

The background of the document is a photograph of a campus. On the left, a modern brick building with a distinctive white, wing-like architectural feature on its roof stands on a grassy hill. A person is walking on the hill. In the foreground, a calm pond reflects the surrounding trees, which are in various stages of autumn color, including green, yellow, and red. The sky is clear and blue.

# The Plan For Reopening Campus:

*Key Points for  
Faculty and Staff*

---

*August 2020*

---



Southern Connecticut  
State University





**Southern Connecticut State University** has prepared a 4-Part Plan for reopening campus for the fall 2020 semester in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. In step with guidelines established by public health experts, the Office of Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont, and the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system, the plan outlines strategies for:

1. Students' return to campus
2. Monitoring the health of students, faculty, and staff
3. Containing cases that develop
4. And, should the course of the pandemic change, temporarily closing the physical campus and switching to remote/online education

## ► Part 1: *Return of Students*

**Faculty, staff, and students share a commitment** to maintaining a safe campus environment. The overarching goal of the following guidelines and procedures is to help members of the community stay well. For more information, see the complete plan at <https://inside.southernct.edu/reopening>.

- **Surgical-style masks or other face coverings** (cloth masks) that completely cover the wearer's mouth and nose are to be worn by students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors, unless they have a medical exemption. Face coverings are required throughout campus, including all academic and administrative areas, in residence hall common areas, and outdoors when 6-feet social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Southern will provide **five face coverings** to each member of the campus community. Extra masks also will be available at central locations on campus.
- **Instructional spaces** — including traditional classrooms, lecture halls, labs, and studios — have been reconfigured to meet social distancing guidelines calling for 6 feet of separation among students and faculty.
- In the fall semester, about 36 percent of classes are being delivered on ground or through a hybrid approach; the remaining 64 percent are online.
- Occupancy levels have been reduced in **lounge spaces and open-seating areas**, which have been reconfigured to provide 6 feet of physical distance. In other campus areas typically used by groups of students, such as **meeting rooms** in the Student Center, spaces have been reconfigured as pods/cubicles to maximize social distancing.
- In **spaces with fixed seating** — such as Lyman Center and the Student Center theater — occupancy is being limited and seats cordoned off to adhere to 6-feet physical distancing guidelines.
- In **computer labs**, some workstations have been cordoned off with Plexiglas dividers and occupancy levels have been reduced to meet social distancing guidelines.
- **Shuttle buses** will follow guidelines established by the Department of Transportation. Measures include requiring riders to wear masks (unless they have a medical exemption), limiting passenger numbers/increasing routes, frequent cleaning, marking seats for social distancing, installing sneeze guards on smaller vehicles, etc.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

- **Electrostatic sprayers** and an EPA-approved disinfectant will be used daily to disinfect classrooms, computer labs, lecture halls, science labs, studios, and common areas. Public bathrooms will be disinfected twice a day.
- **Hypochlorous Acid (HOCl)** — the disinfectant used by the university — is nontoxic, all-natural, and 100 percent safe for humans.
- Custodial staff are **frequently wiping down high-touch points**, including doorknobs/handles, elevator buttons, railings, light switches, etc. Additionally, hand sanitizer dispensers, disinfectant wipes, and/or cleaning solution are available in bathrooms, classrooms, office suites, and other shared facilities.

## Eating Safely

- Southern is following the **State of Connecticut's guidelines** for restaurant reopenings in all dining-related facilities on campus.
- Seating capacity in dining areas has been **reduced by 50 percent** and tables have been reconfigured to meet social distancing guidelines. Alternative seating areas have been added to meet campus needs, and students also are encouraged to dine safely outdoors.
- Dining facilities have been reconfigured for **6-foot social distancing**, with separate designated entrances and exits as well as one-way foot traffic and signage to guide diners.
- A **Certified Food Protection Manager** will oversee dining safety, and the university is completing Connecticut Business Reopening Self-Certification.
- **Other safety protocols** include cleaning surfaces after every diner, the installation of Plexiglas barriers and sneeze guards, readily available hand sanitizer and disinfectant products, single-use condiments, elimination of buffet/self-service stations, disposable/rolled/packaged utensils, and the development of plans for online ordering.

## Athletics

- Southern is following **guidelines set by the NCAA Division II and the Northeast 10 Conference**, the latter of which has suspended all conference-sponsored competition until Dec. 31, 2020.
- Student athletes will **complete pre-activity screenings and tests** and must provide documentation of taking a RT-PCR COVID-19 test within 14 days of their arrival on campus.
- A **wide variety of safety protocols are in place** for student athletes, among them, social distancing (6 feet between players, 12 feet during workouts, 15 feet recommended for coaches); disinfecting surfaces and equipment before/after training; and limits on indoor/outdoor gatherings. Athletes will change/shower at home or in their residence halls.

## Residence Halls

- Students will return to campus following a **staggered, multi-day schedule** to help facilitate social distancing. Numerous health protocols are in place, including students' completion of a daily online self-screening questionnaire for their first seven days on campus.
- No more than two students will share a room, with **occupancy reduced** in some residence halls.
- Students housed together in a room/apartment are **considered a family unit** and are not required to wear face coverings or socially distance in their own rooms.
- However, **in all residence halls common areas** such as lobbies, hallways, laundry rooms, utility rooms/kitchens, stairways, and elevators, students will follow health guidelines designed to reduce spread of the virus: maintain 6-foot social distancing, wear face masks/coverings, reduce elevator capacity, follow directional arrows in stairways as marked, etc.
- Students who have a greater risk of complications from COVID-19 can request accommodations from the **Disability Resource Center**.



## Travel

- Members of the campus community are asked to **avoid unnecessary international and domestic travel**.
- Students are **prohibited from studying abroad**, and all faculty-led study abroad programming for fall 2020 has been canceled. University-sanctioned domestic travel for students will be permitted only under special circumstances and requires approval by Tracy Tyree, vice president for student affairs.
- University-sanctioned domestic and international travel is **not permitted for faculty, staff, and management**.
- International students with student (F/J) visas can pursue academic studies in person if they **currently reside in the U.S. or are able to secure visas to enter the U.S.** They are subject to applicable self-isolation guidelines, testing, and contact tracing measures.

## ► Part 2:

### *Monitoring the Health of the Campus Community*

#### Testing of Residential Students

- All residential students are **required to document a negative** RT-PCR COVID-19 test result within 14 days prior to their arrival on campus for the fall 2020 semester.
- **Students who test positive** prior to arrival will be required to notify Student Health Services and will not be cleared to arrive on campus until 10 days without symptoms from the date of the test.
- All students **arriving in Connecticut from out of state** are required to document a negative RT-PCR COVID-19 test result as close as possible to the time of arrival on campus.
- All out-of-state students **from “non-hotspot” declared states** (as of 7/28/20) can obtain the initial pre-arrival test and will not need to quarantine.
- Students from **“hotspot” declared states** (as of 7/28/20) should test in advance of arrival and then be quarantined for 14 days. These students must also complete the travel advisory form that is filed with the state Department of Public Health.  
[\[https://appengine.egov.com/apps/ct/DPH/Connecticut-Travel-Health-Form\]](https://appengine.egov.com/apps/ct/DPH/Connecticut-Travel-Health-Form)
- For students who are unable to gain access to COVID-19 testing prior to arrival due to financial, insurance, or other circumstances, Southern will provide the **opportunity for testing on campus** during days designated for dropping off belongings.
- All residential students will be required to **submit a daily self-screening report** to the COVID-19 Coordinator for the first seven days after their arrival on campus.

#### Ongoing Testing of Students, Faculty, and Staff

- The University will require testing of all **symptomatic** faculty, staff, and students and will follow a testing strategy for all **asymptomatic** residential students.

#### *Symptomatic*

- Symptomatic students will be tested through Student Health Services or private providers, while symptomatic faculty and staff will be referred to either their own provider or urgent care for testing.

- Students, faculty, and staff will be required to quarantine until the results of the testing are available.
- If the test result is negative, the individual will be removed from quarantine.
- If the test result is positive, the faculty, staff, or student will be required to self-isolate, and contact tracing will commence.

### ***Asymptomatic***

- In the first week of classes, Southern will test all residential and non-residential students from out of state.
- Southern will test 5 to 10 percent of the residents of each residence hall on a weekly basis.
- Asymptomatic students and staff residing in university housing will be tested periodically by Student Health Services.
- Residents will be notified of their results, and if positive they will be required to self-isolate at a private residence or in university isolation housing, and contact tracing will commence.

### **COVID-19 Coordinator**

#### ***The COVID-19 Coordinator will:***

- oversee the plans for testing
- implement the University's plan for containing any cases of the virus that may develop
- serve as a campus expert and resource around public and community health

## **► Part 3:** ***Containing COVID-19 Cases that Develop***

### ***Southern will have three levels of quarantine and isolation:***

- quarantine
  - isolation-asymptomatic
  - isolation-symptomatic
- Students who are in **quarantine** or **self-isolation asymptomatic** will be required to complete a daily symptom check-in.
  - Students who are in **residential isolation-symptomatic** will be required to have a daily telehealth appointment to track symptoms with Student Health Services.
  - Faculty, staff, and students who are in **self-isolation** off campus will be required to submit daily self-monitoring check-ins to the COVID-19 Coordinator.

### **Isolation**

- When faculty, staff, or students are identified as having a **positive COVID-19 test result** they will be required to self-isolate until 10 days have passed with no symptoms from the date of the test.
- The University has **designated space** in the residential area for isolating students when deemed appropriate.

- Faculty, staff, and off-campus students will be required to self-isolate at their **private residences**, and residential students will either self-isolate in their private residences or in the University's designated isolation residential spaces.
- Students who test positive and those awaiting test results will be **housed separately**.

### Quarantine

- Faculty, staff, and students deemed to be in close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to be **tested and quarantine** for a 14-day period from their last exposure to the person who tested positive.
- Close contacts are defined as “any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated” ([Centers for Disease Control website](#)).
- For residential students who are required to quarantine, this quarantine can include students being broken into family groups/pods based on the sharing of bathrooms.
- The University has **designated space in the campus residential area** for students to quarantine when necessary.
- Faculty, staff, and off-campus students will be **required to quarantine** at their private residences.

### Contact Tracing

- For laboratory-confirmed or probable COVID-19 patients, the University will conduct contact tracing for close contacts, as defined by the CDC above.  
A trained team of contact tracers will use **ConTact** (state system) in addition to the contact tracing program made available within MedicaT, the university electronic health records system, to enroll individuals needing to be monitored, monitor daily for symptoms, and connect to additional medical care when indicated.

### Partnering with Regional Health Care Facilities

Southern Connecticut State University has strong relationships with the Yale New Haven Health System, Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center, Hartford HealthCare, and most other healthcare organizations in the state of Connecticut where we collaborate to train students for clinical careers.

- In the event that our campus experience begins to trend toward a surge (criteria to be determined), we will communicate directly with three key providers:
  - Director of Health, New Haven Department of Public Health
  - Office of the Chief Operating Officer, Christopher O'Connor, Yale New Haven Health
  - Office of the Chief Executive Officer, Michael Taylor, Cornell Scott Hill Health Center

Yale New Haven Hospital will coordinate local efforts to ensure adequate inpatient COVID-19 related care. Yale New Haven Health and Cornell Scott-Hill Health will coordinate local efforts to ensure adequate outpatient care and COVID-19 testing capacity. The New Haven Health Department will support campus contact tracing efforts and track incidence rates for individual cases.

## ► Part 4: *Plan for Shutdown*

### **Circumstances Warranting a Campus Shutdown**

- If the campus' designated quarantine and isolation spaces near capacity, the number of infections continues to rise, and there are fewer than seven days remaining until the quarantining/isolating capacity reaches zero, the University, with the affirmation and approval of the CSCU System Office, will start a physical shutdown of the campus.
- With the guidance of the CSCU System Office, if it is determined that the threat for a significant demonstrable spread of the virus among students, staff, and/or faculty across campus exists, the University will begin a physical shutdown.
- The President's Leadership Team will hold a **special emergency meeting** to determine or resolve any non-state-directed closures.
- If the state or region requires housing or other facilities to manage a resurgence of the virus, the campus will close.
- If directed to do so by the **CSCU System Board of Regents or the Governor** for any reason, the campus will immediately close.

### **Continuity of Instruction in Case of Shutdown**

The plan for ongoing instruction in response to a serious emergence of COVID-19 on campus or in the local community would include a **series of steps**:

- Upon notification from the Department of Public Health, CDC, State, System Office, or SCSU Student Health Services that there is a wider health threat on campus due to the COVID-19 virus, the SCSU President's Office will call an **immediate emergency meeting** of the President's Leadership Team. That team will collectively consider the circumstances and make the decision as to whether to "move off campus."
- If that decision is made, the University will begin a process that alerts all faculty, staff, and students that within the next 24 hours we will transition to an **all-online process of education**. This notification will be transmitted by emails, texts, and website postings via the University's Office of Integrated Communications and Marketing.
- With that notice, faculty members who are not already teaching fully online will revert to fully online teaching modes from off campus.
- On-ground or hybrid classes that were scheduled to meet within that 24-hour block of time will be able to do so if it is too late to notify all student participants. If warning is given early in that block of time, faculty will be asked to direct students to remain home and that their course will continue in fully online mode.
- As needed, our **Office of Information Technology** will initiate a process, already tested in spring 2020, to allow students with a technology infrastructure gap to borrow laptops for the remainder of the semester.
- Buley Library will activate its plan for remote work and ongoing virtual programs and processes.
- Once the University enters a fully online mode of teaching, the **rest of the semester will remain online**. If the quarantining and isolating spaces are near capacity, the residence halls will be shut down and students will be notified that they need to leave campus. The University will work with students for whom getting home is difficult (e.g., international students) and those for whom campus housing serves as their primary residence. Students who are in isolation or quarantine will remain on campus until safe to go home.