scheduled time.

Additional touch screen interactive boards (Viewsonic Viewboards) have been ordered to install in lower tech classrooms and/or equip new spaces for instruction.

Additional computers have been added to the loanable technology in the Learning Commons for adjunct faculty and students who do not have appropriate technology for synchronous participation.

Lab instructors are encouraged to utilize remote capabilities, online resources, video recordings, open lab times, etc. to reduce the number of students in the lab period in order to accommodate social distancing. Studio art classes will continue with social distancing and masks required. Studios are set up for social distancing and instructors are encouraged to hold open lab times to reduce studio numbers. Music and theater courses will be accomplished in-seat with social distancing and masks. Where possible, instructors are encouraged to rotate the student rehearsal schedule, utilize online resources, extend piano lab times, to reduce the number of students in the auditorium and choir rehearsal room to accommodate social distancing. Voice lessons will be accomplished with a distance of 12 feet, or greater, between the instructor and the student. Music practice rooms will be open, and students are expected to make use of those individually, and not have multiple students congregate in/around them. Theater rehearsals will be accomplished in smaller sections, with social distancing and masks.

Course Delivery/Faculty Student Interaction. Course seating will accommodate social distancing. Signage will be placed at tables where students cannot sit and markings on the floor will indicate where desks are supposed to be positioned. Adequate space will be reserved for faculty as a teaching space. Additional classrooms have been established including three classrooms in the Johnson Events Center, Townsend auditorium, and Old College Chapel. Viewsonic Viewboards and mobile whiteboards have been ordered for those spaces.

Students will be encouraged to use the first 5 minutes to exit buildings and classrooms and the second 5 minutes to enter buildings and classrooms. Students will be discouraged from congregating in hallways and common spaces before class.

Faculty who may need amplification for their voices may request a microphone, and face shields have been ordered for faculty who need their students to see their mouths during class.

Disposable masks will be provided during the first 1-2 weeks for faculty to distribute to students who may forget their masks. If the student cannot immediately secure their mask, they could join the class via Microsoft Teams but will not be included in the in-person class time.

Faculty will be expected to hold office hours either in person or virtually. Office hour information is to be clearly communicated to students through the syllabus and via signage on office doors.

High risk faculty and students. At-risk faculty are asked to apply through HR for an exception to teach only online courses. Other faculty are asked to consider creative solutions to deliver course content safely, maintaining some in-seat component for student engagement.

At-risk students and students who cannot wear a mask will be able to petition to take courses remotely. Students applying to take courses remotely will be expected to join in-seat classroom meetings via Microsoft Teams and will be subject to the same attendance policy as students who are in-seat. Students approved for remote learning are encouraged to discuss with their advisor the possibility of enrolling in fully online courses for part or all of their course load. The petition is exclusively for the two groups mentioned above. Members of the TWU student body who are active athletes or are living in campus housing are not eligible to apply to take courses remotely. Students are asked to indicate if they need assistance with technology or high-speed internet access. TWU will attempt to assist students through loanable technology available in the library learning commons or by providing lists of access points for high speed internet (including campus). Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they can join their classes remotely.

The Fall Academic Calendar has been updated to include the cancellation of Fall Break and the move of classes to remote learning following the Thanksgiving Break. Fall Break (October 15-16) will now be in seat instructional days. The last day of in-seat instruction will be Tuesday, November 24.

Faculty are encouraged to stick to the final exam schedule. For faculty who require in-seat cumulative exams, they are encouraged to hold those prior to the Thanksgiving Break. Students will be allowed to reschedule the second exam should they have two cumulative exams on the same date prior to Thanksgiving Break.

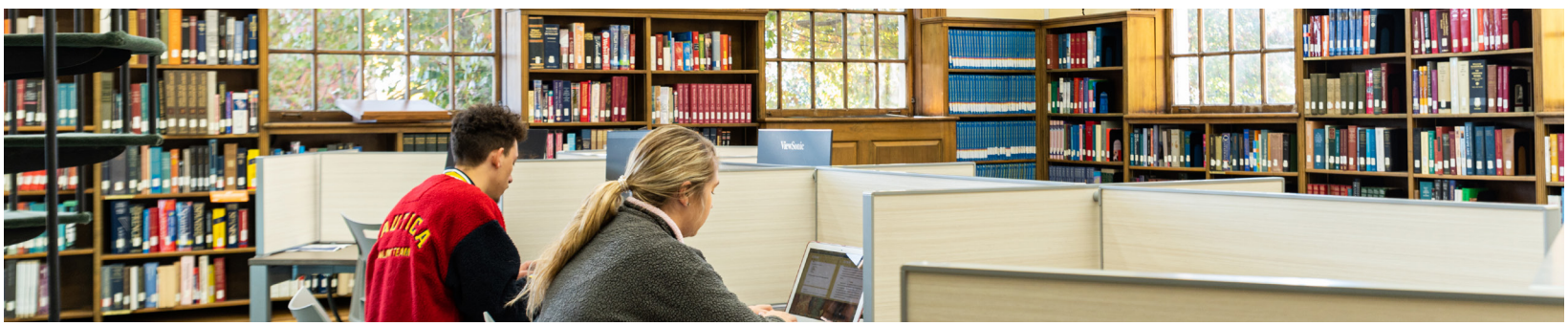
Based on guidance from local public health officials, attendance is required in all courses. This will help in contact tracing, if needed, and support from the Mosher Success Center staff. In an effort to assist with campus contact tracing, faculty will be asked to submit seating charts during the first week of classes. Students are expected to attend class in person for in-seat classes and are subject to the attendance policy in the Academic Catalog unless the student has communicated with the Vice President for Student Life concerning quarantine or a positive test. Students who do not attend class because of self-screening will need to secure a note from the University nurse or a physician for the absence to be

excused unless they have been quarantined or tested positive for COVID. Students who are not in seat are expected to participate via Microsoft Teams. Should the student not be able to participate due to illness, this situation should be clearly communicated to faculty by the student at the earliest opportunity. In-seat instruction will be recorded for students who are unable to attend in-seat or synchronously.

Academic Resources

Merner Pfeiffer Library. The library will resume normal hours assuming staffing levels permit. The library café will be closed until deemed safe to resume. In the learning commons, every other stationary computer will be removed to promote distancing. Disinfectants will be provided so users can wipe down the keyboard and mouse after use. Loanable Technology will be wiped with disinfectant upon check-in. Depending on the status of campus, longer loan periods and/or lower fines will be considered.

Library classes will be offered both in class and remotely via Teams as needed, while in-person tutoring will resume along with remote tutoring via Teams.



III. STUDENT LIFE GUIDELINES

Student Housing. Plans for maintaining safe and secure student housing are contingent upon facility type as well as the CDC's guidance for group housing. In apartments, housekeeping staff will clean public areas on a regular basis. Residents in apartments or suite-style halls are responsible for cleaning their individual bathrooms. All traditional style bathrooms (Fowler Hall) will be cleaned regularly.

Face coverings must be worn in residential common areas and when answering the room door. No overnight guests will be allowed in private spaces.

Tennessee Wesleyan Resident Advisors (RAs) will be trained on appropriate health practices and will serve as role models for other Tennessee Wesleyan residential students. Signage will be placed throughout the residential facilities.

Food Services. The Food Services team, in compliance with local, state and CDC guidelines, has spaced tables 6 feet apart, utilized Glenn Lowe and the Sullins Board Room for additional dining spaces, prepared individual packets of utensils, and moved to staff service at all dining stations. Additionally, individuals can get a to-go box and cup at each meal if they opt not to eat in the dining hall or Burkett's. Food Services will be regularly cleaning tables and other surfaces during mealtimes in accordance with appropriate guidelines.

International Students. For international students to safely return to campus, a mandatory 10-day quarantine upon returning to the United States will be enforced - students will need to quarantine in their place of residence. Meals will be delivered to their rooms during the quarantine period.

All Tennessee Wesleyan study abroad programs have been suspended until guidance from appropriate authorities deem it safe to continue.

Campus residence halls will remain open for international students over the Christmas break to reduce travel to and from their home countries. Should international students leave the United States during the break, they will be required to quarantine for 10 days upon their return to campus.

Health Services. Health Services will operate with appropriate medical-grade PPE for health services staff. Although treating COVID-19 cases is part of the duty of Health Services, staff will continue to provide the full range of health services to the Tennessee Wesleyan community during the 2020-21 academic year.

Those wishing to visit the Health Services office must schedule an appointment in advance and wait outside on the porch until asked to enter the center. The waiting area has been redesigned to allow for social distancing.

Student Athletes. Tennessee Wesleyan University will be conducting athletics under the guidelines set forth by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and Appalachian Athletic Conference (AAC). All student athletes and athletic department personnel will complete a COVID-19 educational presentation through the Appalachian Athletic Conference.

Prior to any TWU practice and/or competition, student athletes will complete COVID-19 screening requirements and a body temperature check for participation clearance. Any student athlete or athletic department personnel that fails the COVID-19 screening or has a body temperature of 100.4F will not be allowed to participate in athletics for that day. Based on signs and symptoms presented by student athletes and athletic department personnel, they may be required to obtain clearance from a medical professional prior to their return to athletics.

Game day operations will follow AAC and NAIA guidelines for participation. For the sport of volleyball, spectators will not be allowed inside Robb Gymnasium. For the sport of women's and men's soccer, spectators will be allowed to attend contests, but they will be required to practice social distancing. Spectator attendance may be subject to change prior or during the course of the athletic season. A determination for spectator attendance for all other sports will be made at a later date. Other safety measures will be issued as recommended by the Center for Disease Control, local or state government, TWU, AAC, and/or NAIA guidelines.

IV. WORKING & LEARNING REMOTELY CONSIDERATIONS

Tennessee Wesleyan Shutdown and Working/Learning Remotely Considerations

Criteria and Process for Moving to Working and Learning Remotely. If circumstances overwhelm campus or McMinn County resources, even after triggering contingency plans to address a surge in cases, a governmental order may require Tennessee Wesleyan to dismiss everyone from campus and/or shutdown the university. It is also possible that the University could deem it necessary to change the model of instruction and campus operations in response to local or campus conditions. The COVID Management Team, in consultation with the Fall Academic Strategy Team and Academic Leadership, will monitor the following areas in order to determine the appropriate operational tier (see below) for campus: guidance from the State of Tennessee and CDC, counts in East Tennessee counties contiguous to McMinn County (including Knox and Bradley Counties), campus positive cases including evidence of significant campus/instructional site transmissions and residence hall active cases, actions taken by local educational systems, NAIA and AAC guidance for athletic competition, and the Harvard Global Health Institute Risk Levels for the region.

Based on careful analysis of these metrics, the COVID Management Team may move to a higher or lower tier for the entire University or for a campus or instructional site. A shift to a different tier may be temporary or for the remainder of a semester depending on campus or community conditions. Temporary shifts between tiers may involve temporary shifts to remote learning with a return to in-seat instruction and temporary campus office closures.

An additional role of the COVID Management Team is to monitor campus compliance to COVID-19 related policies and protocols during this dismissal and/or shutdown and to ensure compliance oversight during implementation.

Closing Residence Hall Consideration. As Tennessee Wesleyan has a sizeable number of residents, consideration will be given to the safest approach for addressing the needs of a residential population and will depend on the nature of the conditions and advice of the Tennessee Department of Health and CDC.

Tier 1 – Campus Open

- Classes, meetings, campus dining, and athletics in session on time following all campus, CDC and TN Department of Health guidelines.
- The majority of classes are in person. Some classes are online where appropriate. Hybrid education encouraged where appropriate to limit number of students in a class. Classes limited to 40 or fewer students.
- Handwashing, physical distancing, and mask-wearing are required.
- Residential students are encouraged to remain on campus and not travel home to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Students are required to notify Scott Mashburn, while faculty, and staff are required to notify Kyle Fulbright if they know they have been exposed to COVID-19. Everyone who has been exposed should remain in quarantine for 10 days.
- Visitors are permitted on campus in compliance with TWU safety protocols.
- Most faculty and staff are working on campus, while others are continuing to work from home. Faculty and staff will need to make an official request with HR to teach or work from home.
- Meetings of all sizes are permitted with appropriate physical distancing.
- Dining available in the Dining Hall and Burkett's; seating in all locations with appropriate physical distancing. Take out boxes are available at all meals.
- Varsity athletic teams are permitted to practice/compete with appropriate health protocols in place.
- University sponsored travel is allowed. Employees are encouraged to follow University health guidelines while traveling.

Tier 2 – Campus Open

- Student(s) testing positive for COVID-19 symptoms are moved and isolated in specific residence halls and monitored. Faculty/staff testing positive are isolated at home for a minimum of 10 days from the start of their symptoms.
- Majority of classes are in person. Some classes are online where appropriate. Hybrid education encouraged where appropriate to limit number of students in a class. Classes limited to 40 or fewer students.
- Handwashing, physical distancing, and mask-wearing are required.
- Residential students are encouraged to remain on campus and not travel home to reduce spread of COVID-19.
- Students are required to notify Scott Mashburn, while faculty, and staff are required to notify Kyle Fulbright if they know they have been exposed to COVID-19. Everyone who has been exposed should remain in quarantine for 10 days.
- Visitors are permitted with approval on campus in compliance with TWU safety protocols. No overnight visitors in residence halls.
- Most faculty and staff are working on campus, while others are continuing to work from home. Faculty and staff will need to make an official request with HR to teach or work from home.
- In-person meetings are limited with appropriate physical distancing and in accordance with state or local government restriction. Campus members are encouraged to utilize Microsoft Teams for meetings when distancing is not possible.
- Dining available in the Dining Hall and Burkett's; seating in all locations with appropriate physical distancing. Take out boxes are available at all meals.
- Varsity athletic teams are permitted to practice/compete with appropriate health protocols in place.
- University sponsored travel suspended. Vice Presidents may approve travel if University safety measures can be assured.

Tier 3 – Learning Remote, Campus Open

- Student(s) testing positive for COVID-19 symptoms are moved and isolated in specific residence halls and monitored. Faculty/staff testing positive are isolated at home for a minimum of 10 days from the start of their symptoms.
- All classes and student services are online; all campus buildings, except residence halls, are closed.
- Handwashing, physical distancing, and mask-wearing are required.
- Residence halls will remain open for students that opt to remain on campus. No visitors in the residence halls and residents can only be in their assigned building.
- Physical gatherings and visitors are not permitted on campus.
- Most faculty and staff are working from home, essential staff remains on campus.
- Physical gatherings are not permitted on campus.
- Dining options are pre-packaged and take-out only.
- Varsity athletic teams may be limited or suspended based on team conditions and NAIA and AAC guidelines.
- University sponsored travel suspended.

Tier 4 – Learning and Working Remote – Campus Closed

- All classes and student services are online.
- All campus buildings are closed to the public.
- Nearly all faculty and staff are working from home, essential staff remains on campus.
- Handwashing, physical distancing, and mask-wearing are required.
- Residence halls and dining facilities will close within a designated time period for the remainder of the semester. All residential students will be expected to vacate the halls by the designated date.
- Physical gatherings and visitors are not permitted on campus.
- Dining options are pre-packaged and take-out for approved on-campus residents only during the designated time period.
- Varsity athletic teams are not practicing or competing.
- University sponsored travel suspended.