



Office of the President

Dear Falcons,

We are excited to welcome students back to campus this fall. The availability of COVID-19 vaccinations has allowed us to plan for a fall semester that is much closer to the traditional UT Permian Basin experience. This will include on-campus face-to-face classes and some hybrid and hyflex classes; events and celebrations, many of them outdoors; and a full-array of on-campus services. As we return to a mostly normal fall semester, we will closely monitor the pandemic as COVID-19 continues to strain healthcare systems locally, and we'll pivot quickly if necessary.

The most important thing you can do to protect yourself and others is to get vaccinated against COVID before beginning the fall semester. The COVID-19 vaccine is free of charge for everyone and widely available. You can find a provider at www.vaccine.gov. **The University will offer on-campus, free vaccination clinics on August 19 and 24 (first shots) and September 14 (second shot) on the 2nd floor of the SAC.** All clinics will be from 1:30 – 4:00 pm. If you aren't vaccinated yet and want to ask questions to a medical provider, [fill out this short form](#) and a nurse will text you to answer your questions confidentially.

Keep in mind, according to [CDC guidance](#), those who are fully vaccinated do not have to quarantine if they are exposed to COVID-19, unless they develop symptoms. Those who are not vaccinated may have to quarantine for 14 days, depending on the circumstances. Note: a previous COVID infection does not equal lasting immunity. The CDC indicates the protection is 90 days. Health officials are seeing reinfection among those who have already had COVID, and we have reports of reinfection within our campus community.

Here are some other ways to support a safe campus community:

- Stay home if you show symptoms of illness
- Consider getting tested before the Fall semester begins
- Consider wearing a mask, particularly indoors
- Report any symptoms or illness to the University to receive support from the case manager on staff who will respond to questions, engage in contact tracing as needed, and provide consultation to anyone with COVID exposure. You can access this support at reportcovid.utpb.edu.

Specifics about the Fall Semester:

All Classrooms/Labs

- 100% occupancy for all classroom types and labs

- Handwashing stations or hand sanitizers will be in multiple locations to encourage hand hygiene

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), physical distancing, or staying 6 feet away from others, does not need to be maintained by individuals who are fully vaccinated. Those who are not fully vaccinated are encouraged to wear a mask indoors.

Events

- 100% occupancy for indoor and outdoor events

Return of Remote Staff to Office Space

The UTPB staff is working 100% on campus. Requests for work-from-home accommodations may be submitted through Human Resources [by using this link](#).

University Related Travel

The University will continue to follow all state and federal guidelines. Guidelines change dependent on the evolving situation. Travel within the state of Texas and all states is allowed per existing approval processes. As of July 13, 2021, the University of Texas System is not allowing international travel.

Personal Travel

The CDC provides guidance on travel both domestically and internationally. Please review this information here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

Testing Guidance

Some Universities in Texas are making testing mandatory within three days of the start of classes. While we will not make this a mandatory requirement, we ask that you consider it, and we have support available. COVID testing continues to be available throughout the community. Please check with your healthcare provider. The University also offers the BINAX Now rapid testing for free on campus. This test works best to identify COVID-19 in those individuals with symptoms. Testing can be requested via the [Report COVID form](#). Students that need testing can receive a free test at Trinity Family Medical. Students without insurance will generally be able to receive a test at no additional charge at Trinity Family Health. The University will not reimburse costs for testing from other locations.

Quarantine

If you **are** fully vaccinated and have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to quarantine or get tested unless you develop symptoms.

If you **are not** fully vaccinated and have an exposure or develop symptoms, please report and stay home. The length of quarantine will vary depending on circumstances.

If you have an exposure and develop symptoms let us know at reportcovid.utpb.edu and stay home. A case manager will reach out to discuss next steps.

Vaccine Incentives

The University will be providing vaccine incentives for students as well as for employees. Announcements about the program will be made soon.

Mask Guidance

While masks are optional inside University buildings and outdoors, the CDC recommends wearing a mask indoors. Throughout the last academic year, masking contributed to low transmission rates on campus.

Preparing to Return to Campus

We encourage all Falcons to continue practicing healthy behavior and self-care, and to maintain your physical and mental well-being. Students can seek a wide variety of [mental health support](#). Employees can access counseling and stress management resources via [UTEAP](#).

The University will continue to monitor conditions and act in accordance with the guidance of the CDC and state officials. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact your supervisor. As we plan for the fall, we look forward to seeing you on campus as we come back together in supporting our mission. Thank you for all you do for the University.

Sincerely,



Sandra Woodley
President