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EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

In order for Misericordia University to provide a safe environment while attempting to contain the spread of COVID-19, it is important that we work together as a community to care and support each other. Each one of us needs to do our part to demonstrate our commitment to keeping our community healthy and strong. Without all of us working together, we will not be successful in addressing the challenges of this virus. Thus, it is imperative that everyone follow the guidelines which follow.
RETURN TO CAMPUS

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

We’re all in this together. To slow the spread of COVID-19, everyone has to help. Here are some key points to help you do your part:

- Monitor your symptoms daily through a University-provided App.
- Unless you are in your residence hall room, wear a mask when on campus. The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected, but it also helps protect you.
- Keep at least 6 feet between yourself and others, even when masked.
- Wash your hands often and vigorously for at least 20 seconds. If you are unable to wash your hands, hand sanitizer is available in all campus buildings.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, especially if you haven’t recently washed your hands. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- People without symptoms can still spread the virus — in fact, you could give COVID-19 to others, even if you don’t feel sick.
- If a student seeks medical advice and/or testing off campus, they must report if they have been identified as having COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test to the Cougar Care Hotline: (570) 674-8000. All information will remain confidential and will be used for tracking isolation and quarantine and student support only. A student cannot return to campus until symptom-free and cleared by a health provider.

SYMPTOM MONITORING REQUIREMENT

It is the responsibility of every member of the community to self-monitor their health every day. The University also asks that in the 2 weeks prior to your return to campus, you carefully monitor symptoms daily, wear your mask and practice careful social distancing, especially if you are coming from areas that have a high incidence of COVID-19. The Back Mountain area, where the University is located, has had a very small number of COVID-19 cases since the outbreak began. Please remember, that we are members of that community too, and it is our responsibility to make good decisions to keep our community, on and off campus, safe.

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19, please do not come to campus.

- Any student who is experiencing ANY of the symptoms of COVID-19 (fever or chills; cough; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; fatigue; muscle or body aches; headache; new loss of taste or smell; sore throat; congestion or runny nose; nausea or vomiting) SHOULD NOT COME TO CAMPUS. You should isolate, seek medical consultation, and follow provider recommendations prior to coming to campus. Students are advised not to come to campus until you are released by a medical provider. (If necessary, alternative plans through the Office of Residence Life can be made for move-in at a later date.)
- If you experience sudden spikes in body temperature to 100.4 or higher, begin self-isolation in your dorm room or home, follow protocols, and seek medical advice immediately:
  - Resident students, stay in your room. (further information for resident students can be found later in the document under Isolation and Quarantine sections)
  1. Monday through Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm, call the Health and Wellness Center (570) 674-6276 to schedule an appointment. For the safety of all, we are not accepting any walk-ins for any reason this year.
2. If you begin to have mild symptoms after hours or on the weekend, it may not be necessary to contact the Health and Wellness Center until the next morning or Monday, UNLESS you are experiencing a high fever or shortness of breath, call 911, then call Campus Safety (570) 674-6304. You can also do one of the following:
   • Contact the TeleNurse on the back of your medical insurance card
   • Geisinger Health System’s COVID Hotline at (570) 284-3657.
   • Call the Cougar Care Hotline at (570) 674-8000 for guidance.
   • Students experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or who have had close contact with someone who is symptomatic, should isolate from others in their room at home or on-campus and immediately report the situation by telephone to:

1. Monday through Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm, call the Health and Wellness Center (570) 674-6276 to schedule an appointment. For the safety of all, we are not accepting any walk-ins for any reason this year.

2. After hours or weekend: Contact the Cougar Care Hotline at (570) 674-8000 to leave your name and contact information.
   • Students will be required to complete an educational module prior to returning to campus. The link to the educational module will be sent to you at a later date.
   • All students will be required to monitor their health daily through an App that will be provided by the University. Information about the App will be emailed to you at a later date.

Prompt detection and intervention is important in continuing to maintain the health of everyone in the university community.

PERSONAL SAFETY PRACTICES
FACE MASKS/ FACE COVERINGS

Scientific research has proven that masks are effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Face masks really do matter. The scientific evidence is growing. Face masks/cloth face coverings must be worn by all students and by resident students whenever they are not in their private room, suite, apartment or townhouse. Students should always wear a face mask, even when outside. The University will provide one cloth, washable mask to every student, however, please make sure you have easy access to additional masks. Masks can also be purchased in the Campus Store. Types of masks and mask care can be found below.

Any mask will act as a barrier to particles that come out of your nose and mouth. You can carry COVID-19 without showing any symptoms, so it’s important to wear a mask to protect everyone around you. You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.

Masks also help to filter the air you breathe in. If someone near you sneezes or coughs, a mask will keep you from inhaling many of their respiratory particles, including viruses, which decreases your chance of getting sick.

WHERE YOU SHOULD WEAR A MASK
Any public area, including but not limited to:

- Class
- Libraries
- Offices
- Gyms or fitness centers
- Common areas (hallways, lounges, stairwells)
- Campus/transportation
- Facilities around campus
- Dining room
- Health Center
- Outside

If you are a resident student, you do not need to wear a mask in your personal room, suite, apartment or townhouse.


**Remember:** Never lay your mask down on a counter, desktop, or other surface that could transmit infection. If you are wearing a cloth mask, make sure to wash it every day using soap and water. Masks must be dried completely before use.

For more information on masks, visit the CDC's [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/masks.html).

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**The University will follow all masking requirements of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.**

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**TYPE AND INTENDED USE OF FACE COVERINGS/MASKS**

**Cloth Face Covering:** Home-made or commercially manufactured face coverings that are washable and help contain wearer’s respiratory emissions.

Required for campus community use in non-healthcare settings (office spaces, general research/work settings, shops, community areas where 6’ social distancing cannot be consistently maintained. Must be replaced daily. (While likely necessary for ingress and egress, not required when working alone in an office).

**Disposable Mask:** Commercially manufactured masks that help contain wearer’s respiratory emissions.

Required for campus community use in non-healthcare settings (office spaces, general research/work settings, shops, community areas where 6’ social distancing cannot be consistently maintained. Must be replaced daily. (While likely necessary for ingress and egress, not required when working alone in an office).

**Medical-Grade Surgical Mask:** FDA-approved masks to protect the wearer from large droplets and splashes; helps contain wearer’s respiratory emissions.

These masks are reserved for healthcare workers and other approved areas with task-specific hazards determined by OESO.

**N95 Respirator:** Provide effective respiratory protection from airborne particles and aerosols; helps contain wearer’s respiratory emissions.

These masks are reserved for healthcare workers and other approved areas with task-specific hazards determined by OESO.

**Other:** Gaiter face masks and plastic face shields that cover the nose and mouth are also permitted. Face shields are an appropriate alternative to a face mask when you can maintain a 6 feet distance from another individual, or if a face shield is required due to a health concern.

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**HOW TO APPROACH SOMEONE NOT WEARING A MASK**

It is your responsibility to help remind others of the masking requirement (because it is easy to forget!). Approaching others can be uncomfortable, but if you do so with a genuine sense of community care, it can make it easier. Here are some ideas on how you can kindly communicate the importance of wearing a mask:

- “Please follow the mask policy in the hallway, I really want to be able to stay on campus all semester!”

- “You must have forgotten your mask. I can wait here while you go grab it.”

- “Please do not wear your mask on your chin. I want to stay healthy, and we can’t always tell if we are sick.”

- “I want to continue this conversation. I would be more comfortable if you wore a mask while we are talking.”

In turn, please remember that if you are reminded to follow the policy by someone else, it is not a personal attack, but a genuine concern for self and others on campus. Responding kindly promotes a healthy and caring community.
**SOCIAL DISTANCING**
Social distancing, also known as physical distancing, is one of the most effective ways to keep yourself and others safe from being exposed to COVID-19, therefore reducing the spread.

Social distancing means maintaining a physical distance of at least 6 feet from other people.

**Here are some tips to prepare for a safe return to campus:**

Tips for a safe adjustment back to campus:
- Follow floor markings, signs, and tape set up to promote social distancing.
- If possible, choose to use the stairs over the elevator. When the elevator is being used, limit it to 2 people in at a time.
- Avoid sharing equipment and tools, such as phones, laptops, writing utensils, and other items.
- Establish alternatives to handshakes (waving, placing a hand over your heart, or making a peace sign).
- Use telephone, video conferencing, email, and text messaging to communicate in place of study sessions or group meetings.
- Disinfect cell phones and electronic equipment daily (use recommended cleaners for your electronic devices).
- If unavoidable, keep in-person meetings brief and held in a place where everyone can stay 6 feet apart.
- Video call with friends to stay safe and social during breaks between classes.
- Avoid gathering in common areas, such as the library, outside of classes, and in the dining room unless you can maintain the 6 feet distance.

**HANDWASHING**
According to the CDC, COVID-19 can live on surfaces for hours or even days. Wash your hands often to protect yourself from the virus.

Here are some tips to help you wash your hands properly and protect yourself from getting sick:
- Wash your hands, including the backs of your hands and between your fingers, often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in public areas.
- Wash your hands before and after you eat.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, especially if you haven’t recently washed your hands.
ACADEMIC INFORMATION

- We know that students would prefer, where able, to hold in-person classes with faculty. We are adjusting classrooms and other spaces on campus to accommodate classes of students in a safe, social distancing manner. You will receive more information about your courses and how they will be conducted as we move closer to the opening of the Fall 2020 semester.

- Note that there will now be 20 minutes between all classes, whether they be MWF classes or T/Th classes.

- While in class, ALL students are expected to be masked.

- Where classes will be held in person, they will be set up so as to promote social distancing – keeping each student 6 feet from each other student, to the best of our abilities.

- We will need to keep close track of attendance so as to maximize our ability to keep track of where students have been and assure the community’s overall health.

- Should you become ill, in addition to notification to the Cougar Care Hotline at (570) 674-8000, you should be in immediate contact with your instructor, your advisor, and the Dean of Student’s office (570) 674-6238. Should you become ill, you will work out with your instructors how you will proceed to address course material and keep up with expectations. The Student Success Center and the Vice President for Academic Affairs office will aid with that support.

ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Enjoying yourself on campus is important to everyone. We know you are excited to attend club meetings, programs, and other activities that are offered on our campus. This year things will be different. We want you to have fun, but we also want you and our campus community to stay healthy.

Here are some guidelines that we will be following:

- Limiting the size of programs and activities to promote social distancing. We will be following Pennsylvania guidelines for indoor activities and at this time, the indoor limit is 25. You may be asked to register for an activity online so we can manage the attendance. Some of the favorite programs or activities may be offered multiple times to accommodate everyone that wants to attend.

- Wearing masks to programs will be required.

- We will be encouraging club meetings through Zoom whenever possible. You will also see other programs, workshops and activities offered remotely through Zoom, Instagram and Facebook Live.

- Cougars in the Cave will continue to be a main communication of what is happening. If you haven’t been following, please go to Instagram or misericordia.edu/cougarsinthecave

- We are very excited to have you return to campus and are planning Welcome Week activities. We will be following our social distancing requirements.

- Students will continue to be able to use the fitness center, the pool and other areas in the Anderson Center when available. There will be a maximum capacity for use in all areas and in the fitness center, you will see that things have been moved to promote social distancing. As always, students using the fitness machines will be required to wipe them down when their workout is complete. All students will be required to bring their own water bottles, so make sure to bring a reusable bottle back with you. Directions for use of the Anderson Center are being finalized.

- Making good decisions for your social life will be especially important this year. If you chose to go to parties, or other places where there may be larger groups of people unmasked and not following social distancing requirements, you are putting your entire community at risk. It could result in the University having to move all classes online and everyone having to leave campus. No one wants that to happen.

Think before you act.
MENTAL HEALTH TIPS FROM THE CAPS CENTER

It’s easy to experience information overload about COVID-19, and it’s completely normal to feel overwhelmed by anxiety and worry, on top of all of the other things you have to stress about. However, here are 5 tips to help you manage your anxiety and provide resources to access:

EVALUATE YOUR SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- We get a lot of our news from friends and social media, and it can be very important to think critically about what sources we can trust.
- Misericordia is dedicated to monitoring information from the CDC and Department of Health and posts guidance and resources for what you can do to keep yourself and our community safe.

TAKE A BREAK FROM THE NEWS

- “Staying on top of the news” is one way to help us feel in control of an out-of-control situation, but it can also be a shortcut to more stress and worry.
- Designate 5-10 minutes in the morning or afternoon to check reliable sources for any updates.
  - Turn off push notifications about the news, and limit your time on social media about the “news.”

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

- When things feel overwhelming and unpredictable related to staying healthy, it can be helpful to focus on what you can control:
  - Wear your mask
  - Maintain your social distance (6 feet)
  - Wash your hands/use hand sanitizer
  - Cover your coughs and sneezes
  - Clean frequently touched objects/surfaces
  - Stay appropriately informed

USE HEALTHY COPING

- Taking a break from school, work, and other demands on your time can be essential to feeling balanced and well, especially in times of high stress.
- Make sure you are doing at least one thing for yourself each day. Here are some suggestions:
  - Take a walk outside
  - Listen to a funny podcast
  - FaceTime a friend
  - Treat yourself to a fancy coffee
  - Do a meditation on calm.com
  - Grab some markers and color or make art
  - Give yourself enough sleep

GET HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT – WE’RE HERE FOR YOU!

- Pay attention to yourself, and encourage others to do the same. Reach out to the CAPS Center by phone, (570) 674-6408 or email, caps@misericordia.edu especially if you’re experiencing some of the following:
  - Trouble sleeping or eating
  - Problems with focus and attention
  - Difficulty completing work due to anxiety
  - Thoughts about harming yourself
LIVING ON CAMPUS: INFORMATION FOR RESIDENT STUDENTS

It is important that each of us takes responsibility for our behavior when we are in the presence of others. How we behave in our residence hall room will impact the health of others on campus. Remember, you can give COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.

Family members will be permitted in the residential areas only during move in and move out. At all other times, family members are asked to wait in the lobby or outside.

All requests for overnight guests have been suspended until further notice.

Only current Misericordia University students (including commuters) may visit the residence halls. No other guests are permitted. Masks must be worn at all times except in private rooms when students are with their roommates. Resident students are limited to one Misericordia guest per room and masks must then be worn. All common spaces will have maximum occupancy signage. Failure to abide by these expectations will result in a referral to the Dean of Students’ office for disciplinary action. Sanctions for such behavior range from warning to, and including, removal from housing and suspension.

Students who refuse to wear a mask will not be permitted to live in a residence hall. If there is a reason a mask cannot be worn, the student must work with the Office for Students with Disabilities (570) 674-6205.

Be sure to talk to your roommate about expectations for cleanliness in the room. That will help to keep everyone healthy. The University will supply cleaning products for each living unit. However, we strongly suggest that students return to campus with their own additional cleaning supplies.

- Make sure to wear your mask in all common areas including hallways and stairwells and elevators. Masks are not needed when you are in your room with your roommate/s. If you are using a cloth mask, wash it daily with soap and water. Dry completely before use.

- Maintain appropriate social distancing (6 feet) whenever possible.

- Do not use the elevator unless necessary. There should be no more than 2 people in any elevator at a time. Make sure to maintain social distancing in the elevator.

- Wash your hands frequently, especially after you have touched a surface.

- Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched items and surfaces (cell phones, laptops, touch screens, keyboards, desks, remote controls, door handles in residence hall rooms etc.)

- Wash cups, glasses, dishes, silverware immediately after use. Do not let them collect in the sink.

- When you take a shower, make sure to put your mask on top of your clean towel, not on any hard surfaces.

- Alumnae Hall and McHale Hall: Housekeeping will clean and sanitize common bathrooms at least twice a day.

- McGowan, Gildea, MacDowell Halls and the Townhouses: Housekeeping will clean bathrooms weekly and sanitize daily. Students in these housing units should regularly clean and sanitize their bathroom in between the housekeeping schedule, cleaning products will be supplied. Students in these housing units are also required to regularly clean the common areas. We recommend students create a cleaning schedule for all occupants.

- All students will be given a sanitizing product, approved by the CDC to kill the coronavirus, directions will be provided. This product is for use in bathrooms or on any hard, touchable surface. Just spray and allow to sit for 3 minutes.

- Laundry, including sheets and towels should be done regularly. Launder items according to the manufacturer’s instructions, use the warmest appropriate water setting and allow items to dry completely. Remember, the use of washers and dryers is free on campus. Be sure to bring clothes detergent with you, in particular to wash cloth face masks.
EATING ON CAMPUS
- Seating in the Mary and John Metz dining room will be limited and will be monitored.
- Online ordering will be available for take-out and grab-and-go options.
- Outside seating will be available under tents.
- Grab-and-go can be taken outside, to the Henry Student Lounge, back to your room or lounge in your residence hall
- Students should wash their hands before and after eating.
- Any student with special dietary needs should contact Paul McMillan at pmcmillan@metzcorp.com

TESTING
We are not testing all students and employees of the University prior to the start of the fall semester. We will test symptomatic students for COVID-19 through our University Health and Wellness Center as long as supplies are available.

ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE
According to the CDC, isolation and quarantine help protect the community by preventing exposure to people who have or may have a contagious disease.
- Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.
- Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

ISOLATION
The University has identified specific university-owned residences off-campus for the isolation of symptomatic students. The University does not have the ability to provide 24-hour care of these students, therefore, it is strongly recommended that when possible, the student return home to isolate. The student will be moved to an isolation room until they can be picked up by a family member.

If the student cannot go home, the University will move the student to an isolation room where they will remain until released to return to their original residence hall. This is usually a minimum of 10 days after their first positive test, and at least 24 hours has passed since the last fever (without the use of fever reducing medications), and symptoms have improved. For patients with severe illness, the duration of isolation is up to 20 days after the onset of symptoms.

EXPECTATIONS IN ISOLATION
- The student MUST REMAIN IN THE DESIGNATED ISOLATION ROOM
- No visitors will be allowed. All communication will be virtual.
- Classes will continue virtually if the student feels well enough to participate.
- The Health and Wellness Center will conduct a daily health check (8:30am-4:30pm) to monitor symptoms. If it is determined that a student’s symptoms have worsened, the student will be sent by ambulance to a local hospital emergency room.
- If symptoms worsen, after 4:30pm, the student should call 911 then contact Campus Safety (570) 674-6300.
- A member of the University’s Care Team will be assigned to contact the student daily. This will provide additional support and give the University an opportunity to assure the student’s needs are met.
- Services of the Counseling and Psychological Services Center (CAPS) will be available virtually.
- Food will be delivered daily.

Isolated students should stay in close contact with their families.
QUARANTINE
Students will be quarantined if they have been determined, through contact tracing, that they have been exposed to COVID-19. If a student lives on the same floor or is in a class with someone who is symptomatic or has been diagnosed, it does not necessarily mean that they have been exposed. Exposure will be determined solely by the trained contact tracer.

The University has identified specific university-owned residences off-campus for the quarantine of exposed students. Students living in Gildea, MacDowell and the Townhouses may be quarantined in their living unit if one of their roommates becomes symptomatic and is moved to an isolation room. However, it is suggested that quarantined students return home where they may be more comfortable throughout their quarantine and more closely monitored for symptoms by their family.

Students will remain in quarantine until released, usually a minimum of 14 days.

EXPECTATIONS IN QUARANTINE
- Students MUST REMAIN IN THEIR QUARANTINE SPACE (Room, suite, apartment, townhouse)
- NO VISITORS WILL BE PERMITTED. All communication will be virtual.
- Classes will continue virtually.
- A member of the University’s Care Team will be assigned to contact the student daily. This will provide additional support and give the University an opportunity to assure the student’s needs are met. If COVID-19 symptoms appear, the student will be moved to an isolation room. The University does not have the ability to monitor symptoms 24 hours a day.
- If a quarantined student experiences difficulty breathing, they should contact 911 immediately, then call Campus Safety (570) 674-6300.
- Services of the Counseling and Psychological Services Center (CAPS) will be available virtually.
- Food will be delivered daily.

Quarantine students should stay in close contact with their family.

If we consistently wear our masks, wash our hands regularly, avoid touching our eyes, nose and mouth and watch our social distancing (6 feet) each one of us will have a better chance to stay healthy. Remember, your behavior will impact on the health and welfare of your community.

We know that by working together, we will keep our community safe and students living, enjoying campus life and attending class on campus until the end of the semester at Thanksgiving.

REMEMBER: ITEMS TO BRING TO CAMPUS
- Additional face masks/face coverings (cloth recommended)
- Personal digital thermometer
- Hand sanitizer
- Reusable personal water bottle
- Clothes detergent
- Additional cleaning supplies