

An Update from the Office of the President

July 1, 2021

Dear members of the North Park University campus community:

I am delighted to share our planning for Fall 2021 as our campus safely reopens and resumes the vibrant activities that comprise North Park's excellent educational experience.

In mid-June, Illinois and the City of Chicago entered [Phase 5](#) of the Restore Illinois plan, reopening all sectors of the economy, lifting travel restrictions and quarantine requirements, and suspending all capacity limits for indoor facilities, conventions, festivals and other large events. These positive developments set the stage for our fall plans at North Park.

My thanks to our Pandemic Response Team (PRT) and its leaders for their diligent work in remaining alert to changing circumstances and reviewing and revising our safety protocols throughout our successful 2020-21 academic year. The work of this committee continues as we approach a return to full campus life and operations this fall. They will monitor and evaluate all data and will recommend adjustments to our health and safety protocols as needed.

Continued congratulations to our campus community – students, faculty and staff – for the evidence of our community commitment to following campus protocols, prioritizing health and safety, and ensuring positive academic progress for our students.

Our planning for the fall 2021 semester is outlined below. More information and FAQs will be available at our [Fall 2021 website](#), and questions may be directed to feedback@northpark.edu.

Fall 2021

Academic Calendar

North Park University will return to its normal [Academic Calendar](#).

- August 30, 2021 - Fall Semester and First Quad (Fall A) begins.
- October 22-24, 2021 – Fall Break
- October 25, 2021 - Second Quad (Fall B) begins.
- November 24-28, 2021 – Thanksgiving Break
- December 15-17, 2021 – Final Exams
- December 17, 2021 – Commencement

- December 18 - Winter Break begins.

Academic Instruction

The University will return to in-person teaching and learning. Classroom and lab capacities and configurations will return to normal capacity. Faculty will teach course sections as they are listed in the Course Schedule, and students will be physically present for in-person classes.

The Viking Shield - Vaccinations Strongly Encouraged and Expected

We are encouraged and informed by the surveys of North Park students, faculty and staff which produced strong response and identified that over 90% of our faculty and staff, and nearly 80% of our student respondents have already been vaccinated.

After extensive research and discussion with the PRT, and with helpful feedback from our community, the University will not require individual members of the campus community to be fully vaccinated as a condition of employment or enrollment.

However, consistent with our priority commitment to health and safety on campus – and to unlock the freedoms that were curtailed last year and return to full activity on campus - North Park University will **strongly encourage and expect** members of the campus community to seek and secure the Covid-19 vaccine before arriving on campus in the fall.

Securing your vaccine is recognized as the strongest defense against the Covid-19 virus, and the best way for all of us to demonstrate the care for mutual health and wellness on our campus. With developing variants and unknown projections, we encourage all community members to take advantage of vaccine availability.

Vaccinations against Covid-19 are free, and they are readily available to everyone age 12 and over. Vaccinations for any North Parker can be scheduled immediately at nearby Swedish Hospital, by following this link. (<https://www.northshore.org/covid-19-information-resources/covid-19-vaccine/>.) Additionally, we will be offering vaccinations on campus at fall check-in for any students, faculty and staff who still need to secure the vaccine.

Information and instructions about how to submit verification of your vaccination status will be announced soon, via University Health Services.

Health and Safety Protocols

Based on current guidance from local, state and federal health authorities, North Park's health and safety protocols have been revised as follows:

- Masks:
 - Masks are no longer required outdoors regardless of vaccination status.
 - Fully vaccinated North Parkers are not required to wear masks indoors.
 - Any unvaccinated community members should continue to wear masks indoors. \where they cannot observe distance.
 - **Important:** North Park will continue to be a “mask-friendly” environment. Many fully vaccinated people may choose to wear masks in public. The wearing of a mask should not be considered an indication of vaccination status. It is expected that all members of the campus community will respect an individual's decision to wear a mask anywhere on campus.
- COVID-19 testing, contact tracing:
 - **Fully vaccinated individuals** who submit verification of that status will not be asked to participate in North Park's Covid-19 testing and will not need to quarantine if they are a close contact of someone who tests positive.
 - **Non-vaccinated individuals** and those who have not submitted verification of vaccination must:

- Submit results of a negative Covid-19 test upon arrival to campus for fall semester (completed within 72 hours of arrival);
 - Enroll and participate in the University’s Covid-19 testing throughout the semester (at the University’s expense); and
 - Quarantine if they test positive or are determined to be a close contact of someone who tests positive.
- Covid-19 positive or probable cases:
 - All campus community members—**regardless of vaccination status**—are expected to report positive or probable cases of COVID-19. Students should report symptoms to University Health Services by calling 773-244-4897, or by emailing healthservices@northpark.edu. Employees should report symptoms to their supervisor and seek medical attention from their healthcare provider.

Residence Life

Residence Halls will return to pre-pandemic policies and procedures. There will be no restrictions on the use of residence hall space, and on-campus guests will be allowed in residential areas with proper approval.

New and returning resident students will soon receive communication from the Residence Life staff with additional residence hall information and protocols, including move-in procedures, housing and roommate assignments, and further details for international students.

Dining Services

The University will return to regular dining hours, operations and capacities this fall.

Chapel

Undergraduate students, faculty and staff are invited to return to in-person worship services Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in Anderson Chapel.

Seminary Chapel will be in Nyvall Hall, Isaacson Chapel, on Thursdays at 5 p.m. followed by dinner at 5:45 p.m.

Athletics

All Viking athletics programs will return to pre-pandemic fall, winter and spring competition and practice schedules. In addition, all athletic facilities will return to standard hours and operations. The athletics department is awaiting further guidance from the NCAA and the CCIW regarding vaccination and/or testing requirements and spectator policies for NCAA-sanctioned competitions. Additional information and protocols will be shared with coaches and student athletes in the coming weeks.

Campus Events and Facilities

Campus events—such as meetings, conferences, and social gatherings—can take place without capacity restrictions. Campus facilities will return to standard hours of operation and capacities.

Staff Returning to Campus

Employees will again begin working full-time on campus by August 2, 2021. The Office of Human Resources will provide any additional information.

We continue to praise God for His provision throughout our history; His protection of our campus community; and His promise of hope and a future for North Park University. With great care we continue our detailed planning for the return of North Park’s excellent educational experience and vibrant campus life in community! We are grateful for God’s guidance and grace in bringing us safely to this point.

Please continue to be alert for important communications throughout the summer, visit our [Fall 2021 website](#) for up-to-date information, and send any questions to feedback@northpark.edu.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Surridge

President

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