University of Montana Summer COVID-19 Guidelines for UM instructional activities and courses

The health and safety of students, faculty and staff is the University of Montana’s top priority. UM remains steadfast in staying up to date with the ongoing health and safety information provided by health officials, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office of the Commissioner for Higher Education, UM’s Healthy Task Force, Missoula City County Health Department, and the Governor’s office. Specific considerations for UM instructional activities and courses on UM’s properties can be found below.

General Notes:
Because the rules, guidance, and recommendations surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic continue to evolve rapidly, these guidelines are subject to change. You are encouraged to stay up-to-date with the most current COVID-19 guidance using the resources listed at the end of this document, and to use these general guidelines alongside those resources to formulate a risk mitigation plan that is appropriate to the unique circumstances around your summer instructional activities.

For inquiries regarding off-campus field research, please visit the Office of Research and Creative Scholarship’s guidelines. For inquiries specifically relating to summer camps, events and programs, please visit Conference & Event Services summer camps and programs page.

Medical Privacy
To protect individuals’ legally-protected personal medical information and comply with HIPPA regulations, please observe the following guidelines:

- Do not ask anyone to disclose their COVID vaccination status.
- Do not request evidence of anyone’s COVID vaccination status.
- If individuals voluntarily disclose their COVID vaccination status, do not record or store this information.
- Do not delineate individual participation in activities according to participants’ COVID vaccination status.
- For small groups, volunteered vaccination status may be considered when formulating a risk mitigation plan appropriate to a group’s activities.

Travel
Within Montana, MUS-affiliated travel is allowable. Travelers will follow local safety protocols and procedures while in travel status. Travelers may use personal vehicles or elect to use campus vehicles if they follow existing COVID-19 protocols related to occupancy and face coverings. Whenever possible, attempts to find local field sites that are accessible via walking, biking, or Mountain Line UDASH buses or other forms of local transportation is encouraged. When this is not possible, prioritizing locations that are proximate to the University to limit travel time in vehicles is encouraged. When vehicle travel for field trips is necessary, the following guidance is highly recommended:

- Whenever practical, vehicles from the UM Transportation Services motor pool should be used for travel. UM directly controls the cleaning and disinfectant protocols for these vehicles.
- Whenever possible, steps should be taken to reduce vehicle occupancy, including reserving more vehicles than would otherwise be necessary. Physical distancing consistent with six feet between occupants is recommended whenever such distancing is practical.
- All students, instructors and teaching assistants must wear masks and cloth facial coverings at all times while inside shared vehicles.
- If running a vehicle with heat or air conditioning, recirculating vehicle air should be disabled.
- All occupants of shared vehicles should sit in the same seat in the same vehicle for the duration of the trip (e.g.
seats are assigned).

- Trip organizers must provide hand sanitizer and/or a portable hand washing station and require vehicle occupants to wash or sanitize hands when entering or leaving vehicles.

Day Experiences and Overnight Field Experiences

- When practical, minimize the use of shared equipment. Gear should be individual rather than communal whenever possible.
- Require face coverings for any activity where physical distancing is not possible.
- Require frequent hand washing/sanitizing and other recommended hygiene practices. If students need to work in groups (e.g. for data collection or for cooking), establish pods that align with groups that share vehicles (to assist with contract tracing and reduce spread throughout the larger group).

Overnight Field Experiences

- Ask students verbally whether they have any COVID-19 symptoms (if they do, they must not attend the trip). Do not create any written records of student health information.
- Develop a contingency plan to implement if any of the students develop symptoms during the field trip (including noting the nearest clinics and hospitals along the planned route).
- Require students to sleep in separate tents or in single rooms, or under open air tarps. Implement specific measures for shared cooking areas and bathrooms (e.g. sanitizing surfaces, hand washing, management of personal items such as toiletries and dishes).

Non-UM Affiliated Entities

Many UM experiences work with outside UM entities to help enrich learning experiences for students. This includes, but is not limited to guest speakers, guest lecturers, public or private transportation services, partnering researchers, etc. While working with these outside entities, it is important to provide a copy of these recommendations to the non-affiliated entity working with the UM or UM affiliated experiential experiences. Although each experience is unique and outside circumstances may pose additional and uncontrolled risks, it is imperative to mitigate risk wherever possible and to refer to your own COVID Risk Mitigation plans. For questions or concerns regarding these recommendations or your Risk Mitigation Plan, please contact The Office of the Provost.

Resources

- UM's Curry Health Center provides free COVID-19 testing for students who are experiencing coronavirus symptoms. Students must call 406-243-2122 to make an appointment before coming in.
- As of March 28, all Missoula County residents ages 16 and older are eligible for COVID-19 vaccines. UM has hosted three clinics and more information on further clinics will be coming soon. UM students and employees, as well as their partners, spouses and household members, are encouraged to schedule an appointment.
- Missoula County is coordinating vaccine administration throughout the county. Visit the county's vaccine website for information on all vaccine clinics and locations that currently have vaccine available. This site contains an interactive map and a distribution dashboard showing how many doses have been administered. The county vaccine website is the best place to check on availability of vaccines.
- UM and the Missoula City-County Health Department (MCCHD) are closely tracking COVID-19 case trends at UM and in Missoula. The MCCHD is releasing information about UM-affiliated cases each day. Find UM-affiliated COVID-19 cases on this page under the "Data" tab.
- Find information on COVID-19 cases across Montana here. In December 2020, after the successful completion of fall semester, UM revisited and revised parts of the Healthy Fall 2020 plan. View the updated Campus COVID Operations Plan here.
- Find information about all necessary health and safety precautions for COVID-19 on UM's Coronavirus FAQ page, or on the Centers for Disease Control COVID-19 website.
- UM's Incident Command Team is managing our campus response to COVID-19. This team, made up of representatives of more than 30 campus units, is monitoring the situation in real time while following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, the Missoula City-County Health Department, the Montana Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. This
UM is staffing an information hotline to answer questions from students, families, faculty, staff and the public. The call center will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday. You can reach the hotline by calling 406-243-INFO (4636).

UMOnline is providing resources to assist faculty and students in continuing instruction remotely. Visit the following webpages for instruction, tools and support geared toward students, faculty and employees.

- Students: Keep on Learning
- Faculty: Keep on Teaching
- Employees: Keep on Working

UM is committed to keeping students connected with one another and to campus. The Keeping UM Connected website and the Keeping UM Connected tile on the UM App provide a comprehensive list of virtual and online activities where students can connect with friends, pass the time, stay healthy and prepare for the future. Researchers can find information specific to their work on UM’s Office of Research COVID-19 webpage.

Still have questions? Please e-mail UMSummer@mso.umt.edu.