MEMORANDUM

TO: ECU Community
FROM: Philip Rogers, Chancellor
DATE: July 1, 2021
SUBJ: Update to campus on face coverings

Over the past months, working groups of your colleagues have been analyzing public health guidance and best practices for institutions of higher education as we plan for our return to campus for the fall semester. Please join me in thanking these various teams and campus leaders who have contributed to the careful review of the current conditions, as well as the entire university community for your continued commitment to safety and well-being during this time.

Our campus experienced a surge of positive COVID-19 cases last fall, and we know there are COVID-19 variants resulting in new cases and disruptions. As we continue to plan for a traditional on-campus experience as students return in August, our public health experts will monitor COVID-19 variants and their potential impact on fall planning.

I have received and accepted the recommendations of the Fall 2021 Planning Committee, chaired by Dr. Ron Mitchelson and Dr. Ying Zhou, and the COVID Coordination Committee, chaired by Bill Koch and Sara Lilley.

As a result, the following face-covering requirement becomes effective July 1.

ECU requires face coverings in the following indoor situations to protect against a possible COVID-19 surge upon return to full density on campus:

- Classrooms, teaching laboratories, studios and other spaces where instruction occurs, unless a safety plan has been submitted and an approved exception has been issued,
- Any indoor setting where social distancing of at least 3 feet cannot be maintained, and
- Other spaces identified per the current Governor’s Executive Order.

On ECU’s campus, no face covering is required outdoors. However, all unvaccinated individuals are encouraged to wear a face covering when social distancing of at least 3 feet cannot be maintained. This face-covering restriction will be re-evaluated on or before Sept. 15, 2021.

The final reports from the Fall Planning Committee will be included in the updated Return of Pirate Nation website, which should be completed by mid-July. The web address will remain the same: https://returnofpiratenation.ecu.edu/.

Our goal is to manage our way through the continued threat of COVID-19 throughout the fall semester — and especially the early weeks after the return of students — to protect Pirates and minimize disruptions. I know working together we can do this.

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