FLEXPLAN 2021

Our plan for the safe reopening in the spring.
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Planning Process

Maintaining the health and safety of the MCPHS Community and the academic continuity of our students is coordinated by the Recovery and Planning Task Force, consisting of the following Steering Committee members:

- Richard J. Lessard, President
- Caroline Zeind, Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost
- Barbara Macaulay, Associate Provost, Academic Innovation
- Henriette Pranger, Associate Provost for Institutional Research and Effectiveness
- Jacinda Félix Haro, Dean of Students and Senior Student Affairs Officer
- Sue Gorman, Executive Director of Academic Affairs, Worcester and Manchester
- Charlie Breckling, Chief Digital Marketing Officer
- Kathleen Ryan, Chief Enrollment Officer
- Kevin Dolan, Chief Human Resources Officer
- Tom Scanlon, Chief Information Officer
- Seth Wall, Executive Director, Worcester and Manchester
- Keith Bellucci, Chief Business Officer
- Peg Crawford, Purchasing Director

The Steering Committee members serve as Chair or Co-Chair of seven working groups, covering the following areas, and they have been charged with formulating specific recommendations related to how MCPHS perpetuates safe operations and student success in the pandemic.

- Healthy Community
- Institutional Research
- Teaching and Research
- Communications
- Students
- Finance and Legal
- Faculty and Staff
- New Normal Operations on Campus

Current On-Campus Operational Status

- **Phase 3 - Vigilant**
  - Open: Carefully Repopulated Residence Halls, Dining Halls, Classrooms

- **Phase 4 – New Normal**
  - New Normal Operations on Campus
Major Assumptions

- Recognizing that COVID-19 pandemic will continue to be present in the spring, MCPHS University will use the best scientific and public health information available to determine the optimal path to safely return to campus in the New Year.
- It will be necessary to plan for both remote education and remote work, reducing the numbers of students, faculty, and staff who will physically be present on campus.
- We will be reducing the density on campus by modifying the capacity of our buildings in order to maintain appropriate social distancing.
- Students will be able to select the learning modality in which they engage—hybrid (a blend of some in-person instruction and online courses with remote instruction) or fully online courses with remote instruction.
- For professional programs with specialty accreditation requirements, Schools will determine the most flexible options possible for students that enable the programs to continue to meet their accreditation standards and learning outcomes.
- The on-campus portion of the spring 2021 semester will be delayed from Monday, January 11, 2021 to January 19, 2021. Spring break week will be eliminated as a public health measure given the ongoing concerns of the pandemic. Two additional No Classes dates will be added on Friday, March 5, 2021 and Thursday, March 25, 2021 to provide some time off. All existing holidays on the calendar will be observed. No changes will be made to finals week nor the end date of April 30, 2021. Two weeks will remain scheduled before start of summer 2021 semester.
- All academic programs with lab coursework will determine what will be offered on campus and online. These decisions will be made in alignment with any specialty accreditation requirements.
- Each academic program will ensure that decisions regarding clinical education are in alignment with specialty accreditation and regulatory agencies, as well as CDC, state and local guidance.
- The Center for Academic Success and Enrichment will continue to provide outreach and academic support services online.
- The Office of Academic Affairs will provide comprehensive support to faculty for teaching hybrid, online, and in-classroom courses.
- The residential move-in process will be spread over a multi-day period.
- Residence halls will include de-densifying and other enhanced safety protocols.
- The University will consider the ongoing needs of faculty and staff and their unique challenges due to COVID-19. It will evaluate the circumstances that impact their ability to work on-site rather than remotely, and will take a sensitive and thoughtful approach with its decision-making processes.
- MCPHS University is committed to supporting its community members with their ongoing financial, operational, and emotional challenges.
- Our Business Office will work closely with budget managers to reallocate resources commensurate with their continuing needs.
- We will keep the University community fully informed with regard to reopening plans for the spring.

The following pages provide the recommendations of the working groups. These groups will continue meeting regularly as information and guidance presents itself.
Healthy Community

Classrooms, Lecture Halls, Labs, and Common Areas
- New occupancy limits, based on CDC guidelines, have been implemented in each space.
- Cleaning and disinfecting protocols have been established consistent with CDC guidelines.
- Adequate social distancing will be maintained for all occupants.
- All students, faculty, and staff are required to wear cloth face coverings or masks.

Circulation Areas (Elevators, Rest Rooms, Exits and Egress Areas, Parking Garages, etc.)
- Directional and circulation patterns have been established in specific areas to guide the flow of foot traffic.
- Cleaning and disinfecting protocols have been established consistent with CDC guidelines.
- Adequate social distancing will be maintained for all occupants.
- All students, faculty, and staff are required to wear cloth face coverings or masks.

Library, Study Spaces, Lobbies, and Other Common Areas
- New occupancy limits, based on CDC guidelines, have been implemented in each space.
- Furniture modifications have been made to support social distancing guidelines.
- Directional and circulation patterns have been established in specific areas to guide the flow of foot traffic.
- Cleaning and disinfecting protocols have been established consistent with CDC guidelines.
- Adequate social distancing will be maintained for all occupants.
- All students, faculty, and staff are required to wear cloth face coverings or masks.

On-Site Clinics
- All clinic visitors are by appointment only and must provide a completed health screening questionnaire when they arrive for their scheduled visit.
- Visitors must wear cloth face coverings or masks at all times, unless they need to be removed for certain procedures.
- All students, faculty, and staff are required to wear cloth face coverings, masks or other appropriate PPE.
- Adequate social distancing will be maintained, except in cases where it is not feasible due to the nature of the clinic visit.

Offices - Private
- Cloth face coverings or masks can be removed when working alone in a private office.
- Face-to-face visits should be limited and kept to only two total people, where possible.
- Adequate social distancing will be maintained.
- Wash or sanitize hands frequently after touching shared surfaces (e.g., doorknobs).
Offices – Shared
- Cloth face coverings or masks are required in shared offices.
- If shared office space is too small to observe appropriate distancing, supervisors will arrange for flex scheduling so that one person uses the space at a time.
- Occupants are encouraged to keep a supply of hand sanitizer/cleaning materials in their office.
- Meetings with co-workers should be done via online/video platforms or phone.
- For necessary small group face-to-face meetings, reserve a conference room with the appropriate occupancy limits, and observe social distancing.
- Wash or sanitize hands frequently after touching shared surfaces (e.g., doorknobs).

Residence Halls
- Carefully repopulate residence halls and modify policies in accordance with best practices.
- In order to limit the spread of COVID-19, guests are not allowed in any residence hall.
- Students must practice physical distancing throughout common areas in residence halls, including designated study spaces, common areas/lounges, laundry rooms, elevators, hallways, and common floor bathrooms (where applicable).
- Cloth face coverings or masks must be worn outside of individual student rooms/suites with the exception of eating and showering/grooming. This includes all common areas of the residence halls.
- Directional and circulation patterns have been established in specific areas to guide the flow of foot traffic in hallways and common areas.
- Cleaning and disinfecting protocols have been established consistent with CDC guidelines, with special attention paid to shared communal restrooms.
- Signage, training, and coordinated messaging will continue to communicate protocols and safety measures.
- Isolation/Quarantine:
  - If a student tests positive for COVID-19, has been in contact with a positive case or has symptoms, they will be asked to quarantine or isolate.
  - Residential students will be expected to follow the University’s requirements regarding personal behavior. Students who test positive will be moved to a designated room for isolation if they are unable to travel home with family.
  - Students residing in a unit with someone who requires isolation or quarantine may also be asked to quarantine to mitigate any further spread.
- Testing/Contact Tracing – residential students are required to follow guidelines established by the University.
Dining and Food Services
Safe and healthy dining on campus is an important part of maintaining individual health as well as building community. Our dining and food services vendors are committed to the safety and well-being of our campus community. Their practices will include daily wellness checks of associates and delivery drivers, increased sanitizing and disinfecting, the wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE), extensive associate training, and informational signage. We worked closely with them to create a plan for our dining facilities that ensures compliance with CDC, state, and local guidelines. We will continue to share more details about meal plans and dining options as the situation evolves, but you can anticipate a variety of to-go options and staffed stations with more limited seating within the dining venues.

- In order to support the safe reopening of campus dining and food services, our vendor partners have each supplied us with detailed guides containing updated hygiene protocols and safety enhancements. These plans have been developed to ensure the health and safety of their own employees, as well as our campus communities.

Colleges of the Fenway Shared Facilities
- We have coordinated with other colleges/universities relative to policies and procedures for the use of shared facilities. More guidance will be forthcoming as the situation evolves.

Co-Curricular Programs and Campus Activities
- To the extent allowed, programs will be held in safe spaces and in limited numbers with adequate supervision.
- Most engagement activities occur in a remote format.
- All safety protocols, including physical distancing, have been implemented.

Cleaning and Disinfecting
Reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by cleaning and disinfection is an important aspect of reopening our campuses. MCPHS has implemented an enhanced cleaning and disinfection program. The frequency and type of cleaning will be determined by the use of the space and the number of occupants. Cleaning supplies will be EPA-registered disinfectants, and specific cleaning protocols will be followed by our custodial staff.

- We have designated restrooms, entry door handles, stairway railings, elevator buttons, etc. as high-traffic/high-touch areas, and they will be disinfected multiple times throughout the day.
- Residential common areas will have increased frequency of cleaning protocols throughout the day and evening. Students will be responsible for cleaning their own bedrooms and other non-shared spaces within the residence halls.
- MCPHS has assigned staff whose responsibility will be to clean and disinfect classrooms and study spaces when not occupied. These dedicated teams will make every effort to cover each classroom.
• Regular cleaning decreases the amount of COVID-19 virus that lives on surfaces. Each person is encouraged to clean the area they personally use. Libraries, study carrels, study rooms, and shared workstations are spaces where the individual is responsible for leaving a safe area for the next occupant. Employees also should regularly wipe down their personal work areas and frequently touched objects (i.e., workstations/desks, keyboards, and telephones).

Testing and Contact Tracing

• MCPHS executes a screening and testing strategy that mitigates community spread through early identification.
• Each day, all students, faculty, and staff are required to fill out a short smartphone app-based self-diagnosis questionnaire before coming to campus to inform them about whether they should remain at home/in their residence hall rather than coming to campus.
• At this point, there is a two-part testing program that will include (1) diagnostic testing of students, faculty, and staff returning for the Spring 2021 semester, and (2) diagnostic testing as appropriate of students, faculty, and staff who will be on campus during the Spring 2021 semester.
• In cases of potential exposure to COVID-19 on campus, contact tracing staff reach out to individuals who have been potentially exposed. Without identifying the source of the potential exposure, staff will inform individuals of the nature of the potential exposure and advise them on appropriate next steps.

Isolation and Quarantine

• Definitions:
  o Isolation: Separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.
  o Quarantine: Separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.
• Any faculty or staff member who exhibits symptoms of illness, has been in contact with someone who has been infected with COVID-19, or tests positive for COVID-19 needs to notify Human Resources and may need to quarantine for 14 days.
• Any residential student who exhibits symptoms of illness, has been in contact with someone who has been infected with COVID-19, or tests positive for COVID-19 needs to notify the appropriate designee (Student Health Services, Student Affairs, or other persons) and may need to quarantine for 14 days.
• The University will provide support to students during the self-isolation/quarantine periods.
• The University will work with all students to minimize disruption to their academic progress during the self-isolation/quarantine period.
Teaching and Research

MCPHS University is fully committed to providing students with high-quality educational experiences, along with comprehensive academic advising and support. The University recognizes the ongoing challenges due to COVID-19 circumstances and has incorporated, as much as possible, flexibility for students with options for the hybrid model or for fully online courses with remote instruction. Given the twenty-six specialty accreditations of our various health sciences programs, the University continues to make every effort for students to progress within their programs as feasible, while also meeting accreditation requirements and dealing with evolving COVID-19 conditions. For professional degree programs with specialty accreditation and regulatory requirements, each School will determine if it is feasible for students to have fully online courses with remote instruction as an option, in addition to providing the hybrid model.

Hybrid Program Plans

- Academic programs will provide a combination of in-person instruction and online courses with remote instruction as possible; most of the professional programs with specialty accreditation need to offer hybrid courses only.
- Students will be able to select the learning modality in which they engage—hybrid (a blend of some in-person instruction and also online courses with remote instruction) or fully online courses with remote instruction. For professional programs with specialty accreditation requirements, schools will determine the most flexible options possible for students that enable the programs to continue to meet their accreditation standards and learning outcomes.
- Accessibility needs will be accommodated.
- The University has delayed the spring 2021 semester start date for academic classes from Monday, January 11, 2021 to Tuesday, January 19, 2021.
- Spring break week has been eliminated as a public health measure given the ongoing concerns of the pandemic.
- Two additional No Classes dates have been added to the academic calendar: Friday, March 5, 2021 and Thursday, March 25, 2021. All existing holidays on the calendar will remain.
- Clinical/externship schedules remain uncoupled from the University’s academic class schedule and will be reviewed and confirmed by each academic program (These are School/Program level decisions).
- No changes have been made to final exam week nor the end date for spring 2021. Two weeks will remain scheduled before start of Summer 2021 semester.

Didactic Instruction (Lecture, Discussion, Demonstration, Group Activities)

- All academic programs will design courses using technology to support both in-person instruction and online courses with remote instruction.
- Technology will be used for delivery of lectures both synchronously and asynchronously, including online discussion, course projects, virtual labs, demonstration activities, and small group work.
- All classroom presentation components will be recorded and/or replicated for students participating in courses remotely.
Labs (Hands-On and Virtual)

- All academic programs with lab courses and/or lab components within courses will determine what will be offered in-person or online with remote instruction. These decisions will also be made in alignment with any specialty accreditation requirements and will be outlined within each program’s academic continuity plan.
- Planning for hands-on labs will include CDC, DPH, and University requirements, including health screening questionnaires, online safety training, social distancing, and appropriate PPE.
- Any program that has identified the need for students to return for laboratory experience prior to the start of Spring 2021 Semester will submit a proposal to the Teaching and Research and Healthy Community Working Groups for review and approval.

Assessment and Exams

- As is standard, all academic programs will define learning outcomes by course and by program and will ensure that these learning outcomes are met.
- As much as possible, exams will be given virtually using online testing tools within Blackboard or with proctored testing solutions.
- Students will evaluate courses at the end of the semester consistent with usual practice.
- Feedback from students on their learning experiences will be solicited through course evaluations.
- A sub-group for online assessment and test integrity has been formed; this group will make recommendations for best practices and needed policies.

Clinical / Externship Rotations and Clinic-based Education

- The Clinical Education sub-group of the Teaching and Research Working Group will follow CDC and DPH guidelines relative to clinical education requirements and share best practices.
- Each academic program will ensure that decisions regarding clinical education are in alignment with specialty accreditation, regulatory agencies and clinical affiliate site requirements, as well as CDC, DPH, state and local guidance.
- Each academic program will determine the PPE needs of students within their programs based on the requirements of clinical affiliate sites. The University will support these PPE needs.
- All students will be notified in advance of their clinical rotation assignments and the site-specific requirements to ensure that they are prepared to follow the COVID-19 and other health screening requirements.
- The Clinical Education leadership team for MCPHS on-site clinics will determine when it is safe to reopen clinic-based education and patient care services based on CDC, DPH, and other relevant guidance (accreditation or regulatory). The Clinical Education Leadership team, with the support of their academic Deans and Directors, will submit their reopening plans to the Teaching and Research and Health Community Working Groups for review and approval.

Field Placements and Internships

- The Field Placement and Internship sub-group led by the School of Arts and Sciences and School of Healthcare Business will follow CDC and DPH guidelines relative to field placement and internship requirements and share best practices.
• The Teaching and Research Working Group and Provost Office will provide support to leadership team of this subgroup as they assess the options for students given their program requirements.

Research
• Research will continue with a phased repopulation plan, in alignment with state and federal guidelines, and will continue to support researchers and students based on priority needs of the University.
• All persons working in labs should follow the CDC and DPH guidelines both inside and outside the laboratory. University requirements will include health screening questionnaires, online safety training, adherence to social distancing, and appropriate PPE.
• Any new research proposals for spring 2021 must be reviewed and approved by the Teaching and Research and Healthy Community Working Group prior to Thanksgiving break.
• Plans for research during the Spring 2021 Semester for academic programs, including schedules, will be submitted by the schools for faculty and student research that follows the University protocols and CDC and DPH guidelines.

International Strategy
• The University recognizes the challenges of our international student population with regards to travel and visa restrictions. It will assist students to select the learning modality in which they engage—hybrid (a blend of some in-person instruction and also online courses with remote instruction) or fully online courses with remote instruction, based on their majors and degree program curricula, accreditation requirements and recent guidance from the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) for spring 2021.
• In addition to the University’s online orientation program, MCPHS has converted its Early Start Program to an online and engaging format available to all incoming new international students.
• For the spring 2021 Semester, the University will offer additional support for our international students. This includes comprehensive online academic support and tutoring from our English as a Second Language (ESL) faculty within the English Language Resource Center, Sciences, Writing, and Math Centers.

Library
• The Division of Library and Learning Resources will continue to provide comprehensive support to students and faculty remotely.
• Consistent with previous semesters, specific plans will be outlined for the following: Reference Services and Research Consultations, Course Reserve Collection, Information Literacy Instruction, and Interlibrary Loan Services.
• Plans will be made for making the library facilities available to students attending classes on our campuses during the spring semester, as is possible following the necessary in-person protocols. The library and study spaces on all three campus libraries will be significantly reconfigured with de-densification to adhere to the University’s protocols.
courses, as well as other academic support resources. Online tutoring will be available to further support students in the mastery of course content.

- Peer tutoring and professional tutors have been retained via remote availability for the students in the Worcester and Manchester academic programs.
- Specialized tutoring will be provided online by the Writing Center, the English Language Resource Center, and the Math/Physics Center. Individual faculty will be engaged to offer discipline-specific tutoring as needed.

**Faculty Support**

- The Office of Academic Affairs, through its units for Academic Technology, Instructional Support, and Faculty Development, will provide comprehensive support to faculty for teaching hybrid, online, and in-classroom courses.
- Academic Technology will work with schools and programs to explore and implement technology solutions for didactic instruction, labs (virtual and hands-on), and simulations.
- Instructional Support will provide a variety of services to faculty for the development of hybrid and online courses, including webinars, virtual drop-in sessions, course development support, and one-on-one coaching.
- Faculty Development will provide virtual onboarding for new faculty (full-time and adjunct).
Students

Students choose to attend MCPHS University not only for the quality of the faculty and the academic programs, but also for its enriched campus life experience. The University is now balancing our immersive residential experience with the health and well-being of the entire campus community. Given this situation, campus life will be a different experience in the spring, with all members of the community playing an important role in mitigating the infection and spread of the virus.

Residence Life

- **Move-In:** In order to accommodate physical distancing during move-in, the University will use an appointment system to assign move-in times. Dates and times will be forthcoming as we coordinate with our campus partners and make room assignments.
  - We encourage students to limit the number of belongings they bring on move-in day to alleviate traffic and support a clean environment within their living space.

- **Arrival:** In accordance with state guidelines, both new and returning residential students will be required to submit a negative COVID-19 test upon arrival. Students remaining in the residence halls over break must remain in compliance with University testing protocols.
  - Throughout the spring semester we continue to strongly advise students to refrain from extended personal travel.

- **Housing Protocols**
  - Housing Unit: Residence hall rooms within a suite or apartment create a “Unit.” Members of each Unit are encouraged to physically distance as much as possible in their shared space but are not required to wear masks within their room, apartment, or suite.
  - Guests: In order to limit the spread of COVID-19, it is necessary to limit contact between people, particularly in the residence halls. Accordingly, guests will not be allowed in any residence hall. Only students who reside in each hall will have access to that hall. Students will not be allowed to visit a residence hall in which they do not reside.
  - Physical Distancing: Students must practice physical distancing throughout common areas in residence halls, including designated study spaces, common areas/lounges, laundry rooms, elevators, hallways, and common floor bathrooms (where applicable).
  - Common Space Amenities: Some common space amenities, such as common kitchens, gyms, and small common spaces, may be closed or limited in usage as CDC guidance and social distancing dictate.
  - Cloth face coverings or masks must be worn outside of individual student rooms/suites with the exception of while eating and showering/grooming. This includes all common areas of the residence halls.
  - Quarantine/Isolation: If a student tests positive for COVID-19, has been in contact with a positive case, or has symptoms, they will be asked to quarantine or isolate. Residential students will be expected to follow the University’s requirements regarding personal behavior, and students who have tested positive will be moved to a designated room for isolation if they are unable to travel home with family.
Testing and Contact Tracing: To remain in compliance with the University’s testing protocols, residential students are required to be tested two times/week. Updates to the University’s testing protocols will be communicated to students as necessary.

Engagement
- MCPHS staff will create virtual and limited in-person programming to engage the residential population aimed at building connections, supporting the mental health of our community, and relieving stress to support the residential community.

Campus Life
- Campus Life staff will continue to advise and support students involved in student organizations.
- All co-curricular meetings, programs, and activities will be conducted in a virtual setting.
- Small, in-person meetings and gatherings will be limited and must be held in accordance with guidelines from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and State of New Hampshire, when it is safe to do so.

Center for Academic Success and Enrichment (CASE) and Center for Professional and Career Development (CPCD)
- These centers will increase the use of video calling for appointments.
- The focus will be on first-year and transfer students to build rapport.
- A robust online tutoring program will be enhanced.
- There will be increased communication to students about online support.
- All programs, workshops, and events will continue to be delivered by online/video platforms.
- Faculty collaborations for classroom presentations will continue with the CPCD components delivered by online/video platforms or recorded webinars.

Community Standards
- All students coming to campus will be asked to agree with the MCPHS University COVID-19 Accountability and Community Standards.
- Students who do not follow the COVID-19 policies/guidelines will be referred to the Office of Student Affairs.
- A space on each campus has been designated for in-person student conduct meetings, while most student conduct matters will continue to be conducted in a virtual format.

Counseling Services
- Counseling Services is providing a full range of services remotely via telehealth.
- Counseling Services continues providing a triage model of care to ensure that students experiencing elevated need or crisis receive prompt, appropriate care and services.
- Counseling Services is providing individual on-going counseling and consultation, as well as referrals to community providers including psychiatry and specialty care.
- Counseling services has expanded its offerings of skills based and support groups to aide in managing stress and anxiety.
- Counseling is accessible to faculty and staff across campus departments via phone and teleconferencing to provide consultation and receive referrals for student needs.
• Counseling Services provides 24 hour on-call services (including weekends and holidays) for all students. In addition, staff coordinates crisis response procedures with Public Safety and Student Affairs to ensure mental health emergencies are responded to quickly and in a coordinated manner that maintains safety of the student and community.
• Counseling Services provides virtual outreach programming via social media and periodic email communication to address and support the needs of the students across campuses.
• Counseling Services is providing signage and informative handout cards to ensure the campus community remains aware of how to access Counseling support.
• Other updated and current resources and services are regularly posted to the Counseling Services website and Instagram account.

Office of Student Access and Accommodation (OSAA)
• Staff will hold meetings and intake appointments online and will set up remote “drop-in hours.”
• Students can submit an online intake form through the OSAA website.
• OSAA will work with students to ensure accommodations are in place at the start of the semester.
• Faculty will provide exam proctoring and OSAA will assist on a case-by-case basis.

Admission and Student Financial Services (SFS)
• Admission and SFS will set up a shared staffing schedule and cross-train more of their staff.
• Admission and SFS will continue to host a robust schedule of virtual engagements.
• Admission will work with academic departments to host virtual admission interviews.
• Additional staff training will be assessed to support the need for a high level of virtual activity.
• Fall and spring in-person travel will be canceled, and all meetings will be conducted via online/video platforms or other means.

Optum Health Services (Boston)
• Optum Health Services will maintain telemedicine access.
• There will be flexible staffing (on- vs. off-site) to best manage clinical space and patient needs.
• “Sick vs. Well” spaces for patient visits are in development in conjunction with MassArt.

Center for International Studies, English Language Resource Center, Immigration and International Support Services, International Academic Services
• Student meetings will primarily be conducted virtually; in-person meetings may be scheduled on a case-by-case basis.
• These departments and centers follow clear and robust outreach protocols to communicate with international students and ensure optimal engagement.
• Because international and multilingual students benefit from real-time interactions, students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to seek opportunities for synchronous video meetings and classes.
Faculty and Staff

The Faculty and Staff Working Group has developed plans to support our faculty and staff, as the health and safety of our employees remains paramount to maintaining a safe working and learning environment on our campuses. We have taken an inclusive approach that considers the needs of our employees and aligns with overall University planning.

The health and safety of our faculty and staff remains a top priority for the University.

- The University considers the ongoing needs of faculty and staff and their unique challenges due to COVID-19. It evaluates the circumstances that may impact their ability to work on site rather than remotely and takes a thoughtful approach with its decision-making processes.
- Special considerations are given to those who have the greatest risk of exposure, such as those who are in high-risk categories based on their risk factors or the nature of their roles given the social distancing protocols.
- For employees who also spend time in clinical settings (external clinical sites and on-site clinics), the University follows established protocols with regular check-in points to ensure that employees feel supported and that they are able to adhere to clinic protocols.

The University continues to foster open, transparent communication and a collaborative approach with the reopening plan.

- Human Resources maintains regular communication with employees to keep them informed of University plans and other important information that is relevant.
- An Employee Advisory Committee, comprised of faculty, staff, and administration was created to foster open, honest, and collaborative communication between employees and University leadership during the implementation phase.
- Human Resources, in collaboration with the Faculty and Staff Working Group and Employee Advisory Committee, continues to seek input from our employees to understand ongoing concerns they may have regarding recommended repopulation plans.
- Communication mechanisms are in place for those in settings with higher risk of exposure to stay informed of possible spikes in clinical settings along with an appropriate plan for response.

For the health and safety of the collective community, the University continues to adhere to public health protocols for COVID-19 with the appropriate monitoring.

- MCPHS continues to provide training on protocols that have been implemented that follow recommended behaviors and best practices.
- We aspire to create a culture of shared responsibility and role modeling, where community members promote good health practices and contribute to keeping MCPHS safe.
- Policies and procedures continue be updated to ensure that our University sets clear expectations that are monitored to make sure that we are collectively following the appropriate protocols.
- Human Resources continues to provide flexibility for employees who can successfully work from home to support de-densification, and has implemented staggered schedules and other creative approaches for those returning to campus.
The University continues to assess its business practices and implement improvements that streamline processes during COVID-19 and thereafter.

- We continually evaluate how we do business and where we can improve our systems, particularly with the use of technology, in alignment with the University’s strategic priorities.
- Based on our feedback from the COVID-19 transition through Fall 2020, Human Resources continues to make recommendations for Spring 2021 to improve the delivery of our academic and administrative services to key units within the University and externally.
- MCPHS will continue to evaluate and implement best practices and innovative programming to promote faculty and staff development, particularly during these challenging times.

Given the evolving circumstances due to COVID-19 and other important factors including the flu season, MCPHS is engaged in scenario and contingency planning.

- Human Resources has focused on framing scenarios and contingency plans to account for various options we may need to consider with repopulation plans, including what to do if federal, state, and local guidance changes, in order to be able to adjust accordingly.
- Repopulation plans are evaluated to support flexibility for employees and also meet the ongoing needs of the University for spring 2021 (e.g. remote, staggered schedules, alternate weeks in the office).

**Institutional Research**

The Institutional Research Working Group researches best practices and shares this information with the Steering Committee, seven Working Groups, and related sub-committees.

**Real-time Responsiveness**

- Ongoing review of CDC, WHO, and other national agencies providing research-based guidance.
- Daily review of regional, state, and local mandates about the pandemic, including public health departments.
- Proactive review of guidance proposed by professional associations (e.g. Colleges of the Fenway, Higher Education Case Managers Association, American Council on Education) and both regional and professional accrediting agencies.
- Ongoing monitoring and flexible adaptation to support the data needs of the University.
Communications

The purpose of the Communication Working Group is to ensure that the University community is fully informed in a timely manner regarding plans for spring 2021. The Group is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders receive regular, consistent, and accurate information.

Communication Distribution

- All communications are sent by email or by social media, text messages, and RAVE alerts when appropriate.
- Non-academic communications come from the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, and other senior administration officials.
- Academic communications for students come from the Office of the Provost, individual school Deans and Program Directors, and the Dean of Student’s Office.
- Past communications are archived in the Community Notifications section of the University COVID-19 website, https://www.mcphs.edu/covid.

Web Presence

- The University COVID-19 website, https://www.mcphs.edu/covid, is the primary platform used to publish new information, community-sourced FAQs, contact information, and historical communications.

University Community Members

- Communications will be directed to collective or individual University community members as appropriate. University community members include:
  - Current and incoming students
  - International students
  - Families
  - Alumni
  - Faculty and Staff
  - Trustees and Corporation members
  - Visitors
  - Patients of on-campus clinics and treatment centers
  - Outside partners, affiliates, and vendors

Community Input

- Community members and interested parties have a number of contact points regarding input, feedback, and questions.
  - A covid19team@mcphs.edu email box is available to take questions, concerns, and feedback. This mailbox is monitored regularly, and responses are generally provided within 24 hours.
  - A COVID-19 Team telephone hotline at (617) 732-2798 is in place to take questions, concerns, and feedback. It is staffed Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Callers who get voicemail will have their calls returned generally within 24 hours.
Input and feedback from community members will be used to add new and update existing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that can be found on the University COVID-19 website, https://www.mcphs.edu/covid.

Finance and Legal

Recognizing that these are uncertain times, our Business and Legal teams will actively and professionally support the financial, regulatory, and operational needs of our students and employees. Unprecedented disruption to higher education has caused significant challenges, and our commitment to service and support will not be compromised.

Insurance
- The Business Office will take a lead role with ensuring financial resources are in place to support student, faculty, and staff health insurance coverage for COVID-19 related expenses and care.
- We will ensure that University insurance coverages are reviewed and updated regularly regarding potential COVID-19 claims and risks.

Student Financial Services and Financial Aid
- We will monitor evolving financial aid regulations as they pertain to all aspects of student financial aid including online learning provisions, extended aid periods, and loan administrative forbearance programs, in order that we may provide optimal assistance to our students.
- We will bill students commensurate with changing academic plans and modified auxiliary services as applicable, including housing and other services.
- A primary goal will be providing students with affordability counseling.
- We will administer the CARES Act in accordance with government guidelines.

Departmental Budgets
- The Business Office will work closely with budget managers to reallocate resources commensurate with evolving needs related to changing instructional approaches and activities.
- We will support all academic and administrative units with the reengineering of their processes due to the disruption caused by COVID-19.
- We will ensure there is adequate funding for all new safety procedures and PPE requirements.

Accounting and Reporting
- We will provide effective continuance and completion of all University accounting, reporting, and financial administration, including all payroll-related federal and state reporting compliance.
- The Business and Legal teams will continue to complete all regulatory filings and financial audits.

Financial Administration
- As we plan for changes in FY21 revenue and expenses, we will continue to support all aspects of departmental needs for the safety of students, faculty, and staff.
- We will support all initiatives of departments and schools for student academic achievement, including safety precautions and learning environment adjustments.
- We will administer departmental budgets and purchasing activity with flexibility and sensitivity to the changing needs of the University’s schools and budget managers.
Legal Affairs

- Our Legal team will work with outside counsel on compliance matters relating to COVID-19.
- All contract review and management issues as they relate to the impact of COVID-19 will be closely and actively reviewed.
- We will continue to oversee immigration and immunization activities, and assist with challenges being created by healthcare system and travel disruptions.