

COVID-19 Update

From the Office of the President August 13, 2021


Dear Aquinas Institute Staff, Faculty, and Students,

Welcome back to another academic year at Aquinas Institute of Theology. Like last year, we are fortunate that we can start the fall semester with face-to-face classes beginning on **Monday, August 23**, even though the coronavirus is still in our midst. While continuing to observe the protocols and recommendations of government officials and medical experts for a safe school environment, we trust that our God will watch over us to ensure our good health and safety. Along with that spiritual guidance, we, too, must do our part to maintain a safe campus.

Last month, I announced all on-campus students, faculty, and staff members are required to be fully vaccinated before August 16th. Along with that requirement, Aquinas Institute is requiring verification of vaccination from all staff, faculty, and students by August 27th. Procedures for a student's submission of proof of vaccination follow below. Also, as mandated by the City of St. Louis, mask wearing is required in public spaces at Aquinas Institute, including classrooms, the Commons (when not eating), and all gathering spaces. We also recommend frequent handwashing, use of hand sanitizer, and appropriate spacing of classroom seating.

We will provide updates throughout the semester as necessary. I extend my best wishes for a productive, enlightening, and peaceful semester. Please pray for the Aquinas community and be assured of my prayers for you.

Yours in Christ and St. Dominic,



Fr. Mark E. Wedig, OP, PhD

Important Announcements for the 2021-2022 Academic Year

Vaccination Requirement and Verification

- For the safety of everyone at Aquinas Institute, all on-campus students, faculty, and staff members are required to be fully vaccinated before August 16th. As previously announced, requests for exemptions for medical reasons and religious beliefs were available through August 2nd. An on-campus student includes any student who attends a class on site at Aquinas Institute, including a cohort student who attends a course intensive on campus.
- If you are a staff or faculty member, instructions for submitting proof of vaccination will be provided via email.
- If you are a student, to provide proof of vaccination to Aquinas by August 27th, please follow these instructions:
 - To securely and confidentially provide your vaccination information, the Populi system will be used.
 - Have a photo or scan of the front of your vaccination card saved to your computer or cell phone.
 - Log into Populi and go to *My Courses*.
 - From your list of *Courses*, choose "VACD100 Vaccination Verification."
 - Once in the "course," choose *Assignments* from the menu on the left. Under *Assignments*, click on "Verification of COVID-19 Vaccination."
 - Under *Submissions*, click on the shaded box to upload the file or photo of your vaccination card that you have saved on your computer or cell phone. To know your vaccination card was saved, the name of the file will now appear under *Submissions*.
 - You have now completed the verification process. Following these steps will confidentially add the verification to your Populi record, making it only visible to you and a few select administrative staff.

Fall Semester

- The fall semester begins on Monday, August 23rd.
- The Convocation of the Aquinas Institute community is Monday, August 23rd, the first day of the semester, with the Mass of the Holy Spirit at 4:00 p.m., followed by a community gathering with light refreshments.
- Masks are required to be worn inside the Aquinas Institute building.

Please direct questions or requests for information to the Office of the President at President@ai.edu.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39