

Dear Ichabods,

We are excited to welcome you back to Washburn this fall. Washburn University is dedicated to ensuring you can continue your educational journey and achieve your goals for earning your degree while creating a safe and healthy environment on our campus. Our faculty and staff have diligently planned and prepared for the upcoming semester and now it is time to share information with you about the academic experience for our students in Fall 2020. **Please know that due to the evolving nature of the pandemic, we are ready to adapt the following plans as appropriate to new developments as they arise.** We recognize that Governor Kelly's July 15 announcement of a delayed start for Kansas K-12 schools will likely affect the lives of many in the Washburn community and we are currently considering those impacts.

Due to COVID-19, there are necessary adaptations and new rules required for all of us that will change our day-to-day interactions. At this time, we are planning to institute a combination of safety protocols, flexible instructional design, and changes to our academic calendar—all outlined below—to create a safe and healthy environment at Washburn.

Key Elements of the Fall 2020 Return to Campus Plans

Face masks: [Face coverings](#) help slow the spread of COVID-19 and every Washburn student will be issued a face mask this fall. In alignment with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and Shawnee County health orders, Washburn has instituted the [policy](#) that face masks or cloth face coverings are required in all indoor public spaces on campus, including the classroom—therefore, only faculty and students wearing face masks or cloth face coverings will be allowed to be in classrooms on the Washburn and Washburn Tech campuses. Those students who are unable to wear a mask for medical reasons should contact [University Diversity and Inclusion](#) to arrange for accommodations by distance learning.

Social distancing: [Limiting close contact with others](#) reduces the spread of COVID-19. Throughout the Washburn University and Washburn Tech campuses, we are reconfiguring spaces to maximize social distance and posting directional guidance in buildings to ensure a smooth flow of foot traffic. To help limit the density of students in classrooms, seating will be arranged and/or marked such that a six-foot distance can be maintained between each person in the room. Additionally, courses may be moved to different classrooms or different buildings to better accommodate the number of students enrolled. We are also identifying socially-distanced spaces on campus for students to use for academic purposes when they are not otherwise in a classroom.

Modes of instruction: We are designing instructional formats that allow students and faculty the greatest flexibility in addressing and responding to the current and emerging challenges of COVID-19 while still delivering the highest quality education. Note that these modes of instruction are subject to change based on developing circumstances.

In some instances this fall, a student's class will be conducted entirely in-person in a physical classroom. In other instances, a class will be conducted entirely in a remote or online format and never meet in a physical classroom. But in most cases, students can expect a hybrid model of instruction, with some instruction happening in a physical classroom and some happening remotely, including rotating in-person and remote attendance within a single class. While this approach maximizes social distancing and accessibility, we recognize that it also presents new complexities for the Washburn community; we are confident we can meet these challenges and we are committed to making the educational experience as smooth and seamless as possible for our students. More information on these [modes of instruction](#) can be found on Washburn University's Academic Affairs site and students will receive additional communication from their instructors on the mode of instruction in their particular course.

For Washburn University students, we have completed an adjustment of the Fall 2020 classroom assignments—in almost all cases, course dates and times have remained the same, but some courses will have shifted to an entirely remote classroom (meeting exclusively in a virtual classroom at their regularly scheduled day and time, with the standard in-person tuition rate) and a very small percentage will have shifted to an entirely online format (instruction is asynchronous, without scheduled meeting dates and times, and with an online tuition rate). At this time, each of you should review your class schedule and consult with your advisor(s) about any adjustments you would like to make.

Adjustment to [academic calendar](#): In order to reduce the amount of time students spend on campus, Fall Break 2020 has been moved from October 10-13 to November 21-24, 2020. In addition, on-campus instruction will cease after November 20, 2020. In general, courses will continue in remote format through the end of the semester (the last day of classes is December 4, 2020). Final exams, assignments, and projects will be completed remotely. Some exceptions may occur for health-related courses (Nursing, Allied Health, etc.); such exceptions will be communicated to students by their instructors. ***This change in the academic calendar does not apply to Washburn School of Law or Washburn Institute of Technology.***

Technology: We recognize that these new approaches to instruction rely on technology to be successful and we are equipping all of our classrooms with the technology necessary to allow students to continue their learning from any location. Students without the computer or internet equipment necessary to be successful in their courses should contact mabeetechnology@washburn.edu or (785) 670-1550 to arrange for a loan of appropriate equipment.

These plans were crafted by Washburn's Academic Scenario Planning team, in collaboration with the university's COVID-19 Steering Committee, and in consultation with academic leaders from across the university. The safety and well-being of all Ichabods is our highest priority and these plans draw upon the best health and safety guidance available, including that of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and directives from the State of Kansas and Shawnee County—for that reason, these plans are subject to change as new information becomes available.

Please note this message is just one of a number of messages you will receive in the coming weeks about the Fall 2020 semester. Please monitor your email closely for new messages, consult Washburn's [Coronavirus Information](#) page regularly, and watch for information shared by your specific program and department. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out via email to your advisor, program director, department chair, or dean. We are committed to answering your questions and making sure you have information you need as you plan for your Fall 2020 semester.

We look forward to the weeks ahead for the start of the semester, but there is no doubt that this fall semester will differ significantly from any other. Every member of our community will play an important role in adapting their own behavior to help ensure the health of others, accepting the necessity of some inconveniences, forgoing some activities, and demonstrating flexibility and resilience as we adapt should conditions change. It will be challenging, but I heartily believe that not only is each of us capable of making these changes, we are committed to each other and to living out Washburn's motto *Non Nobis Solum—Not For Ourselves Alone*.

Sincerely,

JuliAnn Mazachek

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