

# FRAMEWORK AND PLAN *for Resuming On-Campus Operations* in Academic Year 2020–21

UPDATED JULY 28, 2020



UNIVERSITY OF  
NEW ENGLAND

INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND (UNE) IS PLEASED TO PRESENT THIS PLAN FOR RESUMING ON-CAMPUS OPERATIONS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR (AY) 2020-21. This plan provides important information about UNE's implementation of the framework for reopening Maine's higher education institutions, which was developed in the spring of 2020 through a partnership of all of Maine's private colleges, the University of Maine System, and the Community College System: **Sustaining Higher Education and Sustaining Maine: A Framework for Reopening Maine's Colleges and Universities in Fall 2020**. This framework served as a guiding foundation for UNE's planning efforts.

The highest priority of UNE's plan is maintaining the health and safety of the University's students, faculty, and professional staff, while recognizing that our community, like our state and nation more broadly, cannot completely eliminate risks associated with the COVID-19 virus until an effective vaccine is available. Our plan reflects the complexity of UNE as an institution and its diverse array of programs – from Humanities to Marine Science to Osteopathic Medicine. The plan is inherently flexible, allowing the University to pivot quickly in response to changing conditions in Maine, the region, the nation, and at UNE's study abroad locations. In this context, several other resources inform this plan, including, but not limited to, the national **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**, the **Maine CDC**, the **World Health Organization**, the **State of Maine Office of the Governor**, the **Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)**, the evolving science on COVID-19, and emerging best practices in higher education.

A group of administrators, faculty, and professional staff have been working diligently since April 2020 to develop this plan and remains engaged in implementing and updating it. With its array of graduate and professional programs that run throughout the calendar year, UNE has already welcomed back students in June on both the Biddeford and Portland campuses. Likewise, faculty with research laboratories began returning to campus in June and will continue to do so throughout the summer months. The experiences of the students, faculty and professional staff in the College of Dental Medicine, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Westbrook College of Health Professions, and the Office of Research and Scholarship will allow us to further refine this plan in advance of the new and returning undergraduate and graduate students in fall 2020.

UNE's mission to prepare students *to thrive in a rapidly-changing world and, in so doing, to improve the health of people, communities, and our planet* could not be more relevant than today. The plan reflects this core mission and is a living document. The University continues to plan for various scenarios related to changing conditions in Maine, the region, and at UNE's study abroad locations. If restrictions continue to improve, UNE will remain vigilant in its gradual and cautious approach to relaxing any of its policies and procedures related to the pandemic. The University is also well-prepared and positioned, because of its experience in March 2020, to quickly pivot in the other direction by enhancing restrictions, including shifting again to a fully remote operations model, should that need arise. We know some of the decisions we have made may need to be revisited and revised in the future, and there are questions yet to answer. As such, we will continue to update this plan throughout the coming months to include evolving information from government agencies, the scientific literature, and the higher education community.

*This version of the UNE Onward plan was published on July 28, 2020. The plan will be updated and re-published regularly. To ensure that you are referencing current information and policies, please download the most recent version of the plan at [une.edu/onward](https://une.edu/onward).*

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## I. ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

### A. ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2020–21

The current plan is for the University's **academic calendar for 2020-21** for undergraduates to remain as previously published with the exceptions noted below. This calendar is subject to change depending on the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Face-to-face orientation for new undergraduate students (including residential transfer students) ordinarily scheduled in the summer months will be held from Friday, August 21 to Tuesday, August 25. Orientation for commuting transfer students will be held on Tuesday, August 25.
2. Face-to-face classes will begin as scheduled on Wednesday, August 26 and will run without interruption through Friday, November 20. In contrast to the prior published calendar, the normal schedule of classes will now be held on Labor Day (Monday, September 7), the Fall Break Day (Friday, October 9), and Veterans Day (Monday, November 11). Face-to-face classes and most student on-campus residency will end on Friday, November 20.
3. Following the break for Thanksgiving week, classes will resume Monday, November 30 and will continue through Friday, December 4, by remote delivery only for most students.  
  
Students in some health sciences programs will return to campus following the Thanksgiving Break for clinical skills assessments that cannot be scheduled prior to the Holiday Break and that are required for progression to the next semester.  
  
Some of the graduate and professional student programs will essentially follow the undergraduate calendar for fall 2020, i.e., ending face-to-face classes on Friday, November 20 and completing the term remotely. However, other graduate and professional programs will follow a different calendar due to requirements for continued clinical skills training and other experiential components. Students in each program will be notified by mid-August about their specific calendar and any planned modifications to the prior published calendar.
4. Final examinations will be conducted as scheduled, but by remote means only, from Monday, December 7 through Friday, December 11, and the term will end on December 11, as scheduled.
5. The spring term is currently scheduled to begin on Wednesday, January 13, 2021.

## B. SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

The schedule of classes for fall 2020 and related room assignments are currently being reviewed to ensure that the public health and safety parameters outlined later in this plan can be maintained. Every effort is being made to minimize disruption in the existing schedule to students and faculty. However, a number of adjustments will need to be made to accommodate the additional sections required to maintain social distancing in classrooms and teaching labs, which will necessitate an approximately 40% reduction in classroom capacity overall. Students and faculty will be notified well in advance of the start of classes about any alterations in their schedules that are necessary due to the modifications in classroom capacity. (See Section III.A for more information about the curriculum delivery plan and class schedule.)

Clinical practica schedules for the various health professions programs involve student placements at clinical sites across the United States. The schedules for students in these programs will be coordinated and managed at the individual program level, as external program accreditation standards and regulatory body guidelines vary across state lines. The faculty and professional staff who oversee the clinical education components of the curriculum will communicate directly with the students about any modifications to their practica schedules.

Again, it may be necessary to make other adjustments to class schedules over time, depending on the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## II. PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

### A. SOCIAL DISTANCING

All campus facilities and operations are being designed to ensure compliance with the **CDC's 6-foot social distancing guideline** where possible. Ground and floor markings, placed to maintain six-foot (ft.) separation between individuals, will be positioned in known congestion areas to help guide and ensure appropriate social distancing.

All classroom furniture seating will be adjusted to accommodate a 6-ft. separation between individuals. In undergraduate science teaching laboratories that have fixed furniture arrangements, such as biology and chemistry labs, maximum class sizes will be set to maintain the 6-ft. distancing requirement. As noted above, class section sizes will need to be adjusted accordingly, which may result in changes to students' current schedules. (See Section III for more information regarding delivery of the curriculum).

Dining areas and other public seating spaces will be furnished to allow for the physical distancing requirements.

All students and employees will be expected to remain in compliance with the maximum group size parameters outlined in the Governor's **Gradual Plan to Restart Maine's Economy**.

All University operations and shared office spaces will be reviewed to limit the density of individuals to the extent possible. This will be achieved through a variety of solutions including, but not limited to, remote work for all or part of the duties of some employees, flexible/staggered work scheduling, the use of plexiglass shielding as dictated by the specific student-facing needs of the department/area, and the re-purposing of small and large conference rooms to achieve social distancing targets. The use of Zoom videoconferencing technology will be expected for all meetings whenever possible, including large meetings such as the monthly meeting of the University Faculty Assembly.

### B. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF CAMPUS FACILITIES

To the extent possible, services for students will be designed to provide flexibility for access. For example, student academic support, counseling, student access, student health, and financial aid services will all be available in both face-to-face and virtual modalities, e.g. through Zoom or other online platforms. At the same time, the ability to maintain the health and safety of our community will necessitate some limitations in hours of operation of some buildings, such as the libraries, the Ripich Commons, and athletic facilities, as well as the



need for specific traffic flow patterns. Specifics are discussed throughout this plan and will be directly communicated to UNE community members and any visitors to campus. Signage throughout the campuses will also help inform everyone about traffic flow and facility restrictions.

## C. CLEANING AND DISINFECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

UNE will follow **CDC guidelines for enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices** in all campus facilities using products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) and are appropriate for the particular surfaces.

Campus common areas, including common areas of the residence halls, such as restrooms, elevators, and reception areas, and other frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned at increased intervals by our Campus Services professional staff, including the use of an electrostatic sanitation system (commonly referred to as a portable misting/fogging system). Sanitation stations with equipment, supplies, product information, and usage guidelines will be located in centralized areas of each building. Any member of the UNE community may request proper sanitation training through Housekeeping Services.

Employees will be expected to clean and disinfect their personal work area daily. Any frequently touched areas should be cleaned with a household disinfectant or 70% alcohol cleaner. This includes computer workstations, keyboards, mouse and trackpad devices, desks, phones, door handles, and any other frequently touched areas. Sanitation stations with equipment, supplies, product information, and usage guidelines will be located in centralized areas of each building. Trash receptacles should be placed in the hallway, outside office/work areas, and they will be emptied by Housekeeping. Employees will also be expected to regularly clean their face coverings or face shields (see Section D.1 below for more information about face coverings).

Enhanced cleaning and disinfection protocols will also be used for athletic facilities, such as the strength and conditioning, locker, and athletic training rooms. These protocols include self-service options for occupants, who will be provided with equipment and materials, as well as daily deep sanitation by misting with electrostatically charged EPA registered disinfectants.

University fleet vehicles will be sanitized by Facilities between uses by different drivers. Sanitization will consist of cleaning of touched surfaces or misting as required. The contracted transportation companies, including the Portland Campus Shuttle and the Biddeford Campus to Biddeford Shuttle, will use their sanitation protocols as approved by the State.

## D. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTIVE MEASURES

**1. FACE COVERINGS:** In consideration of the State of Maine and CDC guidelines regarding the use of cloth face coverings, the University will require the use of cloth or other approved face coverings at all times (indoors and outdoors) with the following exceptions:

- ▶ Employees working alone in their private offices
- ▶ Students in their dorm rooms
- ▶ Employees performing work outside (landscapers, facilities management workers, etc.) who are able to maintain social distance at all times
- ▶ All faculty who are teaching on campus may wear a face shield when they are conducting teaching activities. Once the teaching activities have ended, the faculty member must wear a face mask/covering.
- ▶ Community members engaging in moderate to high-intensity outdoor physical activity (e.g., running and other athletic activities) and who are able to maintain social distance at all times
- ▶ Other approved rooms and situations. Requests for additional exceptions should be submitted to the relevant unit head (e.g., dean of students, department chair, program director, or college dean, etc.). All requests will also be reviewed by an ad hoc committee appointed by the University's senior leadership.

The University will provide a cloth face covering for all employees and students. Face shields will also be provided to faculty who are teaching on campus and who have requested these through their dean. UNE community members may also use a personal cloth face covering, such as a bandana, created per [CDC's instructions on homemade cloth face coverings](#). Any additional required personal protection equipment (PPE) will also be provided by the University.

Employees and students who are unable to wear a face covering for health or other reasons should explore their options via the reasonable accommodation request processes available through Human Resources or the Student Access Center, respectively. (See Section II.E for more information).

**2. HAND HYGIENE:** Employees and students will be expected to wash their hands (at least 20 seconds of washing with soap and water) on a regular basis throughout the day, particularly when arriving and leaving campus, after touching their face, touching communal surfaces, coughing or sneezing, or using bathroom facilities. Hand sanitizer stations will also be available at multiple locations across the campuses.

3. **COUGH ETIQUETTE:** Employees and students will be encouraged to cough or sneeze into their elbow or use a tissue, covering both their mouth and nose, and then immediately wash their hands as described above.
4. **TRAFFIC FLOW:** To the extent possible, designation of certain doorways as points of entry and others as points of exit will be followed. Right-lane traffic patterns (similar to vehicular traffic) will be encouraged throughout all buildings.
5. **PLEXIGLASS SHIELDING:** An inventory of high traffic transaction areas is being conducted to assess where shielding will be useful, such as the Library Circulation Desk, Dining Services check-in station, and Solutions Desk at the Commons.  
  
Security vehicles and shuttle buses will be outfitted with shielding between the driver and passenger seats to afford a greater level of protection when transporting individuals.
6. **SPECIALIZED PROTECTIVE (N95) MASKS:** Any employee or student required to wear an N95 mask (also known as an N95 respirator) will be required to successfully undergo a health screening and will be fit tested by the professional staff in UNE's Department of Environmental Health prior to being authorized to use the mask.
7. **PROTECTIVE MEASURES IN THE STUDENT HEALTH CENTER, CLINICAL SKILLS LABORATORIES, AND CLINICS:** Social distancing is not feasible in the Student Health Center and certain clinical skills instructional laboratories, including the Oral Health Center and the Dental Hygiene Clinic, that require students to practice on patients, their peers, standardized patients (actors), and in the simulation environment, all with close faculty supervision. For non-aerosol-producing clinical care and skills training (taking blood pressure, listening to heart/lung sounds, etc.), all participants (health care providers, student examiners, student examinees, and faculty) will wear surgical masks supplemented with a cloth mask, gloves, re-usable cloth gowns, white coats, or other appropriate overlay apparel. For aerosol-producing clinical care and skills training, particularly in dental medicine and dental hygiene, students and faculty will wear N95-type masks and face shields, disposable gowns or overlay apparel, and gloves. Masks, gowns, and gloves will be discarded after each aerosol-generating procedure. Face shields can be cleaned and reused, in accordance with established protocols.

## E. ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS

Student requests for accommodations regarding participation in on-campus classes and other activities, face covering requirements, or other COVID-19 related requirements should be directed to the **Student Access Center**.

Employee requests for accommodations regarding on-campus work and other activities, face covering requirements, or other COVID-19 related requirements will be handled by Human Resources in consultation with the employee's supervisor.

## F. RETURN TO CAMPUS FOR UNE EMPLOYEES

Many of the policies and procedures described above and throughout this overarching plan for reopening the University are also included in Phase 1 of the **Return to Campus Plan for Employees**. This plan has been shared with all University employees via email, and it is posted on the **Novel Coronavirus COVID-19 webpage**. Human Resources will continue to update UNE employees as policies and procedures evolve in the coming weeks and months.

Due to the change in the academic calendar, UNE will not observe Labor Day as an official holiday. Instead, UNE will observe the Wednesday before Thanksgiving as a holiday for employees. In addition, the floating holiday typically accrued during the first pay period in October will be accrued during the first pay period in September.

## G. STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE HEALTH

- 1. FACILITIES:** The physical footprint and staffing of the Student Health Centers are being relocated and expanded on both campuses to accommodate the possible need to manage both suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19, as well as to safely manage the regular and ongoing operations of student health.
- 2. VISITS:** The **Student Health Centers** will be available to students for both face-to-face visits through both walk-in and scheduled appointments, as well as visits via Zoom. The Health Centers on both campuses will continue to provide a full scope of care, including acute care visits, physicals, vaccinations, and laboratory services.
- 3. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT ILLNESS:** Students who are in need of medical care should contact the Student Health Center or seek medical care at one of the local acute care facilities immediately. Those students who seek care at a facility off campus must notify the Student Health Center as well.

A student who experiences any of the symptoms described under Daily Self-Monitoring below who is in contact with a COVID-19-positive individual or who is diagnosed with COVID-19 is required to self-isolate and immediately contact the Student Health Center.

- 4. TESTING:** In an effort to safeguard the UNE community against the threat of COVID-19 infection and transmission, we have developed a 4-tiered testing program that includes initial broad-based entry testing, ongoing symptomatic testing, focused surveillance testing of asymptomatic individuals, and testing of wastewater emerging from each residence hall. Baseline and surveillance testing will be conducted in partnership with the **Broad Institute** in Cambridge, MA. Students with symptoms that might be the result of COVID infection will be tested with a point-of-care system on campus. All confirmatory testing will be done in partnership with **MaineHealth's NorDx laboratories**.

Upon return to campus this fall semester, all undergraduate students will be required to bring evidence of a negative test taken within 72 hours of arrival, and will be tested again shortly after arrival. This broad-based testing will provide critical baseline data that will inform our subsequent testing protocols. The student health center will provide ongoing testing for all students who develop respiratory or other symptoms that might reflect COVID infection.

UNE will not be testing employees. As described below, UNE will encourage self-monitoring of symptoms among all members of the community, including employees. Employees showing signs of illness should seek immediate care from their health care provider.

- 5. Employee Responsibility to Report Illness:** Employees who are diagnosed with COVID-19, who have any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19 (see below), or who have been in close contact with COVID-19 positive individuals will be expected to contact their primary care provider, immediate supervisor, and Human Resources for guidance.
- 6. Daily Self-Monitoring by All Members of the UNE Community:** Early detection of illness can prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the UNE community. All community members are expected to monitor their health daily. The University will be providing an easy to use mobile app for this purpose (more details to follow). Students and employees will be expected to stay home or in their dorm room if they are sick and if any of the following symptoms or circumstances apply to them:
- ▶ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - ▶ Cough
  - ▶ Temperature that exceeds 100.4 F when measured with a household thermometer
  - ▶ New loss of smell or taste



- ▶ Sore throat
- ▶ Muscle pain
- ▶ Headache
- ▶ Congestion or runny nose
- ▶ Nausea or vomiting
- ▶ Diarrhea
- ▶ Anyone in their household diagnosed with COVID-19 or has exhibited COVID-19 symptoms (listed above) within the last 14 days
- ▶ Close contact (being within 6 feet for 15 or more minutes) with anyone who has a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis or COVID-19 symptoms within the last 14 days

As noted above, students with any of these symptoms or circumstances will be expected to contact the Student Health Center. Employees with any of these symptoms or circumstances are expected to contact their immediate supervisor and Human Resources.

**7. CONTACT TRACING:** UNE will conduct contact tracing to the extent feasible. Those who are symptomatic must quarantine until test results are confirmed negative before returning to on-campus classes (students) or work (employees). Those who are asymptomatic will be expected to quarantine for 14 days before return to on-campus classes (students) or work (employees).

**8. PLAN FOR POSITIVE CASES AND THOSE AWAITING TEST RESULTS:** Employees who have a positive COVID-19 test or who are waiting for testing results are expected to remain at home until cleared by a health professional and Human Resources to return to on-campus work. Any arrangements for remote work during quarantine should be discussed and approved with the employee's immediate supervisor and Human Resources.

Students awaiting test results must remain in their dorm rooms. Students who have a positive COVID-19 test who can safely return home and do not have high-risk individuals in their household should do so.

For students who must remain on campus, the first floor of East Hall (resident dormitory) on the Biddeford Campus has been designated as the quarantine space for residential students. Transportation of students to this quarantine location will be provided by the University. This dorm is situated in an ideal location given its proximity to the Student Health Center. The suite features in this dorm also include kitchenettes and single bedrooms.

The locations of both hallway and building entry doors allow for restrictions to access, which will prevent students not residing in that section from being able to enter. The programming of student ID cards, used for accessing residence halls, will reflect this area as restricted. Only those residing on that hallway, as well as approved professional staff (e.g., Health Center, Housing, Security, Housekeeping) will be provided access.

All students in quarantine will be evaluated on a daily basis, including self-temperature checks and Zoom/face-to-face meetings with student health clinical staff. All students in quarantine are required to comply with all quarantine rules, which will be provided upon quarantine. Any student found in violation of the established rules will be required to leave campus and will not be able to return until they are cleared by a health professional. Well students attempting to or gaining access to the quarantine space will also face consequences for violating the clearly posted directives regarding restrictions on this space.

Students who feel well enough to continue with classes during quarantine may participate remotely.

Students may return to regular on-campus activities and housing when they are cleared by a health professional and the Student Health Center.

- 9. IMMUNIZATIONS:** In order to improve the overall safety of the campus, we will strongly encourage all members of the UNE community who reside or work on campus to be immunized for influenza.

## **H. REPORTING COVID-19 CASES: THE UNIVERSITY WILL NOTIFY THE MAINE CDC OF ALL REPORTABLE CASES.**

### **I. EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT TRAVEL POLICY**

- 1. EMPLOYEE TRAVEL:** The travel policy implemented in March 2020 prohibiting non-essential domestic and international travel remains in effect until further notice. Exceptions include employees who travel regularly as part of their job (such as medical directors) and other travel that is deemed essential. Approval for essential travel will require approval from the provost (academic areas) or the senior vice president of Finance and Administration (administrative areas).
- 2. Student Travel:** As of the date of publication of this plan, individuals traveling to campus from areas other than Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey must sign an attestation that they have completed one of the following before returning to campus:

- ▶ A negative COVID test no more than 72 hours prior to entering Maine.
- ▶ Arrange for a test upon arrival & self-quarantine until the results are obtained.
- ▶ Self-quarantine for 14 days.

Individuals from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey are required to sign an attestation that they have not traveled to states or countries other than the specified states within 14 days of their return to campus.

All community members are advised against travel outside of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey until further notice. If individuals do travel out of these specified states, they must follow the 14-day self-quarantine/testing guidelines outlined above upon their return to Maine.

These travel requirements are subject to change based on evolving State requirements.

## J. EDUCATING THE UNE COMMUNITY ON COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS

Concerted, current, and accessible education and training will be utilized to inform students, parents, and employees about requirements and expectations for resuming operations on-campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is important so that all members of the UNE community understand the known risks of COVID-19, understand how UNE and each member of the UNE community can help mitigate transmission and exposure, and understand UNE's requirements and expectations. All members of the UNE community will be expected to complete an online training program prior to return to campus.

A COVID-19 signage campaign is underway on both campuses and will consist of the installation of traditional signs, as well as messaging on social media. Signage will remind the community members of the importance of their continued adherence to best practices and to reinforce the training they received. Signage will also inform the general public of temporarily restricted access to UNE facilities.

## K. COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY'S HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES: UNE ONWARD PROMISE

UNE will expect the entire community of faculty, professional staff, and students to confirm their commitment to the campus-wide COVID-19 rules of community engagement regarding social distancing, masking, enhanced hygiene, testing, symptom checking, and contact tracing. This will be included as part of the online training described above. All members of the

UNE community will be expected to honor their commitment to the University's COVID-19 policies as they return to campus with the understanding that policies may change as regulatory or pandemic public health advisories evolve throughout the academic year.

Violations of UNE policies and protocols related to COVID-19 may subject individuals to discipline or other actions, including but not limited to removal from campus.

### III. DELIVERY OF THE CURRICULUM

#### A. INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY PLAN

The faculty, academic professional staff, directors, department chairs, and deans of UNE's academic programs and colleges are all focused on providing a high quality, safe academic experiences for students, maximizing opportunities for face-to-face interaction to the extent feasible given the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with CDC and State guidance for social distancing and limits on group sizes. As noted earlier in this plan, a detailed classroom and teaching laboratory analysis has been conducted using current 6-ft. social distancing guidelines to inform revisions and updates to the current schedule of classes for fall 2020. Class sizes, number of sections, and time slots will balance face-to-face teaching and learning with available resources.

In order to assure that students can safely attend class while maintaining 6-ft distancing (and wearing the required face masks), classrooms will have their seating adjusted accordingly. There are several consequences to this change in capacity. This will result in many courses only being able to accommodate about one-half of their enrolled students on a given day. In order to balance physical and scheduling constraints, UNE is planning to move to a "hybrid instruction" model for fall 2020 for undergraduate courses, which involves a mix of face-to-face and asynchronous online learning experiences. The hybrid model is a common teaching pedagogy which has been developed over the past 20 years.

**1. STRUCTURAL MODEL:** This plan is always subject to change based on the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. The current plan for the basic structural model that UNE will follow for the fall term is as follows:

- ▶ Most undergraduate courses will follow a Monday-Wednesday or Tuesday-Thursday schedule (except for a small number of classes that already meet once a week or have other alternative formats).
- ▶ Each class will meet in a 90-minute block (80 minutes of instruction) on this schedule, and most teaching labs will meet for 3 hours (two 90-minute blocks) as usual.
- ▶ For course sections that cannot be accommodated in a single classroom due to the reduced capacity of the rooms with 6-ft distancing (which is the majority of sections even for small classes), each course or section will be split into two sub-groups. Each sub-group will meet alternately on one of the two scheduled classes, i.e., Monday or Wednesday, or Tuesday or Thursday following a similar pedagogical model. The other half of the coursework will be done online using various electronic resources (recorded lectures, readings, etc.) depending on the course and faculty preference.



- Likewise, most teaching labs will be split into two sub-groups. Each sub-group will meet on alternate weeks, and the sub-group that is not meeting that week will do lab work online (modeling, writing reports, data analysis, recorded demonstrations, etc.).

A working group of faculty are collaborating with UNE's Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) to develop a suite of hybrid teaching and learning approaches that individual faculty can choose from in modeling their course structure, depending on the discipline and level of the course, the style and preferences of the instructor, and the types of learning that can be adapted to remote teaching and learning. The most popular of these models is the so-called "flipped" classroom, where students do pre-work (reading a chapter, watching a recorded lecture, or other self-directed work prior to each section of a class) for the remote portion, and then engage in active learning (discussion, group work, etc.) based on that pre-work for the face-to-face portion.

However, there are many variations on the general hybrid model, and faculty will have a range of options to choose from. Workshops, online resources, communities of practice, and other support and resources for development and refinement of their teaching and learning models within this basic framework will be available for faculty. These approaches are either already in use or being developed this summer to allow faculty time to adjust their courses to this new format. Prior to the start of the term, students will also be provided with information and guidance on these models and the expectations of the faculty as they adapt, including sessions during first-year orientation, and other similar sessions for returning students.

- 2. RECORDED CLASS SESSIONS:** In anticipation that some students may be temporarily unable to participate in face-to-face class sessions (due to illness or other reason), the faculty will be required to record each of their face-to-face class sessions using Zoom and to make these recordings available to all students in Blackboard, the University's learning management system. This will allow absent students to keep pace with their coursework through remote methodologies. The addition of the recorded class sessions to the asynchronous online materials will essentially produce a full record of the course online, allowing students to stay in synch with the course. Faculty will also be encouraged to consider alternative assignments for graded class activities that students miss and cannot replicate on their own. Students attending class in the normal face-to-face/hybrid modality will also be able to refer to these recorded sessions for review and reinforcement of key material as part of their regular learning.

**3. SUPPORT FOR ONLINE LEARNING:** We also recognize that some non-residential students may not have reliable Internet service, live in environments that are not conducive to study, and/or require technology support to continue the online component of their education. To address these concerns, we plan to continue our computer laptop loan program and provide designated spaces on campus for students to complete the online portions of their classes. This will include several proctored study halls on each campus, as well as individual small rooms that can be reserved by students to study, take an exam, meet by Zoom privately with an advisor or counselor, and for other specific student academic needs.

**4. GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS:** As noted earlier in the plan, many of the graduate and professional programs already have students on campus this summer using the basic hybrid instruction delivery model described above, with the larger classes broken into a series of smaller cohorts. The instructional plan for those programs and other graduate and professional programs that begin in fall 2020 will continue to be refined based on the experiences in these summer programs, but will involve variations of the hybrid model based on room and scheduling constraints.

## **B. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (INCLUDING CLINICAL PRACTICA, INTERNSHIPS, SERVICE LEARNING AND RESEARCH)**

Clinical practica/internships will continue to be coordinated and managed at the individual program level, as these experiences occur at different types of health care facilities (e.g., acute care hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient clinics) and different locations throughout Maine and the United States. The curriculum in all of UNE's health sciences programs already includes content and skills training regarding the risks associated with being a health care provider and the protective measures to prevent transmission of infectious diseases (e.g., appropriate handwashing technique and the use of personal protective equipment) prior to these clinical experiences. Current information regarding the transmission of and protective measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 will be included in this training.

Other types of internships in non-health care environments will be coordinated and managed by the new central advising office of the Student Advising Center, in collaboration with the specific internship and practicum coordination that occurs at the individual program level (e.g., the College of Arts and Sciences internship office for credit-bearing internships, the various Westbrook College of Health Professions programs for individual clinical rotations, etc.). The faculty and professional staff are responsible for ensuring that internship sites have the necessary health and safety measures in place before students are assigned to sites.

For the time being, service learning and volunteer activities shall continue remotely. When face-to-face experiences resume, the faculty and professional staff who oversee these experiences for UNE students will be responsible for ensuring the service learning/volunteer site has in place the necessary protective measures before placing a student at that site for face-to-face activities.

Like internships, clinical practica, and service learning/volunteer experiences, student research lies at the heart of the experiential component of the UNE educational experience. Our goal is for students to return to research activities as soon as is reasonable. Most faculty have already developed detailed plans for resuming their research activities, including plans for incorporating students where applicable. Students will be required to follow all research-related policies and training guidelines. Students who are completing thesis work or who are nearing graduation will have priority for participation in research. Wherever possible, scholarly projects that can be completed remotely will be encouraged in order to minimize the number of individuals in research labs. In the case of students who conduct research in facilities outside of UNE or who have affiliation with another institution, consideration of policies and procedures at the outside institution will be crucial in decisions to approve such experiences (See Section VI for more details about UNE's plan for resuming on-campus research and scholarship).

## C. STUDY ABROAD

UNE's fall study-abroad programs remain one of the biggest areas of uncertainty at this time. Students who are signed up for such programs (the vast majority of whom are scheduled to spend the fall semester at UNE's campus in Tangier, Morocco) are also registered for our Maine-based courses and on-campus housing in case travel is prohibited. UNE's Office of Global Affairs is actively monitoring the evolving situation regarding international travel and providing updated information to students and their families throughout the summer. Because these experiences include travel, residential, health care, and other daily life considerations, local policies and procedures to protect public health and safety are being highly scrutinized to ensure the protective measures are comparable to those expected on UNE's campuses in Maine. The go/no-go decisions on study abroad will be made by early August.

At the present time, some programs out of the country are scheduled to go forward. For example, the Professional Science Masters in Ocean Food Systems is currently scheduled to go to Iceland in October, following that country's detailed plans for allowing foreigners to enter and stay in the country, which includes testing either prior to travel or upon arrival. PSM students will spend several weeks there as part of their normal education and training program. All programs are subject to change depending on the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## D. LIBRARY SERVICES

The mission of Library Services is to support students on different campus locations, abroad, at clinical sites, and online. As such, the vast majority of UNE library resources and services have been and will continue to be available by remote access.

The Biddeford and Portland campus libraries are implementing a phased return to campus approach beginning in August 2020. It is anticipated that this will include a mix of on-campus and remote student support. The resumption of in-person library services will occur as feasible in accordance with University guidance, CDC and state guidance, and information from local, state, and national organizations governing libraries, archives, and museum spaces.

Based on results of a recent study regarding the attenuation of SARS-CoV-2 on common library materials, the library will continue with a 72-hour quarantine policy for all loaned materials between patrons. Print books on reserve will be available for 2-hour in-library use followed by a 72-hour quarantine period. Access to eBooks will be increased for required and supplemental readings as feasible.

Policies and procedures regarding hours of operation, reference and instruction, use of study space, etc., are currently in development. It is likely that access to the campus libraries, including special collections and art galleries, will be restricted to UNE community members only, with very limited access for others with permission and by appointment for the time being (See Section VII for more information on visitor policies). UNE community members and potential visitors will be notified about these policies and procedures via email and updates on the Library Services webpage.

## E. TECHNOLOGY AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

The professional staff in UNE's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and Information Technology Services (ITS) created a comprehensive array of resources for faculty and students regarding remote teaching and learning in spring 2020. These resources have continually been updated since that time and are now focused on providing support for faculty to implement the curriculum delivery plan outlined in Section III.A above.

Additional support has been added in the form of a self-paced course on fully online course design, a companion site on hybrid course design, and workshops and resources on forms of blended instruction. ITS and CETL continue to provide virtual group tutorials, one-on-one consultations, drop-in help desk hours, etc., on topics ranging from assessment with virtual proctoring to effective use of Zoom. These sessions include valuable lessons learned from an extensive survey of faculty, professional staff, and students after the move to remote instruction this past spring.

## IV. STUDENT LIFE

### A. RESIDENTIAL HOUSING

The current plan is to maintain the on-campus residential experience for students, consistent with health and safety priorities. This plan is subject to change depending on the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. A plan has been established to proceed with a double-occupancy model of residential housing and to eliminate all triple-occupancy options. Lounges in some dorms may also be converted to double-occupancy rooms to accommodate the need for additional beds.

Hotel space is currently being explored in the local community to accommodate the projected number of students needing a housing option. As noted in Section II.G.8 above, a quarantine space has been designated in East Hall.

**1. MOVE-IN PLAN:** A plan for fall move-in is being finalized, which reflects the shared guidance of the Offices of Housing and Residential/Commuter Life, Security, Facilities, and Housekeeping. The plan will limit the number of people assisting with the move-in of individual students (i.e., no more than one family member or friend per student) and minimize the number of people in residence halls at any given time by utilizing assigned move-in times. Students living within reasonable driving distance of the Biddeford Campus will be provided the opportunity to travel to campus in the weeks before the start of the fall semester to drop off belongings in the residence halls. A communication will be sent to residential students in July detailing this process and providing the opportunity for families to make these arrangements. The Offices of Housing and Facilities are also developing a system that will allow residents to request room set-ups in advance of their moving-in, eliminating the need for staff to complete this work while students are present. The July communication will describe this process.

**2. RESIDENCE HALL CONDUCT PLAN:** The University is currently finalizing its comprehensive COVID-19 policies and procedures to set conduct expectations in the residence halls, consistent with CDC and State guidance. These policies will include requirements and guidelines on topics ranging from social distancing in lounges, to the use of shared areas such as kitchens and laundry rooms. Guests, defined for this purpose as anyone who is not a resident of a Biddeford Campus residence hall (this includes commuting UNE students), will not be permitted entrance. The only exception will be during move-in, when resident students may bring one family member or friend with them for assistance. (See Section VII. For more details on visitor policies.) The enforcement of



residence hall conduct policies will also be communicated to students in July. Enforcement will follow a tiered approach, recognizing that early offenses should be approached in the spirit of education, with only repeat or more egregious offenses warranting punitive action.

## B. ON-CAMPUS DINING

The University has developed policies and procedures regarding the provision of food services in alignment with State and CDC guidelines. **Parkhurst**, the University's dining services vendor, is working collaboratively with UNE professional staff to provide safe access to meals and snacks for students and employees in the main dining facilities and via the various satellite retail locations on both campuses. Parkhurst will also provide meals to students in quarantine on campus, should that become needed.

## C. STUDENT SUPPORT

All student support services transitioned to distance interactions in spring 2020, including the Professional Advising Center (academic and career), Student Academic Success Center (SASC, tutoring, and other academic support), the Student Access Center, Student Counseling Center, Student Health Center, Registrar, and Student Financial Services. Student guides for accessing these resources are posted on each resource's website, and there is a comprehensive guide to accessing all of these resources on the **UNE COVID-19 website**. The majority of these services will continue to be available in fall 2020 through both face-to-face and remote options. For any services that cannot be delivered through remote technology, professional staff will ensure their respective office areas are arranged to maintain social distancing and other appropriate precautionary measures.

- 1. COUNSELING CENTER:** Professional staff in the Counseling Center will provide the majority of sessions with students via Zoom. Protocols are being established for students who require face-to-face consultations, and physical adjustments will be made to office spaces to remain compliant with social distancing guidelines, while maintaining client confidentiality. Policies and procedures are also being developed that address emergency mental health needs of students in crisis and that require face-to-face intervention. These policies and procedures will outline a response that addresses student needs while also minimizing risk to Counseling, Health Services, Security, or Housing professional staff.
- 2. STUDENT ACCESS CENTER:** The Student Access Center will conduct the majority of appointments via Zoom and is prepared to handle student requests for accommodations related to UNE's COVID-19 policies and protocols.

- 3. STUDENT AFFAIRS:** All functions falling under the Division of Student Affairs, including Housing, Student Engagement, Health and Wellness Education, Student Conduct, Intercultural Student Engagement, the First Year Experience, and Graduate and Professional Student Affairs also transitioned to providing remote services in spring 2020 for individual students and undergraduate/graduate clubs and organizations. Zoom, email, and telephone will remain the preferred methods for communication into the fall semester. To the extent possible, programming, typically administered in person and often to large groups, will go forward remotely and in smaller, socially-distanced groups.
- 4. CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES:** In spring of 2020, club and organization activity, as well as the social and educational programming coordinated by Student Affairs team members, was moved to the virtual environment. Much of this activity will continue to occur via the use of Zoom, minimizing the need for in-person organizational meetings. To the extent possible, in compliance with State and CDC guidelines, UNE will provide on-campus shared experiences for students. However, some traditional activities that brought together hundreds of community members will need to be modified or eliminated for health and safety reasons.

## V. ATHLETICS, CLUB SPORTS, AND INTRAMURALS

Our primary goals for all our athletics and recreation planning are to offer the highest quality of student experience possible while balancing the health and safety of our students, athletics staff, and others in our community. In addition to our own deliberations, we are guided by recommendations from governmental agencies and professional organizations, including the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA), the state and federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the **National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA)**, and the **National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA)**. We also work closely with our athletic conference, the Commonwealth Coast Conference (CCC). An Athletics COVID-19 Action Team has been established consisting of the director of Athletics, UNE's medical director, the NCAA compliance coordinator, the Faculty Athletics Representative, and representatives from Recreational Sports, Athletic Training, Strength and Conditioning, and Facilities Management, to oversee policies and procedures with respect to athletics. This group continues to make recommendations to the Provost and President regarding Athletics and related sports and recreation programs.

**VARSITY SPORTS:** The University is engaged in discussions with the presidents, medical professionals, and athletic directors of other universities and colleges throughout Maine and those in the CCC, and is monitoring the evolving guidance from the NCAA, CDC, and other regulatory bodies noted above to inform decisions regarding the resumption of varsity sports.

On July 17, the CCC announced that it is suspending intercollegiate athletic conference competition for the fall 2020 semester. UNE has suspended all fall semester athletic competition, including swimming and rugby, which are not part of the CCC. UNE remains committed in the coming semester to providing our student athletes with experiences in athletics, including training and practice opportunities, that comply with institutional policy, CDC, and state of Maine executive orders regarding safety protocols. New safety procedures include, but are not limited to, verification of daily symptom screenings, temperature checks, and maintenance of social distancing.

Additionally, student athletes will not lose their National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) eligibility as a result of this decision. Per current NCAA rules, student-athletes do not use a season of eligibility if their team does not compete during the traditional sports season. Therefore, no UNE student-athlete will use a season of eligibility during the fall semester.

Please note that the decision does not affect the process of required pre-participation forms and documentation. All student-athletes are required to complete the necessary NCAA Compliance/Athletic Training/Sports Information elements prior to engaging in sport-related activities.

Also note that because preseason for fall sports has been canceled, all student-athletes will return to campus with the general student population. Because winter sport competition is suspended for the fall semester, all student-athletes will leave campus at the same time as the general student population in November. (See Section I.A for more information about modifications to UNE's academic calendar for 2020-21.)

With improved public health conditions and relevant NCAA guidance, the CCC hopes to begin competition for winter sports athletic competition as early as January 1, 2021. Spring sports currently remain on schedule as planned, with the exception of the cancelation of their non-traditional fall play date. In addition, should NCAA legislation permit fall sports teams to conduct athletic competition in the spring 2021 semester, CCC schedules and championships may be adjusted accordingly.

**CLUB SPORTS:** UNE will suspend all fall athletic club competition. As with varsity sports, UNE is reviewing all return-to-sport protocols, safety guidelines, and information from governing bodies.

**INTRAMURAL ACTIVITIES:** Intramural sport/activity programming will be assessed for the potential for COVID-19 transmission, and scheduled offerings will be adjusted as necessary. Activities will be amended to comply with social distancing and gathering size limitations. Examples of virtual and other activities that comply with social distance recommendations may include eSports, singles tennis, cornhole, badminton, singles pickleball, one-on-one basketball games such as HORSE, free throw and 3-point competitions, punt/pass/kick competition, disc golf, billiards, air hockey, scavenger hunts, etc.

## VI. RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

As a university with a high level of education-linked research and scholarship, virtually all of which involves students, discovery and the creation and application of new knowledge are core to UNE's mission. As noted in Section III.B above, research and scholarship is integral to the student experience at UNE. In response to COVID 19, on-campus and face-to-face research operations were largely closed down with the exception of essential functions and COVID-19 related work, as was the case across higher education institutions.

The phased return to on-campus research is underway via a rigorous review process overseen by the University's associate provost for Research and Scholarship (APRS) and the University Research Council. Given the diversity and complexity of research conducted at the University, specific plans are being developed for each research program and reviewed for compliance to best practice guidelines, e.g., for human subjects or vertebrate animal research. Other recommendations for travel and extramural funding processes during the COVID-19 pandemic are also in development. A key component of this process is timely communication with the UNE research community and outside research partners concerning changing regulatory policies (national and state) as well as UNE plans, policies, and protocols. This communication is facilitated via the [Office of Research and Scholarship blog](#).

### A. ACCESS TO UNE RESEARCH FACILITIES

Research operations will follow UNE's general health and safety plans and protocols (including, but not limited to, social distancing and use of PPE). This includes activities that are occurring on campuses as well as off-site (e.g., fieldwork, research vessels, and human subjects research sites). Access to research facilities will be dependent upon the specific size of the research space, the number of individuals involved in the specific research activity, and the appropriate use of PPE as determined by consultation with UNE's Department of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS). These details will be outlined by the principal investigator (PI) of each research group as part of the approval process described below.

### B. APPROVAL PROCESS

There is a three-part approval process to reopen a research program through the APRS: 1) Each investigator (faculty, professional staff, student) must provide documented completion of UNE's COVID-19 training; 2) Each research team/lab must submit a Resuming Research Activity Plan, providing details specific to the type of research to be conducted; and 3) Each research group must complete a safety plan/checklist as appropriate for its research facility, in consultation with EHS.



### C. OFF-SITE FACILITIES INCLUDING FIELD WORK

Research activities conducted by members of the UNE community must comply with all policies, wherever they take place. Specific guidance relating to these activities will be provided by the APRS as Best Practice Guidelines. In some cases, additional guidelines must be considered, including policies of partner institutions or clinical research sites. These details must be included for review as part of the Resuming Research Activity Plan.

### D. SITUATIONS WHEN SOCIAL DISTANCING IS NOT FEASIBLE

Some of the spaces in which research is conducted are not conducive to social distancing (e.g., research vessels and small laboratories). In these situations, plans will be developed, in consultation with EHS and APRS, to employ appropriate PPE to minimize risk. These details must be included in the Resuming Research Activity Plan.

### E. REMOTE WORK

As an ongoing guiding principle, all scholarly work that can be conducted remotely should be done in this manner.

## VII. VISITORS (GUESTS) AND EVENTS – EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL

To avoid risks of potential exposure to COVID-19, UNE will restrict outside visitors on its campuses, unless they have reason to be present for official business. The general public will not be allowed in campus buildings or residence halls in order to use the libraries, fitness centers, and dining areas; to attend lectures/athletic events or similar functions; or to visit friends in residences for daytime or overnight stays. (See Section IV.A.2 for more details on the policy regarding guests in residence halls.)

Allowable exceptions to the restriction on visitors include pre-scheduled visits of students' family, admissions tours, athletics recruitment visits, contractors, and other visitors conducting essential business with the University.

Conference services may resume scheduling events on a limited basis in accordance with CDC and State guidance. Conference services will consider bookings where possible to utilize low traffic areas and will schedule events during off-peak hours to reduce density in campus spaces and mitigate the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for the UNE community. Signage will be placed throughout the campuses to inform the general public of temporarily restricted access to UNE facilities.

Internal student serving events, such as award ceremonies, inductions into honor societies and professional student organizations will be coordinated for the college, department, or student group by Conference Services and the Office of Communications. Many events will be virtual, requiring advanced prep, set assembly, graphic design, and videography. Many internal events will be a combination of campus-based and virtual, often requiring live stream and social media components. Requests for planning internal virtual or live streamed events may be made to the Office of Communications.

## VIII. COMMUNICATION PLAN

Ongoing timely, transparent, clear, and accessible communication will be critical to the success of this resumption of on-campus operations plan. In this context, our guiding principle is that we cannot over-communicate, particularly when implementing a plan of this scale, and we recognize that all stakeholders need to be “on the same page” with expectations. Communication will therefore involve multiple platforms and approaches, and the University’s existing communication infrastructure to support this plan is robust.

### A. EMAIL

All members of the UNE community are expected to regularly check their email for all University-related business, including the regular and ongoing updates about the pandemic.

### B. UNE WEBSITE

Timely updates are posted on the [UNE COVID-19 website](#).

### C. EMERGENCY ALERTS

Students, faculty, and professional staff are expected to register their phones through U-online in order to receive emergency alerts sent from UNE’s Office of Security.

### D. SOCIAL MEDIA

For those community members who use social media, updates and news will be communicated through the University’s Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts.

### E. SIGNAGE

The use of extensive signage across the campuses has already been discussed in other parts of this plan.

### F. DEPARTMENTAL/UNIT UPDATES

To ensure that communications reach intended audiences, unit supervisors will also be asked to share updates with the faculty and professional staff in their respective areas.

## G. STALL STREET JOURNAL

Featured in restrooms across both campuses, the *Stall Street Journal* is a remarkably effective communication tool for messages about health and wellness and will be used to communicate messaging on staying well, symptom-monitoring, the value of social distancing, etc.

## H. ADDITIONAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

In addition to these venues and platforms, there are additional communication strategies to reach students and their families (as applicable).

1. **NAVIGATE APP:** Beginning last year, all incoming undergraduate students have been strongly encouraged to download the “Navigate” communication app (a function of UNE’s Education Advisory Board subscription) to their phones, which provides a “real-time” mechanism to push notices out to students. Adoption to date has been strong among first- and second-year students.
2. **PARENT EMAIL:** Student Affairs is in the process of updating their parent email list for undergraduates so that, when appropriate, we can share messages with families. In residence halls, resident advisors (RAs) and area coordinators (ACs) will also help to spread information to that population.
3. **COMMUNICATIONS TO STUDENTS ABROAD:** In the event that students are able to travel abroad, the Office of Global Affairs, which maintains regular contact with students travelling for semesters abroad, will serve as a significant purveyor of information to students while away. Staff in the office will also serve as a point of contact for the faculty who lead study abroad courses.
4. **BLACKBOARD:** The University’s learning management system, Blackboard is an additional faculty-to-student communication tool.

## IX. REFLECTIONS

This plan for resumption of on-campus operations at the University of New England in fall 2020 reflects the collective and collaborative efforts of faculty, professional staff, and administrators across UNE's colleges and operational support units. We believe the underlying theme throughout this report reflects our student-centric approach to everything we do. The health and safety of our community resonates throughout this plan and, in many cases, reflects precautions that exceed CDC guidelines. We pride ourselves on our "can do" positive attitude, our innovative thinking and creative problem-solving, and the ability to pivot quickly in the face of rapidly shifting environmental and regulatory conditions. We are confident that each member of the UNE community will contribute to making our journey forward as seamless and successful as possible.