



Students,

With a successful spring semester behind us and the summer sessions beginning, it is time for us to look forward to a vibrant fall on campus!

I am writing today to share an update about Fall 2021 and the college's intentions to move back toward traditional campus operations this fall. The college continues to review and update our health and safety protocols, and has developed guidance for this summer and fall.

As a result of a strong community-wide commitment to the Lynx Promise and the health and safety protocols this spring, we had a low positivity rate through most of the spring. We feel confident about our ability to have a robust campus experience this fall. While our campus commitment to masking and distancing guided our success in spring, it will be our campus commitment to campus-wide vaccinations that helps us achieve a successful fall semester. A campus-wide commitment to vaccination will mean that we can move towards full capacity and reduced masking allowing for the intentional in-person campus life experience that we all love about Rhodes.

As you live, work, or visit campus this summer and plan for your fall return, please take action now to be fully vaccinated before returning to campus and keep these updated policies in mind:

Fall Vaccine Policy

Aligned with our long-standing practice and policy requiring health forms and vaccinations, the college fully intends to require the COVID-19 vaccination immediately upon FDA approval. This will be required for students, faculty, staff, vendors, and campus partners. It is anticipated that FDA approval may be authorized this summer.

In anticipation of FDA approval, we are strongly recommending all students be vaccinated this summer in order to not prevent or delay your return to campus in August. Immediately following FDA approval, students will be required to be vaccinated to access campus. Upon returning to campus non-vaccinated students will be charged a \$1500 per semester Health & Safety fee to cover the costs of mandatory testing as outlined below.

The college recognizes that international students may not have access to vaccinations prior to returning. International students may document their intent to be vaccinated upon arrival to campus via email to the Director of International Programs, Dr. Erin Hillis, at hillise@rhodes.edu, which will serve to waive the Health & Safety fee.

Until FDA approval, the college is not requiring, but strongly recommending full vaccination for any individual who comes to campus. Additionally, Flu vaccines will continue to be required this fall.

All students should submit their vaccination cards by August 1, 2021 via [Medicat](#) to prevent delays in returning to campus. Questions or concerns about how to upload documents should be directed to Director of Health Services, Adora Browne at health-forms@rhodes.edu.

Medical or religious vaccine exemption requests may be submitted for review to Student Accessibility Services. The recommended deadline for priority review of vaccine exemptions is August 2, 2021. Students should contact Director of Student Accessibility Services Director, Melissa Butler, directly at butterm@rhodes.edu regarding exemptions.

Fall Testing Protocol

Vaccinated students will not be required to participate in return to campus or regular asymptomatic testing. Out of an abundance of caution, and in alignment with medical advice, vaccinated students will be required to be tested at the college's COVID-19 Clinic in the event they become symptomatic. Non-vaccinated individuals will be subjected to initial and regular testing upon return to campus.

Masking

This summer, in accordance with the CDC, the college will not require masks for individuals who are vaccinated. Non-vaccinated individuals must remain masked indoors and socially distanced outdoors. Any individual who prefers to be masked is welcome to do so.

In alignment with the tradition and history of the Rhodes Honor Code and the Lynx Promise, which commits each of us to honesty on all matters, I have no doubt that each of us will be honest regarding our vaccination status and mask in accordance with the campus policy.

The college may require masking dependent on event size. College-wide masking protocols will be reviewed at the end of July for the Fall 2021 term.

Fall Move-In and Welcome Week

The college intends to return to more traditional Move-In Day and Welcome Week schedules and activities, and more information will be shared throughout the summer. For planning purposes, we wanted to share that each student will be permitted two guests to assist them with move-in. Students and guests should be completely vaccinated prior to move-in day.

Return to Campus for Non-vaccinated Domestic Students

In order to return to campus, non-vaccinated students will be required to:

- Complete a COVID-19 PCR test at their own expense and through their own health care provider 14 days prior to returning to campus and submit their results via [Medicat](#).
- Isolate at home or another determined location for 10 days before returning to campus.
- Complete initial asymptomatic testing on campus on move-in day or for non-residential students Friday, August 20th. This will be covered by the Health & Safety Fee. Students will be required to quarantine in place until they receive their test results and are cleared to participate in campus activities.
- Complete weekly testing as required by the college.
- Depending on campus positivity rates, non-vaccinated students may not be permitted to participate in certain campus events and activities including Athletics, clubs and intramurals, and student organizations.

Return to Campus for Non-vaccinated International Students

In order to return to campus, non-vaccinated international students will be required to:

- Complete a COVID-19 PCR test at their own expense and through their own health care provider 14 days prior to returning to campus and submit their results via [Medicat](#). In the event that testing is not possible, students should share that with International Programs before travelling.
- Complete initial asymptomatic testing on campus on move-in day or for non-residential students Friday, August 20th. Students will be required to quarantine in place until they receive their test results and are cleared to participate in campus activities.
- Complete weekly testing as required by the college until fully vaccinated.
- Depending on campus positivity rates, non-vaccinated students may not be permitted to participate in certain campus events and activities including Athletics, clubs and intramurals, and student organizations.

Beyond COVID-19

We also realize that keeping our community healthy and safe involves much more than COVID-19 related commitments and protocols. Some of you may have concerns about how recent Tennessee legislation affects the ability of you or your trans peers to live openly and be welcomed on campus. Rhodes is committed to providing a community of belonging for our trans and other LGBTQ members and our policies will not change as a result of these laws.

Rhodes community members have the right to use restrooms that correspond with their sex, gender identity, and/or gender expression without being questioned by others about their restroom choices.

Additionally, the college has committed to providing gender-neutral restrooms on campus for those who wish to use them. The College's gender-neutral restrooms can be found on [this map](#). I encourage anyone with other questions or concerns to reach out to our Student Life team at studentlife@rhodes.edu. Chaplain Beatrix (weilb@rhodes.edu) and the Student Counseling Center (counseling@rhodes.edu) are also available as resources.

As the fall nears, I will be in touch at least once in July and then again in August as you prepare to return to campus. From there you can expect to hear from me weekly as you did this spring. I will share information and guidance concerning on-campus events and other fall operations. You can also find updated information on our [COVID-19 information website](#). If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to our Student Life team at studentlife@rhodes.edu.

In the meantime, I hope you are enjoying your summer. I know many of you are engaged in internships, fellowships, summer research, and other academic and experiential endeavors. I hope you find time to rest, relax, and rejuvenate this summer.

Be well,

-mhw

Meghan Harte Weyant, Ph.D.

Vice President for Student Life

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