



## **Executive Summary**

### **Re-Starting Campus Operations**

Looking toward the 2020-2021 academic year, I would like to share the planning measures our university is taking. Our planning is, and has been, conducted with the health and well-being of all members of our campus community as our foremost priority.

At UB, we have established a forward-thinking planning structure to ensure that we continue to provide our UB students with an exceptional education, and that we continue to conduct impactful research, scholarship and creative work during these challenging times.

Given the reverberations of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are intentionally preparing for the challenges that lie ahead—from questions about public health, university finances, enrollment, academic continuity, research, and our overall student experience.

Through our comprehensive planning process, we are planning for every eventuality—from a distance education model to a residential, campus-based experience in a less dense and safe environment, to a potential full return to conventional campus operations.

In unequivocal terms, our planning and preparations are being conducted within the framework of these principles:

First and foremost, we ensure the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff. We maintain our reputation as a premier public research university, and as a member of the AAU.

We provide all of our students with a distinctive education that prepares them as global citizens in their respective fields.

We continue to pursue our strategic goals so that we deepen our impact and further our reach as a national public research university. And, we ensure that our university is on strong financial footing today and for the long term.

## **1. Re-starting On-Campus Operations**

### **a. Campus Planning Committee**

The charge for the Campus Planning Committee (23 members) called for us to coordinate the work of five separate subcommittees (137 members) to include an Academic Continuity, Retention and Completion; Faculty and Graduate Professional Research Continuity; Student Experience and Wellness; Faculty and Staff; and Operations subcommittees.

In all, a total of 180 faculty, staff, and students are engaged, not including the various working committees under the VP/CIO and the VP for University Communications.

It is important to note that all determinations about the Fall 2020 semester will align with the Governor's Executive Orders—including Western New York's progress pursuant to the state's Phase 1-4 regional benchmarks. In addition, Dr. Michael Cain is as a member of the WNY Regional Control Room where he serves as the Control Room's medical specialist.

### **b. Academic Program Planning.**

Scheduled classrooms outfitted with synchronous in-person / online / distance and video capture capabilities.

Significantly limited capacity for in-person instruction (total seating at 25% of typical capacity, given current social distancing protocols.

Utilize technology and distance learning in hybrid/blended designs using asynchronous and synchronous modalities to maximize the in-person/classroom based instructions within social distancing protocols.

#### **i. Classroom Population Density.**

Modified in-person instruction for the start of the Fall 2020 semester.

The entirety of UB's classroom and potential classroom space has been inventoried and assessed pursuant to physical distancing guidelines.

#### **ii. Instructional and Research Laboratory Protocols.**

UB is putting into place a clear set of guidelines and protocols for health and safety for the entire university community that describes implementation and compliance requirements.

**Instructional Protocols.** The amount of in-person instruction possible during the Fall is determined by classroom availability given the need for 6 feet of physical distancing, masks, PPE, and other health considerations.

Access to classrooms will be determined by critical curricular goals (labs, clinical experiential learning, classes involving in-person, practical, performance, and research experiences, etc.) and university goals (research requiring in-person components, such as graduate courses, and courses that contribute to retention and student experience, such as first year seminars and small group instruction).

Particular courses that will be taught in-person, partially in-person, or fully remote will be determined through a distributed decision-making approach in which central administration sets guidelines and parameters, and academic units determine, within those guidelines, instructional modality and how they utilize spaces in which courses are scheduled.

Additional recommendations for Fall 2020 include:

- Ensuring best practices and training in educational technology for faculty and TAs;
- Reviewing academic policy to align with modified in-person instruction;
- Reviewing curriculum to ensure compliance with curricular requirements (university, SUNY, SED, and accrediting/licensing agencies),
- Planning for academic support including measures to maintain academic integrity and supporting students' access to appropriate technology in a modified in-person environment; and
- Upgrading classrooms as needed to ensure the ability to deliver synchronous online instruction.

**Research Protocols.** We are implementing a multi-staged approach to Research Ramp-up<sup>1</sup> on campus.

Labs and facilities will resume in-person activities at a lower capacity and following social distancing protocols, but continue to require that work, which can be done remotely, continue to be done remotely.

PIs have been given planning and guiding documents to assist them in completing their own Laboratory Operations Plans for the approval of their Department Chair and Associate Dean for Research.

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<sup>1</sup> Research Protocols have previously been submitted to the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research.

**c. Restarting On-Campus Operations.**

UB is innovating every part of the UB student experience to provide students the best and safest possible living learning environment.

We are preparing our campus operations to provide a healthy and safe learning environment for our University community.

We are putting in place new policies and practices that include social distancing; limiting the number of people in offices, classrooms, residence halls, and labs; stringent sanitation measures; the use of face coverings and other personal protective equipment, and other public health requirements and guidelines.

**i. Residence Halls.**

As we plan for a return to campus, the US Centers for Disease Control's Considerations for Institutions of Higher Education inform our work.

Our housing remains open and we have increased disinfection of public areas and added new physical distancing protocols across housing and dining. These protocols will continue.

Safety precautions for the residence halls will be informed by evidence-based, public health protocols for the control of infectious disease, considering issues such as density of the student population, restroom/shower facilities, cleaning protocols, ventilation, etc.

We will schedule appointments for early check-in for individual move-in dates and times to help achieve physical distancing.

Students who test positive for the virus or who have been exposed to the virus will be accommodated in separate housing preserved for these situations.

**ii. Dining Services**

Campus Dining and Services (CDS) employees will receive temperature checks upon arrival and health survey to confirm they are free of symptoms. Hand washing and glove usage procedures and new disinfection guidelines will be implemented. Face coverings for employees will be required. CDS will implement and enforce protocol for employees.

On-campus dining services will be open to students, faculty, and staff.

Seating in dining halls will be reduced to promote physical distancing, and we will expand to-go offerings.

Also, mobile food ordering and touchless pay options will be offered throughout campus to limit density at counters and contact during transactions.

**iii. Personal Protective Equipment.**

UB has established processes to centrally procure all PPE and sanitation products and distribution of such products.

**iv. Screening, Testing and Tracing.**

UB's planning structure includes a Screening, Testing and Contact Tracing Protocol Committee Campus Planning Committee. Dr. Michael Cain, Vice President for Health Sciences and Dean of the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences is leading this committee.

UB's screening, testing and tracing protocols will be based on evidence-based methods which includes screening and tracing and testing for symptomatic individual and those who have been in contact with individuals who have tested positive.

**v. Custodial Services**

UB is aggressively monitoring cleaning protocols to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread. All units are using CDC-recommended disinfecting products. Below are some of the precautions currently in place.

University Facilities staff has undergone specialized CDC-recommended training in sanitization and proper bio-safety procedures to implement UB's enhanced cleaning protocols. We use disinfecting cleansers certified by the EPA and CDC for the destruction of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19).

Commonly used surfaces are disinfected daily, including (but not limited to):

- Doors (doorknobs, handles, opening bars and activators)
- Restrooms (toilet seats, flush mechanisms, handrails, stall locks, faucet activators, paper towel dispensers and soap dispensers)
- Copy machines
- Handrails
- Elevator buttons
- Light switches and push plates
- Water fountains
- Tables, desks and furniture

Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed campus-wide, near all restrooms and drinking fountains and other high-traffic areas. Soap dispensers and hand sanitizing units are checked and refilled often, and upon request.

**vi. Student Health Services**

Student Health Services has adjusted their processes in order to reduce exposure and ensure availability to those that will need us most by:

- Moving to appointments only - no walk in clinic
- Temporarily eliminating well-visits and other non-urgent appointments
- Phone support/secure messaging support

**d. Campus and Local Communities**

i. Vision for Town Gown interactions.

Town Gown interactions have continued albeit in almost entirely in a virtual mode.

UB actively continues to work with community leadership, neighborhood groups, members of the WNY state delegation, NYS federal delegation, and City of Buffalo Common Council, and Erie County Executive.

ii. Transportation, Mail and General Delivery Services

- UB Stampede buses and UB shuttles are disinfected twice daily.
- Individual drivers are disinfecting throughout the day.
- Drivers and passengers are required to wear face coverings.
- Capacity on buses and shuttles will be at 50%.
- Each unit has a designated mail and delivery drop off location.
- Drop off locations are disinfected after each delivery and at the start and end of each shift.
- Delivery personnel are required to wear face coverings and to practice social distancing when possible.

## **2. Tracing and Monitoring After Re-Opening**

UB's planning structure includes a Screening, Testing and Contact Tracing Protocol Committee Campus Planning Committee. Dr. Michael Cain, Vice President for Health Sciences and Dean of the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biological Sciences is leading this committee.

UB's screening, testing and tracing protocols will be based on evidence-based methods which includes screening and tracing and testing for symptomatic individual and those who have been in contact with individuals who have tested positive.

## **3. Communication and Outreach Plan**

UB has a comprehensive Communication plan with the goal to instill confidence in and build understanding of UB's plans for the fall semester. To accomplish this goal, UB is employing a highly coordinated multi-channel communications approach across the university.

The communications plan will be implemented under the theme, "*UB Forward: The university's plans in response to COVID-19,*" and will be executed in three stages:

Stage 1: Planning and Coordination – June 1 through mid-June; providing updates on UB's planning process and progress; preparation of messaging and content with internal partners.

Stage 2: Announcing UB's Decision for the New Academic Year – end of June through early July; implementing a carefully coordinated announcement of UB's plan for the new academic year, providing concise, actionable information to stakeholders with an emphasis on academic excellence and health and safety.

Stage 3: Preparing Key Stakeholders for the Fall Semester – July through fall semester; weekly updates on UB preparations and plans, directing stakeholders to authoritative information, and providing additional direction on academic planning and health and safety measures.

## **4. Resources Required to Re-Open.**

The university must make significant investments in IT and associated personnel to ensure the university has the capacity to move into this "modified in-person" setting. This includes enhancing the current range of synchronous and asynchronous technologies as well as expand training services to better equip faculty and instructors for quality teaching.

To deliver modified in-person and flexible instructional delivery scenario, UB will need to:

- fully-outfit 50+ central classrooms for hybrid/hyflex instruction.
- create 100 portable “webcam” systems.
- design/assembly of 50 mobile carts for optimal on-line/in-person instructional capabilities.

In addition, UB will need to invest in screening and contact tracing protocols.

## **5. Time Required for Re-Starting On-Campus Operations. June 2020**

Planning and preparations are underway.

In order for our students and faculty to plan for the Fall 2020 semester, the university needs to be able to communicate in early June the university plans for the semester.





## **Appendix:**

### **Checklist for Re-Opening**

#### **1. Repopulation of the Campus:**

- ✓ **Capacity to maintain social distancing (students, faculty and staff).**
  - Modified in-person instruction for the start of the Fall 2020 semester.
  - Significantly limited capacity for in-person instruction (total seating at 25% of typical capacity, given current social distancing protocols).
  - Utilize technology and distance learning in hybrid/blended designs using asynchronous and synchronous modalities to maximize the in-person/classroom based instructions within social distancing protocols.
  - Return-to-work plans follow a set of best-practice health guidelines.
  - Workplace density at 50% to decrease campus density.
  - Focus on maintaining social distancing in our work spaces and we will require all employees to wear face coverings where social distancing standards cannot be met.
  - Repeated refusal to follow these standards by faculty or staff will be referred to UB Human Resources.
  - Supplies of disinfectant wipes will be distributed to each unit as employees return to work.
  - Occupancy of all quad and triple residential rooms will be reduced to double occupancy to reduce housing density.
  - Additional residential rooms will be set aside and designated as quarantine/isolation space.

✓ **PPE**

- Access for all faculty and staff to PPE and hand sanitizing products as recommended by the CDC will be provided. Supplies of disinfectant wipes will be distributed to each unit as employees return to work.
- Environmental Health & Safety will coordinate and distribute reusable face coverings and individual area cleaning/disinfectant materials for all campus work areas.
- Clear and consistent guidelines and recommended practices regarding PPE will be provided to all faculty and staff to enhance their safety.
- Faculty will be encouraged to add statements in their syllabi regarding classroom norms for social distancing and PPE.
- Residential students will receive reusable masks in their dorm room or welcome packet while commuters will pick them up at central drop-off locations.
- Face masks are required when unable to maintain 6 ft. of social distancing.

✓ **Travel Advisory and Restrictions**

- States under Travel Advisory
  - Students, faculty, staff and visitors arriving in New York State from [designated states that have significant community spread of COVID-19](#) will be required to quarantine for 14 days before coming onto campus. This requirement does not apply to any individual passing through designated states for a limited duration (i.e., less than 24 hours) through the course of travel.
  - All travelers to New York State must submit the following form <https://forms.ny.gov/s3/Welcome-to-New-York-State-Traveler-Health-Form> to determine whether a 14-day precautionary quarantine is required.
    - Students will submit only the signature page of their online health form to the UB Office of Student Affairs.
  - For residential students who may need to come to campus early to quarantine, UB Campus Living will house those residential students in an on-campus residence.
  - Non-residential students will be required to quarantine at home or at their off-campus housing.

- Incoming students will need to attest through UB Hub that they have met these quarantine requirements.
  
- International Travel
  - For any person arriving from overseas, the university will follow guidance from the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control](#) which requires quarantine for 14 days before coming onto campus.
  
  - International students should also submit the online health form <https://forms.ny.gov/s3/Welcome-to-New-York-State-Traveler-Health-Form>
    - Students will submit only the signature page of their online health form to the UB Office of Student Affairs.
  
  - For residential international students who may need to come to campus early to quarantine, UB Campus Living will house those residential students in an on-campus residence.
  
  - Non-residential international students will be required to quarantine at their off-campus housing.
  
  - Incoming students will need to attest through UB Hub that they have met these quarantine requirements.

### ✓ **Screening and Testing**

- Daily screenings asking students and employees to attest to their health status each day through use of LifeLink, Inc. technology.
  
- Testing for symptomatic individuals and those who have been in contact with individuals who have tested positive.
  
- Residential rooms will be set aside and designated as quarantine/isolation space for students who have tested positive.
  
- Will follow Erie County Department of Health and NYS Department of Health guidelines when employees test positive. Includes contact tracing, isolation of those who have been exposed and thorough cleaning of areas in which the individual who tested positive came in contact.
  
- Campus Dining employees will receive temperature checks upon arrival and health survey to confirm they are free of symptoms. Hand washing and glove usage procedures

and new disinfection guidelines will be implemented. Face coverings for employees required.

✓ **Residential living.**

- Residence hall move-in period will be extended to take place over 8 days. Recommendation maximizes social distancing at check-in sites and at campus support services frequented by students and their families.
- Schedule appointments for early check-in for individual move-in dates and times to achieve physical distancing.
- Residential students will receive reusable masks in their dorm room or welcome packet while commuters will pick them up at central drop-off.
- Implementing staggered mealtimes or allowing for reserved seating.
- Increased disinfection of public areas and added new physical distancing protocols across housing and dining.
- Safety precautions for the residence halls will be informed by evidence-based, public health protocols for the control of infectious disease, considering issues such as density of the student population, restroom/shower facilities, cleaning protocols, ventilation, etc.
- Students who test positive for the virus or who have been exposed to the virus will be accommodated in separate housing preserved for these situations.
- Face masks are required when unable to maintain 6 ft. of social distancing.
- Behavioral standards will be consistently communicated to all groups including students, faculty, staff, and guests. This information should be communicated in a number of ways to ensure that the messaging is reinforced (e.g. physical signage, course syllabi, email and other mass communications, etc.).
- Repeated refusal to follow these standards by students will be subject to the conduct process and referred to **Student Conduct and Advocacy**.

✓ **Operational Activity**

- Social distancing of six feet will be required throughout public and classroom spaces.
- For classrooms, two or more points of entry preferred to promote distancing while entering and exiting the room.
- Rooms should be equipped with synchronous technology wherever possible.

- Registrar will fully book all available classrooms between 8 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. to maximize in-person instruction.
- Schedule 20 minutes between classes to allow one class to exit before the next class arrives.
- All centrally scheduled classes must be on standard time.
- Hold classes on Labor Day (observe Labor Day for non-instructional faculty and staff).
- End in-person instruction for most classes before Thanksgiving, with the final week of classes and exams conducted via remote learning.

✓ **Restart Operations**

- Flushing out of plumbing systems (toilets, facets, drinking fountains)
- Temperature of unoccupied buildings will be adjusted for seasonal temperatures.
- Commonly used surfaces are disinfected daily, including (but not limited to):
  - Doors (doorknobs, handles, opening bars and activators)
  - Restrooms (toilet seats, flush mechanisms, handrails, stall locks, faucet activators, paper towel dispensers and soap dispensers)
  - Copy machines
  - Handrails
  - Elevator buttons
  - Light switches and push plates
  - Water fountains
  - Tables, desks and furniture
- Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed campus-wide, near all restrooms and drinking fountains and other high-traffic areas.
- Soap dispensers and hand sanitizing units are checked and refilled often, and upon request.

✓ **Extracurricular activities including intramurals and student performances**

- For all extracurricular activities, social distancing requirements will be in effect including, as appropriate, the use of face masks.
- For intramurals and student performances, disinfecting shared equipment will be required.
- Events be limited to 30% of the capacity of the room or venue to ensure appropriate social distancing.
- The frequency of student sponsored programming will be limited to reduce density and overlap.
- All student programming will be expected to comply with the limitations on room capacity and large gatherings.

✓ **Vulnerable populations**

- For any individual that identifies the need for UB to address a specific medical issue, UB will utilize the ADA regulations to accommodate a request with appropriate medical documentation.
- For individuals who share concerns based on their own level of comfort to return to work on campus, we will have multiple conversations to address specific issues and situations. This “continuum of comfort” for an individual about returning to campus is best addressed by providing information and education regarding what is the compliance expected by all within the campus community, how we can best describe what to expect on a daily basis to lower risk for all, and working to address “things that people have heard” from all multiple outside sources. It also entails discussing the specific work needs/requirements and how they can be met.
- UB is determining and will clearly communicate curricular options and possibilities for students who are unable to come to campus.

✓ **Hygiene, cleaning and disinfection**

- UB is aggressively monitoring cleaning protocols to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread. All units are using CDC-recommended disinfecting products.
- University Facilities staff has undergone specialized CDC-recommended training in sanitization and proper bio-safety procedures to implement UB’s enhanced cleaning protocols. We use disinfecting cleansers certified by the EPA and CDC for the destruction of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19).

- Commonly used surfaces are disinfected daily, including (but not limited to):
  - Doors (doorknobs, handles, opening bars and activators)
  - Restrooms (toilet seats, flush mechanisms, handrails, stall locks, faucet activators, paper towel dispensers and soap dispensers)
  - Copy machines
  - Handrails
  - Elevator buttons
  - Light switches and push plates
  - Water fountains
  - Tables, desks and furniture
- Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed campus-wide, near all restrooms and drinking fountains and other high-traffic areas.
- Soap dispensers and hand sanitizing units are checked and refilled often, and upon request.
- In addition to the food safety standards continuously practiced by Campus Dining & Shops (CDS), staff have increased the frequency of wipe-downs in all guest areas including:
  - Seating
  - Service areas including counters and self-service spaces such as beverage, condiment and dish areas
  - Doors in the unit
- Sneeze guards and hand sanitizer units are in use at all campus dining locations.
- UB Stampede buses and UB shuttles are disinfected twice daily. Individual drivers are disinfecting throughout the day.

## **2. Monitoring**

### **✓ Testing responsibility**

- Testing will occur for symptomatic individuals and those who have been in contact with individuals who have tested positive.

✓ **Testing frequency and protocols**

- UB will utilize LifeLink, Inc. – a chatbox technology – for screening of faculty, staff and students. Will also be utilized to monitor early warning signs of an outbreak. “Bots” enable information exchange in a conversational format, like text messages.
- Daily screenings asking students and employees to attest to their health status each day through use of LifeLink, Inc. technology.
- Testing for symptomatic individuals and those who have been in contact with individuals who have tested positive.

✓ **Early Warning Signs**

- UB will utilize LifeLink, Inc. – a chatbox technology – for screening of faculty, staff and students. Will also be utilized to monitor early warning signs of an outbreak. “Bots” enable information exchange in a conversational format, like text messages.
- UB will follow all reporting guidance from the Erie County Health Department.

✓ **Tracing**

- Contact tracing is coordinated and conducted under the guidance of the Erie County Health Department.

✓ **Screening**

- UB will utilize LifeLink, Inc. – a chatbox technology – for screening of faculty, staff and students. Will also be utilized to monitor early warning signs of an outbreak. “Bots” enable information exchange in a conversational format, like text messages.

**3. Containment**

✓ **Isolation**

- Students who test positive for the virus or who have been exposed to the virus will be accommodated in separate housing preserved for these situations. Students who can return home will be encouraged to safely do so.
- Employees who test positive for the virus will reside at home during isolation.



✓ **Quarantine**

- Students who test positive for the virus or who have been exposed to the virus will be accommodated in separate housing preserved for these situations.
- Students will have access to telehealth (including physical health monitoring and mental health monitoring)
- Student health services will check in daily with students to determine health status and will make appropriate health care accommodations based on those determinations.
- Residential life staff will check in with individual students to determine whether the student has academic, health and safety, and other wellness needs.
- Students will order meals online and meals will be delivered contact free.
- Daily trash removal, and laundry and maintenance services will be provided for students.

✓ **Students confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19**

- Residential students who are awaiting test results will self-isolate at home.
- If students are not able to return home, they will be isolated in a residential room with private bathroom.
  - Residential life staff will check in with individual students to determine whether the student has academic, health and safety, and other wellness needs.
  - Students will order meals online and meals will be delivered contact free.
  - Students will have access to telehealth (including physical health monitoring and mental health monitoring)
  - Student health services will check in daily with students to determine health status and will make appropriate health care accommodations based on those determinations.
  - Daily trash removal, and laundry and maintenance services will be provided for students.

✓ **Hygiene, cleaning and disinfection**

- University Facilities staff has undergone specialized CDC-recommended training in sanitization and proper bio-safety procedures to implement UB's enhanced cleaning protocols.

- Exposed areas are cleaned and disinfected using CDC-recommended sanitization and proper bio-safety procedures.
- Exposed areas will be cleaned with disinfecting cleansers certified by the EPA and CDC for the destruction of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19).

#### ✓ **Communication**

- University communications has developed a comprehensive communication strategy for all COVID-19 related information, UB Safe Campus Campaign
  - Regular updates for stakeholders via “UB Forward,” leadership emails and web postings
  - Health and safety videos produced for Safe Campus webpages and COVID-19 website
  - Creation and posting of signage
  - Regular coverage of planning and implementation in UB Now
  - Updates to stakeholders via social media
  - Periodic briefings and interviews to local media
  - Town Hall Safe Campus updates from Facilities/Environment Health and Safety
- Please refer to UB’s comprehensive website:  
<https://www.buffalo.edu/coronavirus/dashboard.html>

#### **4. Return to remote operations**

##### ✓ **Operational Activity**

- For employees: return to essential employees only (using same guidance from Spring 2020 semester)
- For courses: for Fall 2020 semester, most courses have been designed to accommodate both synchronous and asynchronous formats so a return to remote learning will (although not ideal) can be accommodated.
- Courses and programs with accreditation or licensing requirements that include in-person format will be accommodated based on best practices utilized in the Spring 2020 semester.

✓ **Move-Out**

- Students will be assigned a date and time to move out of their residential hall.
- To stay in on-campus housing, students must meet one of four criteria:
  - University housing is their primary residence (most international students).
  - Safe living and dining arrangements cannot otherwise be made.
  - Students will have limited or no access to technology if not on campus.
  - Students who have in-person academic requirements.

✓ **Communication**

- University Communications will provide regular updates for the campus community through:
  - Web postings
  - Regular coverage of planning and implementation in UB Now
  - Updates to stakeholders via social media
  - Periodic briefings and interviews to local media