

From: LCOM Office of the Dean

Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 4:35 PM

Subject: Message from Rick Page to Larner Community ~ Guidance on Resumption of Selected In-Person Activities in the LCOM

Dear Larner Community:

It has now been four months since many of us made the rapid change from working on campus to working remotely. That we were able to do so, all the while maintaining our commitment to our core missions, is a testament to the hard work and ingenuity of our faculty, staff and students.

Vermonters as a whole rose to this challenge of COVID-19, as demonstrated by our state's current low caseload levels. Now, with a new academic year approaching, we face the next challenge: reopening our University and College in a cautious, safe manner. Hundreds of people from across the University have contributed to the planning and preparation for this effort. Since the spring, the Larner College of Medicine has followed a careful, phased approach to in-person operations in the fulfillment of each of our clinical, education and research missions. Many members of our community were deemed essential personnel and served critical roles supporting the clinical and research missions throughout these months. Our phased resumption of in-person operations began with wet research lab programs in mid-May and expanded all programs by mid-June. In early June, the University issued guidance on the requirements to resume in-person operations throughout the campus, and our departments and programs are currently working through this process as they submit safety plans for the personnel within their respective areas.

Our medical student Classes of 2021 and 2022 have returned to their assigned traditional curriculum of instruction, and we look forward to welcoming back to campus the Class of 2023, and greeting the 124 newest members of our community, the Class of 2024, on August 10.

Our experiences over the past several months have proven the value of telework. This option will continue to be the preferred approach. To the extent possible, all LCOM offices and units should continue to operate remotely and plan on-campus staffing at the minimum level to meet service needs. Waiting area furniture throughout the complex will be removed to support the need for physical distancing. Conference rooms and classrooms will only be used to support teaching activities; they cannot be used for meetings, which should continue to be held using the Zoom and Teams technology we have all made use of during the pandemic.

Our Dean's Suite will resume in-person operations beginning August 3, with office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. The Office of Medical Student Education has resumed its operations to serve our students and LCOM community, weekdays from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Although staffing on-site will be reduced, we are open and happy to be on site to serve your needs.

Since mid-March, the medical complex external doors have been programed to require a valid UVM CATcard from those approved for access to the facility. This will continue to be the case through the fall semester. If someone without such approved access has a valid reason to visit someone in the complex they will need to be met at the door to be allowed in.

Everybody in the public areas of the complex, or in the presence of other people, is required to wear a face mask. Doing so is one of the most effective actions to prevent virus transmission, and failure to adhere to this policy will have serious consequences. Please refer to the [UVM Face Covering Guidelines](#) for more information.

The face mask policy, as well as building access and physical distancing requirements, will all be noted on signage throughout the complex. But signage will only go so far. More important will be our shared values, the same ones that have bound us together throughout this crisis. We are a caring community, and that care will be evident in the way we respectfully navigate the return to in-person operations on our campus, and keep them in mind at all times.

"We will get through this" are words I've spoken time and again throughout this crisis. I am confident this is the case, because I've seen how you all have risen to this challenge with commitment and compassion. I have confidence that the Larner community will navigate this next chapter with the professionalism we exhibit every day. I look forward to seeing you -- appropriately masked -- in the coming weeks.

Please continue to take care of yourselves, and each other,

Rick

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