



RE:UNION

Excellence, Reimagined.

Virginia Union University Fall 2021 Opening Plan

<https://www.vuu.edu/vuu-reopening>

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VIRGINIA UNION
UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Greetings,

I look forward to welcoming you to our Fall 2021 semester. Students who have been approved for campus-based learning (CBL) will be scheduled to move into residence halls during July, August, and September. Whether you are virtual- or campus-based, you will witness more upgrades in technology, safety, and the way we conduct business.

Thank you so much for being so diligent in following the safety and wellness plans outlined in our *ReUnion: Relentless Pursuit of Excellence* reopening plan. Critical planning, along with your support, helped us to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus to under 4% on campus. This is an accomplishment when compared to other colleges and universities. However, we want to do better and work towards fewer exposures and/or positive cases. VUU's Executive Leadership and Tactical Response Team have continued to assess the COVID-19 status and guidance from the Virginia Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Fall semester will include improvements to the policies and procedures, increasing all campus-based students' and employees' safety and well-being.

I hope you will take the time to read and understand the Fall 2021 *ReUnion: Relentless Pursuit of Excellence* plan. Congratulations on your attention to academic success while learning to embrace a new way of learning, social distancing, and new policies and procedures. I also want to thank our remarkable faculty and staff for your work to support students and our new online business and administrative protocols. Virginia Union University is stronger and better than ever. We are on our journey to being recognized as a Best-in-Class University.

Sincerely,

Hakim J. Lucas, Ph.D.
President & CEO

OVERVIEW

As we move into the Fall of 2021, the University has developed criteria to enforce to provide a safe and secure campus. We are guided by mandates issued by the Governor's Office and recommendations outlined in the American College Health Association (ACHA) Guidelines: Considerations for Reopening Institutions of Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era (ACHA Guidelines). In addition, the revised plan coincides with recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). Virginia Union University reserves the right to be more strenuous than other mandates, as we have increased the requirements of our plan to ensure the health and safety of our community. Virginia Union University (VUU) monitors its campus daily and provides updates via website and email through our daily wellness check.

Given the history of the virus' transmission, we state up front that our plan to repopulate the campus is intentionally fluid. This enables our capacity to employ, intervene, and prevent measures to maintain our campus community's safety and wellness. ***The University does reserve the right to implement additional protocols for students and employees.***

Guiding Principles

The following principles guide our plan for the reopening of on-campus activities

1. Preserve the health, safety, and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff.
2. Maintain and deliver our Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU) mission through teaching, research, and civic/community engagement.
3. Enable students to make meaningful progress towards their educational goals.
4. Protect and maintain university operations necessary to support strategic priorities.
5. Streamline processes and procedures to ensure operational efficiency; and
6. To grow a new university that is relevant and responsive to the current context

The approach is not time-bound but flexible and based on the climate and condition of areas contiguous to the campus, including the City of Richmond, Commonwealth of Virginia, and broader national trends.

Expectations and Guidelines

All members of the VUU community are expected to fully comply with all policies, protocols, procedures, and guidelines outlined in this document and elsewhere. Failure to adhere to all required policies, protocols, procedures, and guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to termination, dismissal and/or loss of privileges, including access to campus buildings and resources. As per the ACHA guidelines, "meticulous adherence to public health practices including hand hygiene, physical distancing, proper cough/sneeze etiquette, frequent disinfection of common and high traffic areas, symptom assessment, temperature checks, and face-covering in public is the campus' new normal." Many of the strategies, processes, and procedures outlined in this document require each community member's full cooperation, as we are responsible for our own safety and the safety of those around us.

Phase I

- Strict physical and social distancing measures
- Campus-based classroom maximum 12:1
- Occupancy will be set at 60% of its capacity throughout campus
- Mass gatherings are limited to 150 or fewer individuals. Anything larger must have the approval of the Chief Operations Officer (COO) or his/her designee
- Individuals are required to wear face masks when in public
- Offices and service areas are restricted to virtual and appointments
- Employees will work remotely and on campus
- All campus-based employees and students are required to show proof of the vaccination
- The campus community will be required to undergo screening, testing, and tracing
- Individuals who test positive or awaiting results must isolate
- Those who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, test positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 must quarantine for 10 days

Phase II

- Modify social distancing restrictions according to CDC guidelines
- Occupancy will be set at 75% of the space capacity
- Mass gatherings are limited to 250 or fewer individuals. Anything larger must have the approval of the COO or his/her designee
- Individuals are required to wear face masks indoors and at large gatherings
- Offices and service areas are restricted to virtual, appointments, and limited walk-ins
- High-risk or vulnerable individuals will have limitations and guidance
- Most employees will work on campus, only those with approval will be allowed to work remotely
- All campus-based employees and students are required to show proof of the vaccination
- The campus community will be required to undergo screening, testing, and tracing
- Individuals who test positive or awaiting results must isolate
- Those who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, test positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 must quarantine for days

Phase III

- Activities return to "new normal"
- No ban on any activities is in place, but some restrictions may be imposed on a case-by-case basis
- Large gatherings allowed on a case-by-case basis, depending on specific public health risk and containment activities

Reopening Criteria

- All campus-based employees and students attending classes on campus and contractors are required to be vaccinated. Please refer to the [VUU Vaccination Policy](#) for details.
- All campus-based employees and students (residential and commuter) will be randomly selected to be tested for COVID 19.
- Physical and social distancing measures will be adhered to throughout the campus.
- Occupancy will be set at a capacity based on the phase of the plan.
- Facemask mandate is in place, see phase of plan for details.
- Residence halls are closed to nonresidential students.
- On-campus residential visitation is allowed for upper class students.
- First-time freshmen have a midnight curfew and are not allowed visitation.
- The main entrance gate off Graham Road will be the only gate used to access entry and exit to campus until further notice.
- Anyone who enters campus by foot must go directly to the security booth for an ID check and health screening.
- Visitors who wish to access the campus must be vetted and approved before entering the campus through the appointment approval process. [Appointment Request](#)
- All events and space needs shall be directed through the Division of Business Affairs, Director of Special Events, Sales, and Space Management to ensure proper approvals.
- Non-business visitors are prohibited, and work-related visitation will be limited.
- All approved visitors and those with appointments are to exit campus when the appointment and business are completed. Making unauthorized visits to other individuals or areas on campus is prohibited.
- All employees and students must carry their VUU ID cards to access campus.
- A valid [VUU Parking Decal](#) will be required for entry.
- Rideshare, food, and gift deliveries will not be allowed to drive through the campus. A designated area is located near the Security Booth for delivery drop-off. At no time will items (food deliveries, gifts, or donations) be left at the security booth.

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Communication

All campus-based students and employees and contractors, and consultants who work more than two days per week or visit campus more than six times within a month will be required to adhere to the guidelines and policies. This would include submitting proof of vaccination through an electronic form, random testing, and completing a daily wellness check. Each community member is expected to check emails, website, and other means of communication for updates. A Daily Alert Email will be sent to all campus community members; this daily alert serves as the University's dashboard. The goal is to update the community on the status of the University's climate, which includes COVID 19 status, campus phase, and any other pertinent guidance. Information on changes regarding the health and wellness of the larger community, which consists of the activation of our Emergency Response Plan, will be included as well. This communication will be sent by the Chief of Police/Director of Public Safety.

Daily Wellness Checks

The following VUU affiliates are required to complete the Daily Wellness Check:

- All campus-based employees;
- All students residing on campus, participating in on-campus events including but not limited to in person classes, athletics, and group activities; and
- Contractors and consultants who work more than two days per week or visit campus more than six times within a month.

Anyone who answers YES to any screening questions must alert the appropriate entity on campus for further guidance. All VUU faculty and staff members should contact the Virginia Union University Office of Human Resources and Talent Management (HRTM) at (804) 257-5841 or email AskHR@vuu.edu. In addition, Student Affairs (SA) and HRTM will also contact all those who answer yes to any questions. All VUU employees and students, please contact Health Services, also known as Capital Area Health Network (CAHN) via telehealth at (804) 780-0840. Home test kits are not valid.

Preparing for When Someone is Symptomatic or Potentially Ill

- Follow [CDC Guidance](#) for caring for oneself and others who are sick.
- Employees will be required to quarantine/isolate at home.
- Immediately separate faculty, staff, and students with COVID-19 symptoms (such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath).
- Provide quarantine/isolation facilities for campus-based students.
- Maintain a sufficient number of isolation spaces in readiness according to demand.
- Quarantine suites used by an ill or potentially ill person will remain closed off until complete cleaning and disinfecting.
- Any areas previously utilized by sick persons will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected upon notification.
- Clean and disinfect suite area no sooner than 24-hours after being vacated by an ill or potentially ill person with FDA approved disinfectant.

Vaccination Process

After a person takes the vaccination the person has to wait 14 days after the completion of the vaccination process before entering campus. International students will have to quarantine, test, get vaccinated and quarantine before entering the campus.

Positive COVID-19 Process and Protocol to Return to Campus

Anyone, regardless of vaccination status, who tests positive for COVID-19 MUST disclose through the daily wellness check or appropriate university entity directly:

- Employees must report to Human Resources and Talent Management.
- Students must report to Student Affairs.

A confirmed COVID-19 positive person must go into isolation and can return to the campus community when they have satisfied the following requirements:

- At least ten (10) calendar days have passed since positive;
- No symptoms are present (such as respiratory, temperature, cough, etc.); and
- Doctor's note.

*To ensure you are well, we require that you complete the daily wellness check and note you will still need to monitor yourself for symptoms.

A suspected COVID-19 case or close contact with a positive person must satisfy the following:

- Isolate for three (3) days before getting tested
- If negative test, you may report back to campus with a negative test result
- If positive, you must quarantine for ten (10) calendar days with no symptoms and retest; if negative, you can resume to campus with test results and doctor's note.

Please note, as per the CDC, fully vaccinated people that are identified as close contact are no longer required to quarantine. However, they must monitor symptoms and get tested on days 3 through 5 after their last exposure to a positive individual. Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html> for more information.

The University will manage all cases with the utmost anonymity, not revealing an employee's test results. HRTM will notify the manager/supervisor of the employee's leave. HRTM will follow up with the employee and supervisor about the ability to work remotely (if there are no symptoms) or need to leave (if they have symptoms).

Contact Tracing

- SA and HRTM will interview students and employees to determine who they have been in "close contact" (based on CDC guidelines) within the previous two weeks.
- SA or HRTM will notify everyone who was exposed at work or school without revealing the identity via telephone and email.
- SA or HRTM will contact the Virginia Department of Health (VDH Epidemiologist) and complete an online submission form.

- SA or HRTM will follow up with the individual one (1) day before the isolation end date to discuss a return to work or school date and process. Before ending isolation, students and employees should consult their doctor and/or CDC guidance.

Information Sharing/Record Keeping

All students and employees who undergo COVID-19 testing with university partners such as VDH, and LTS will be documented in accordance with HIPPA regulations. University partners must report all positive cases to the Virginia Department of Health. Any positive outcomes will include continued check-ins with patients for at least 10 days following positive tests. The LTS will contact patients with negative results. Any employee or student who submits documentation that may contain health information will be stored separately from the employee's personnel files.

Promoting Healthy Behaviors that Reduce Spread

Hygiene and Sanitization

Every member of our community is responsible for following good hygiene (i.e., covering mouth and nose properly, washing hands, cleansing personal items) and sanitization. Measures will be implemented that include making disinfecting supplies available for all employees and students through the housekeeping department in Living and Learning Center.

Social Distancing Protocol

Social distancing should be practiced in combination with other everyday preventive actions to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The following are tips from the CDC for practicing social distancing will be marketed and promoted weekly through all VUU communications channels <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

Physical Distancing Protocol

Members of our community are required fully vaccinated on campus are required to adhere to physical distancing (social distancing), according to the CDC. This would mean keeping a safe space between yourself and other people. To practice social or physical distancing, stay at least 6 feet (about two arms' length) from other people if you are indoor and outdoor spaces. Implementation of such efforts will occur in collaboration with various campus departments. In addition, enforcement of said policies will occur through the Division of Administrative Services and Business Solutions.

Clean and Disinfect

Housekeeping will continue a daily cleaning schedule (trash removal, floor cleaning, dusting, etc.) along with disinfecting and sanitizing efforts in each University building daily.

- Monday through Friday 5:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday & Sunday 7:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.
- All common spaces (restrooms, lobby, lounge, hallways, stairs, open office areas).
- Housekeeping Workers will perform Electrostatic Sanitization as needed.
- Housekeeping will provide disinfecting wipes and/or disinfecting spray and cloths in the Living and Learning Center (based on appropriate stage) for individuals to utilize for the disinfecting effort.

WORK CULTURE

The Department of HRTM is dedicated to VUU employees and providing timely information to ensure that safety is critical. All members of our community must adhere to the protocols and guidance. The safety of our community must be everyone's priority. The following outlines the precautions and procedures we will implement and follow as part of our collective effort to repopulate campus and protect personnel. Some employees may be unable to return to campus for a variety of reasons; contact Human Resources and Talent Management at (804) 257-5841 to discuss further. All campus-based students, employees, contractors, and consultants are required to submit proof of vaccination through an electronic form. All campus-based employees or students are subject to random testing.

THE ACADEMY

All campus-based students, employees, contractors, and consultants are required to submit proof of vaccination through an electronic form. All campus-based employees or students are subject to random testing. VUU's academic calendar will consist of virtual-based learning (VBL) and campus-based learning (CBL). To facilitate informed decision-making and comprehension of the newly formatted [academic calendar](#), faculty advisors have intensified their efforts by encouraging the use of the VBL platform for all students while reserving opportunities for face/face instruction to those students who require it. Academic advisement is ongoing and is complemented by a full schedule of course options on our website.

Method of Instruction

Courses across all disciplines and levels (undergraduate/graduate) are offered in a CBL, VBL, and synchronous model. Synchronous learning requires a student to sign-in to the class on the day and during the time of the class. Asynchronous learning allows a student to learn on their own pace following the instructor's deadlines. Supplemental instruction will be offered asynchronously via VBL.

VBL courses will transition to CBL based on the academic calendar; learning supports will be available for all students. Routine and rapid disinfecting will occur between classes and will be conducted by students and led by the course instructor. The L. Douglas Wilder Library and Learning Resource Center will provide virtual-based services and face-to-face services as needed.

Library Hours from August 23, 2021 - December 18, 2021			
Monday-Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00 a.m. to midnight	8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.	8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Noon - Midnight

CAMPUS LIFE

Visitation and curfew should be adhered to through the Student Handbook.

Housing & Residence Life

All residential students must have the following to be able to move-in:

- (1) Students must be financially cleared and approved to move-in.
- (2) Complete the COVID-19 training.
- (3) Vaccinated.

Move-In Process

- The residence hall move-in process is spaced out over a multi periods.
- Three (3) family members per student will be allowed, and all move-in participants must wear a face always covering and gloves. The family members will have to complete a wellness check at the gate.
- Students will be allowed two (2) hours to move into their residential space.
- Additional details about move-in will be shared with those who have been approved for housing through the Move in Guide.
- Prior to receiving their move-in date and time, students will be required to submit proof of vaccination, on-site testing prior to move-in and cleared for housing (approved assignment, no conduct violations, and financially cleared), and complete training.

Move-Out Process

- Residential students will be required to schedule move-out appointments
- Three (3) family members per student will be allowed, and all move-out participants must wear face coverings and gloves
- Move-out details will be shared with those who have been approved for housing

ATHLETICS AND BAND

Athletics and Band

The health and safety of all student-athletes, coaches, and staff are of the utmost importance. The following procedures will be used to guide the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and Community Wellness (IACW) at Virginia Union University with monitoring and reducing the risk of Coronavirus (COVID-19) exposure. Changes will be made as updates from federal, state, and local health agencies are received. Additional policies developed by the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association and the NCAA will also modify this document.

COVID Testing

- COVID testing will be required for fully vaccinated individuals per NCAA/CIAA recommendations.
- Student athletes living in communal residents may be required to COVID test per VUU policy.

- If a student athlete misses COVID test, it is considered a positive test, and the individual is immediately suspended from team activities until a new test can be administered. This test may not be on the same day, so it is vital to on time.

CAMPUS SAFETY

Virginia Union University Campus Police (VUUCP) and Public Safety are committed to students, faculty, and staff's safety and well-being. Campus Police will collaborate and partner with all campus entities to maintain a safe and secure campus environment and are committed to responding with the utmost care and compassion during this pandemic.

Enforcement and Accountability

Failure to follow the required behavioral expectation and university policies and procedures related to COVID-19, including proof vaccination, face covering and training requirements, is considered at a minimum a basis for the violation of the Student Code of Conduct (students) and University Code of Conduct (faculty and staff) and may result in disciplinary action. Visitors that fail to adhere to expectations and requirements may lose access to facilities and services.

Declaration of an Emergency

The authority to declare a campus state of emergency rest with the President or his/her designee. Until the President makes such a declaration, the Chief of Police will place into immediate effect the procedures necessary to meet the emergency, safeguard resources, and secure University facilities. Please refer to the VUU Emergency Operations Plan for more details.

The Crisis Communications Team

This team is comprised of staff that will play a critical role in addressing the crisis and any disruption to the University. In an emergency, instant alert messaging will be sent to registered VUU students, faculty, and staff using text messaging via personal cell phones. The officer on duty will notify the Chief of Police of any campus emergency as necessary and at the direction of the Chief will initiate the notification system by calling the following and other University administrators as appropriate:

- President & CEO
- Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer
- Senior Vice President/Provost
- Senior Vice President for Business Affairs
- Vice President Institutional Advancement
- Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Chief of Police and Director of Safety
- Assistant Vice President Executive Communications/Press Secretary

PLANNING TEAM

The University developed a tactical team to monitor the daily activities of the campus. This team worked with each divisional lead to update the spring plan. The team will continue to meet and monitor this plan's implementation and the campus's health and safety. The team will be led by Mrs. Tasha Hunt, Director of Environmental Health and Safety. Members of the tactical team include President Hakim Lucas; Dr. Allia Carter, COO & EVP; Dr. Terrell Strayhorn, Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost; Ms. C. Misha Thomas, Chief of Police/Director of Public Safety; Ms. Kristie White, Assistant Vice President of Administrative Services and Business Solutions; Ms. Kiesha Pope, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management; Mr. Brock Mayers, Dean of Students; Ms. Dawnyale Bundy, Director of Housing and Student Conduct; and Ms. Jocelyn Logan, Director of Compliance.

Each of them worked with respective unit heads to update the Fall 2021-2022 Opening Plan. We would like to thank Mr. Gregory Lewis, Mr. Ralph Dickerson, Ms. Doreen Dixon, Ms. Sharonne Jennings, Mr. Michael Rawlings, Mr. Freddie Robinson, Mr. Robert Lynn, Major Robert Cottrell, Mr. Brian Bullock, Ms. Pamela Cox, Mrs. Victoria Nichols, Mr. Jerome Furtado, and SGA Representatives.