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Introduction
This document provides an overview of the plan that Ursinus College has developed to reopen for in-person instruction in the fall of 2020. It is a living document that is meant to provide enough detail to allow the reader to find more detailed information and guidelines; it is not meant to constitute a formal policy. It is designed to support all of Ursinus with special attention to those most vulnerable members of the community. It also functions as a response to the call from the Pennsylvania Department of Education in the June 3, 2020 Preliminary Guidance for Resuming In-Person Instruction.
Coordination with Local Public Health Officials
Ursinus has been in close contact with Montgomery County officials to make sure that we will work hand in hand with them in planning and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to following guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control, we are establishing the following capabilities in collaboration with county officials.

**Contact Tracing**

Ursinus is offering a summer course for students to enable them to learn the skills of contact tracing, using the Johns Hopkins Coursera online course. These students will form a Health Corps that will engage the full campus community in learning and awareness of the disease and the efforts to enforce mitigation. The Corps will ensure that their efforts extend the support that the Montgomery County Office of Public Health will offer for an outbreak on campus.
Coordination with Local Public Health Officials (cont.)

**Lockdown on Outbreak**

The college will set clear guidelines that will trigger a temporary lockdown on campus and alert public health officials for support to determine if and when to reopen for in person instruction. Under such a lockdown, students will remain on campus and confined to their rooms except for essential needs until testing of the campus allows isolation of active cases.

**Overflow Capabilities**

The college will work with county officials to establish plans for overflow housing or care for students requiring isolation or quarantine in the event of a local outbreak beyond campus abilities.
Strategy for In-Person Instruction
Academic Calendar Changes

To enhance safety, students will return to a campus in a phased manner, with the expectation that most will depart at the Thanksgiving recess.

1. The fall semester begins earlier than normal for first-year students: **Thursday, August 20.** First-year students will move in shortly before that date in order to participate in an intensive “block” version of the Common Intellectual Experience (CIE), the College’s first-year experience course.

2. Other courses will begin after “block” CIE on **Monday, September 7.** Sophomores, juniors, and seniors will move in before that date.

3. The traditional fall break is canceled in order to minimize off-campus travel.

4. Courses will move from in-person teaching to remote teaching at the Thanksgiving recess, with most students leaving campus at that point. Final exams and final projects will tie up remotely.
Classroom Details

1. Everyone in the classroom and classroom buildings are required to wear a cloth mask or functionally equivalent face covering. See “Face Coverings and Other PPE Below.”

2. Physical distancing will be required in classrooms. Accordingly, some courses will be re-assigned to new rooms that are compatible with physical distancing.

3. Some faculty may be asked to hold classes in the evening.

4. Where indicated, students will be required to enter and exit the classroom through designated doors.
Remote Options for Those Who Are Isolated, Quarantined, or Unable to Participate in Person Due to Individual Circumstances

1. Students in this category may choose to take one or more courses remotely.

2. Students who are symptomatic and/or identified for physical isolation or quarantine should switch from in-person to remote learning. Depending on the circumstances, the switch may be temporary or permanent. Every professor and every class this fall will be prepared to achieve learning goals and outcomes using remote teaching methods.

3. Faculty who are in this category may choose to teach one or more courses remotely.
4. Faculty who are symptomatic and/or identified for physical isolation or quarantine should switch from in-person to remote learning. Depending on the circumstances, the switch may be temporary or permanent.

5. Circumstances of faculty or staff who are rendered unable to work due to illness will be handled individually and to the best of our ability to ensure continuity of courses and other college operations, as we do in other semesters.
Outdoor Capabilities

The College is creating some outdoor classroom meeting spaces (although each class will also have a designated indoor meeting location). These spaces may include tents, move-able whiteboards, and new WiFi access.

Course Adaptations and Modifications

Faculty will be asked to prepare ways for students who choose to learn remotely. The best practices for learning remotely will vary by subject matter, but may include live streaming of class meeting sessions, recordings of class sessions, discussions on Canvas.
Monitoring Campus Health Conditions
The goal of this plan is to reduce the chance of an individual on our campus contracting COVID-19 to a level that is comparable or better than would be typical for an individual living elsewhere in Southeastern Pennsylvania. This depends on enforcing excellent hygiene practices but also by reducing the number of individuals infected on campus by identifying and isolating those infected with the virus.

As transmission is frequently asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic, we are committed to comprehensive testing of students as we bring them to campus. We will continue to monitor the health of the campus through heightened awareness of symptoms and clear guidelines to contact campus Wellness. We will also do routine contactless temperature checks, and random testing of students on campus to be aware of any spread of asymptomatic disease. Details of testing protocols will adjust to respond to the changing health environment of the campus, health of the surrounding community, and testing technology and availability.
Response for Confirmed or Suspected Cases
Response for Confirmed or Suspected Cases

If a student on campus develops symptoms of COVID-19, the student will promptly be tested for the virus and quarantined on campus. This will be coordinated by the Wellness Center who will oversee quarantine and testing of the student. If the student tests negative, that individual will be encouraged to largely stay secluded in the residence hall until symptoms resolve; if the symptoms persist and continue to be consistent with COVID-19, a second test will be administered.

If the student tests positive, the following steps will be taken:

• The student will be isolated, either on campus or at home if practical and close enough for family to pick the student up.
• Students isolated on campus will be given guidance for self-care and will be monitored remotely to enable referral to additional care as necessary.
• The Wellness Center will notify the PA Department of Health and the Montgomery County Office of Public Health of the positive case.
• The Ursinus Health Corps will engage the student virtually and in collaboration with Montco Public Health officials to do contact tracing of others in close contact with the infected individual over the preceding 48 hours.

• Students identified by contact tracing will be asked to quarantine for two weeks on campus, or at their homes if close and practical. They will continue to engage with classes virtually.

• Faculty and staff identified by contact tracing will be asked to teach/work remotely for a two week period, and advised to quarantine as well as possible to protect other members of their household and their local community.

• The campus community will be notified of the identification of a case on campus, and that the appropriate steps of isolation and quarantine have been taken. Individual privacy will be respected in communication to the full campus and through the contact tracing process.
If faculty or staff are identified as having symptoms of COVID-19, similar steps will be taken. The Wellness Center can help facilitate testing if necessary, but the primary points of contact will be Human Resources and (for faculty) the Office of the Dean of the College. The college will not provide on campus quarantine or isolation space, so faculty and staff will be asked to remain off campus until symptoms resolve or the recommended quarantine expires.

The college recognizes the limited capability of the campus to house students in quarantine. Even a single positive case could readily result in a score of individuals requiring quarantine. The establishment of clear criteria for more dramatic responses to local transmission is required. A small outbreak of a few cases on campus would trigger a temporary lockdown of the campus. A larger outbreak would trigger a closure of the campus, including the sending of the majority of students home.
In collaboration with Montgomery County officials, and through use of simulated contact tracing, the college will develop more fully informed guidelines for when we might move to an on-campus lockdown, those conditions under which we would close the campus, and local overflow options in the event of a sudden crisis from a major superspreader event. In any case, the college would continue to offer its courses remotely. Even under closure, the college would plan to continue to house students without safe home environments to return to, as well as those students who lack the necessary environments at home, in technological and social senses, to continue to learn effectively.
Mitigation Efforts
Mitigation Efforts

Mitigation efforts will incorporate the strategies described below under Detailed Public Health and Safety Measures. We believe that the requirement of masks on campus in all indoor and outdoor public settings—classrooms, laboratories, studios, libraries, offices, hallways, public pathways, residence hall shared spaces, athletic facilities, and dining facilities will help remind and reinforce the importance of all other measures: hand washing, physical distancing, limiting the size of gatherings, using outdoor spaces and virtual meetings whenever feasible, and following recommendations for traffic flow.
Critical to the success of the fall semester will be an awareness on the part of all members of campus of the need for consistent vigilance in the use of mitigation practices. This will be made more effective if members of the campus community feel regularly updated with reliable information. Since March of 2020, Ursinus has followed a comprehensive communication plan that has brought together multiple forms of communication to keep the campus and surrounding community aware of developments and plans.

Radiating out from a central online presence, this communication plan has involved e-mail, virtual town-hall discussions, social media, on campus posters, and an extensive FAQ section. As students return to campus, this will be complemented with on-campus signage and discussions, integrating these issues into new student and new faculty orientation events, both online and in person.
Effectiveness also will depend on the cooperation and buy-in from the student body. The required wearing of masks in public spaces itself will help remind students of the need for vigilance. Additionally, two faculty members are organizing a primarily student Health Corps group. This group is studying issues of COVID-19, including learning about contact tracing. This group will take the campus lead on contact tracing but also lead an effort to model and encourage compliance with recommendations for hygiene, physical distancing, and mitigation strategies.
Residence Life and Phased Return
As a residential campus, it is inevitable that interactions between students in residential settings will continue to be central to the student experience. We also recognize that phasing the student arrival to campus will be essential for us to gain understanding of the full challenges of monitoring the health status of the campus.

To enable this phased approach to return to in-person operation, we have chosen to bring the first-year students to campus first, and engage them in an intensive version of our first-year seminar over a three week period. This time frame is convenient from an academic perspective, but also from an epidemiological perspective, as it will allow us to gain experience that extends beyond the incubation period for COVID-19. It is only at the end of this time that we will bring the remainder of the student body to campus.
After careful consideration, we have come to the conclusion that single occupancy, being implemented by many campuses, is unlikely to have a significant impact on disease transmission on our campus. The social structures on campus are more likely to provide transmission arenas than individual residence hall rooms. Therefore, we believe we can still safely bring the vast majority of students back to campus in near typical occupancy levels by implementing these extensive plans including:

• imposing clear expectations of behavior (e.g. mask wearing, physical distancing)
• inclusion of these expectations in our conduct processes to allow strong enforcement
• closure of some common areas at least until the overall health of the campus can be established.
Dining
Plans for dining focus primarily on the main campus dining facility in the Wismer Center. A flexible combination of take-out and sit-down dining will enable us to adapt to the varying status of the campus transitions and the established health of the campus. As the campus returns, and while weather is appropriate for outdoor dining, we will heavily encourage the take-out options. Within the dining facility, Sodexo, our outsourced food provider, has established practices that will meet and exceed guidelines from public health authorities.
Self-service will be limited to single use of touchless beverage dispensers; otherwise all service will be one-way across see-through barriers. Traffic patterns in the dining hall are designated in a single direction format with floor markings and six-foot spacing indicators. Seating will be limited to ensure appropriate distancing between individuals. We are pleased that the Sodexo organization has had extensive successful experience in food service in areas with high levels of COVID-19 rates, including in hospitals in Wuhan during the initial outbreak.
Athletics
This section covers a range of student and staff activities that revolve around the use of athletics and fitness facilities—from those activities associated with intercollegiate athletics to making facilities available to students and employees for general health and fitness. This plan gives an overview of more detailed practices that can be found through links in each section.

**Intercollegiate Athletics**

With the cancellation of fall 2020 intercollegiate competitions within the Centennial Conference, athletics teams will restrict activities to individual training during the college’s Old Gold phase of re-opening. Only under the black phase will select teams return to full practices. Details of the full planning for intercollegiate teams can be found [here](#), and will be updated as conditions change.
Fitness Center

The fitness center serves a wide range of members of the Ursinus community. A complex set of guidelines for the use of this facility, incorporating physical distancing, scheduling protocols and frequent sanitization, has been developed for the various phases of reopening. The structure of these guidelines will balance the various needs of individual groups, and prioritize those needs to support both athletic teams and the larger college population. Details of these guidelines, which will be updated as the campus goes through various phases of reopening, can be found here.
Sports Medicine Clinic

This facility provides services for college athletes; in addition to the general guidelines for the use of shared spaces on campus, more stringent guidelines will apply here as the ability to maintain physical distance between the student athlete and the healthcare professional. Detailed expectations of both athletes and the healthcare professionals are given here. In general, these additional expectations include screening, spaced appointments, and limiting sharing of supplies or equipment. The healthcare professionals will also be expected to maintain physical distancing whenever possible, and make use of appropriate personal protective equipment.
Club Sports and Use of Recreational Facilities

The use of athletics and recreational facilities, both indoors and outdoors, have highly varying levels of risk to participants. Additionally, as these are not in the context of professionally coached activities but rather club sports, intramurals, or informal activities, we will rely on community compliance with well publicized guidelines for these activities.
Options for Vulnerable Populations
Options for Vulnerable Populations

Wherever possible vulnerable populations will be provided with options to continue their work, as students, faculty, or staff, in a remote format. There are some instances in which it may be impossible to continue to provide those opportunities, such as for laboratory instruction for relevant faculty, staff, and students, or for campus employees engaged in maintenance of the facilities.

We will define “vulnerable populations” in a generous way that allows individuals to self-identify, and to include risks or constraints arising from their domestic situation, such as another member of their household that would be at high risk. That self-identification process will neither go through immediate supervisors or instructors so as to bypass implicit expectations of assumption of risk.
Guidance for Student Groups
Guidance for Student Groups

Student clubs and organizations will be encouraged to transact as much of their business as possible through virtual means through the Old Gold phases, and with strict regard for physical distancing and good hygiene measures throughout the semester. Group activities correlated with superspreader events, such as choral groups, will not be permitted during the fall semester. Groups requiring in person meetings should maintain the use of masks, and should consider meeting outdoors whenever possible.
Travel to and from Campus
Travel to and from Campus

It is a goal to keep the overall health of the campus at a better level than that of the surrounding community. This means that travel to and from the campus invariably increases the risk of bringing disease to the campus. With this in mind, the college promotes the following practices with regard to travel:

• Local travel to and from campus, for students, faculty, and staff, should be kept to a minimum, and should only include essential travel as long as there are significant levels of infection in the local area. For those who commute to and from campus, extra care should be maintained to minimize chances of infection off campus as well as the chance of transmission to others on campus. Those who use public transportation should make sure to wear a mask, and use hand sanitizer or hand washing to avoid infection en route.

• Study abroad programs are canceled for the fall semester.
• Visitors to campus in general are not permitted during the Old Gold phase, and may be allowed in limited ways. Some carefully designed exceptions may be made for exceptional circumstances, such as for carefully circumscribed visits by prospective students.

• College employees are encouraged to reconsider personal travel that may bring them to areas in which COVID-19 is particularly prevalent. The Pennsylvania Department of Health specifies that following travel to particular states “you will need to quarantine for 14 days upon return.”

• General advice on travel can be found from the CDC here and from the Pennsylvania Department of Health here. Advice on using public transportation can be found here.
Detailed Public Health and Safety Measures
Hygiene and Sanitation

Everyone must follow recommended CDC hygiene practices including but not limited to washing hands for at least 20 seconds with (preferably) soap and water or if washing is not practical, use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, and covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. In addition,

• Soap and water for hand washing is available in all restrooms.
• Hand sanitizer stations are located throughout campus (usually at all entrances). If you notice that dispensers are empty, please notify the Director of Facilities immediately at 610-409-3598.
• Pump hand sanitizers are available at administrative assistant offices in each building.
• Employees must wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with warm soap and water upon entering or prior to leaving the College, before and after breaks, after glove removal, etc.

Everyone must help stop the spread. Employees should wipe down all touch points (doorknobs, railings, work surfaces, light switches, coffee makers, etc.) in personal workspace before starting work and at the end of the workday with soap and water. When using shared equipment such as printers, copiers, and lab equipment, always wipe down prior and after each use with a 60% alcohol-based product.

Students should wipe down all touch points (doorknobs, handles, light switches and other surfaces) in rooms and are encouraged to bring cleaning supplies with them to campus.
Face Coverings and Other PPE

Faculty, staff, students, and visitors are required to wear a cloth mask or some type of face covering at all times while on campus, except under conditions where that is impossible (e.g. during meals) or superfluous (e.g. within a student’s residence). You can use your own or the college will provide one for you. Disposable masks are available at Campus Safety and designated locations in administrative and academic buildings. Your face must always remain covered—this includes your mouth and nose. Cloth masks should be washed daily. Review the CDC guidelines for further information. If you work in a laboratory, perform a hazard risk assessment of your work to determine if an alternative mask is required. Individuals unable to wear face coverings due to health condition or disability should contact the supervisor and Human Resources.
Physical Distancing

• Everyone must maintain physical distancing of 6 feet or greater inside and outside of buildings. This includes offices, classrooms, laboratories, hallways, restrooms, common areas and outdoor spaces. If a task or a specific activity such as lab work involves working with others in closer proximity than 6 feet, **CDC guidelines** and the specific precautions/practices put in place for the task or specific activity must be followed.

• Physical distancing reminders that will be implemented throughout campus may include sidewalk and floor decals, floor tape, and signage. Entrances and exits of buildings maybe controlled to minimize the number of occupants in hallways and stairwells and to maintain 6 feet physical distancing especially during class changeovers.
Physical Distancing (cont.)

• Where physical distancing cannot be observed, barriers or shields will be installed. Each department along with Facilities has assessed and identified these areas.

• Virtual meetings are strongly encouraged. If an in-person meeting is required, physical distancing must be maintained, masks worn, and no more than 25 people present.
Limit Large Gatherings

During the Old Gold phase, the only large (greater than 50) gatherings will be those that can be accommodated in outdoor or similarly large, highly ventilated spaces. Under no circumstances will gatherings greater than 250 individuals be allowed. Strong efforts will be made to dissuade student social gatherings that cannot include physical distancing and mask wearing. The student Health Corps will provide peer persuasion, and Campus Safety will be empowered to disband groups in violation.

If and when the college enters the Black phase, when there is no evidence of infection on campus for a continuous period of two weeks, then limits on gatherings will be relaxed, although masks and physical distancing will still be advised, and no gatherings greater than 250 will be permitted.
Detailed Public Health and Safety Measures (cont.)

Limit Class Sizes

Class sizes will be limited, and classroom spaces will be reassigned to allow physical distancing within the classroom settings. Our largest classes are typically just over 50; those have been divided in half to meet separately. Although consideration of classroom is also relevant, in general we will keep class sizes to no larger than 30 students. Regardless of class size, the expectation is that masks will be worn consistently.
Ventilation

The college operates and maintains air handling systems according to ASHRAE standards to control climate, energy efficiency, and indoor air quality with the proper amount of outside air and room air changes. Increasing ventilation will not eliminate the risk of COVID-19 exposure or infection, but will be used with other measures to help reduce the risk. These include:

• Holding some classes, events, and gatherings outside, weather permitting.
• Making use of 30 ft x 30 ft tents whenever possible for classes and other necessary gatherings to extend the ability to meet outdoors.
• Increasing the circulation of the outside air whenever possible by opening windows in buildings.
Bathrooms

Where 6 feet physical distancing cannot be maintained in bathrooms, physical barriers will be placed where feasible or some sinks, showers, or toilets will be covered and unavailable for use.

Bathrooms are cleaned daily in all buildings following recommended CDC guidelines.

Clinical Health Services

The Wellness Center will be open Monday – Friday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Services will be available by appointment only. When appropriate, telehealth appointments will be offered. Students who need medical care should contact the Wellness Center by phone at 610-409-3100 or email wellness@ursinus.edu.
Clinical Health Services (cont.)

Students who call with any of the following list of symptoms will undergo additional screening and triage. To enhance student safety, separate space in Wellness has been created to work with any student who is experiencing these symptoms. The provider will discuss symptoms and deliver guidance and medical care per current CDC recommendations.

Fever without suspected etiology

Cough

Shortness of breath

Sore throat

Known exposure to someone with presumptive/confirmed COVID-19

Any GI symptoms

Loss of taste or smell
Clinical Health Services (cont.)

If a student is experiencing any of the above symptoms outside of Wellness business hours, students should contact Campus Safety at 610-409-3333 for further instruction.

Mental Health Services

For the health safety of staff and students, the Wellness Center will provide online counseling appointments in Fall of 2020. All current services will continue to be offered via the virtual counseling platform.

The Wellness Center will work with any student in finding a safe and confidential space to engage in appointments, if this is a concern. Please contact Wellness if an accommodation is needed.