MEMORANDUM

TO: ECU Community

FROM: Bill Koch, co-chair of the COVID Coordination Committee and associate vice chancellor for campus safety and auxiliary services; and Sara Lilley, co-chair of the COVID Coordination Committee and assistant vice chancellor for HR, talent management

DATE: Jan. 11, 2022

SUBJECT: Guidance for events

As we begin the Spring semester, we recognize there are events currently planned or being planned across campus. The COVID-19 Omicron variant is now the dominant variant of the virus globally, nationally and locally. In North Carolina and Pitt County, current testing reports positivity rates (as of Jan. 10) approaching or exceeding 30%. The number of cases has increased at rapid rates, and new cases greatly surpass previous peaks. At the same time, we know for many students that student success depends on in-person instruction. In addition, there are other mission-critical activities (research and clinical) that require on-campus presence and in-person gathering, and these must be maintained.

Based on this the COVID Coordination Committee recommends the following guidance on how departments should proceed in moving forward with scheduled events and/or planning future events. These recommendations will be re-evaluated Feb. 15 and updated as needed. Please see below:

- Avoid providing food or drinks at indoor events to prevent the removal of face coverings.
- Consider providing to-go meals or snacks for attendees to take with them after the event is over.
- Consider large meeting spaces that will allow for adequate social distancing.
- If possible, consider postponing events that involve food and beverages to later in the semester.
- Consider moving planned events or gatherings to a virtual platform.
- For events with food and drink, try to identify an outdoor space for attendees to eat or drink. If outdoor space is not an option, encourage attendees to social distance while eating and drinking.
- Remind attendees, masks continue to be required for indoor settings unless you are actively eating or drinking.

While we recognize that departments may be eager to gather students and employees in person given the return to campus for the Spring semester, virtual events until Feb. 15, 2022, helps maintain a safe environment for everyone. Guidance will be reassessed and updated if needed after this date.