



**O G L E T H O R P E**

U N I V E R S I T Y

COVID-19 Campus Handbook

Spring 2022 Edition

Updated March 2, 2022

This handbook serves to formally establish the protocols, policies, and procedures for the COVID-conscious campus environment.

The policies outlined in this handbook remain guided by the following principles:

- The health, safety, and welfare of every member of our community is paramount.
- Educational access for our students is essential and critical to ensure their success.
- All decisions must be based on prevailing health and safety guidance from the CDC, state and local authorities, and grounded in scientific and epidemiological principles.
- Taking steps to minimize the risk of COVID-19 infections is a shared responsibility. Every member of our community must do their part.

This handbook touches on several different areas that may ordinarily be codified in the University Bulletin, Code of Conduct, Employee Handbook, Faculty Handbook, the University website, among other places. These policies carry the same weight and force as any other established University policy. This handbook will be published on the University website and a link will be distributed to all members of the community by email. Because of the dynamic nature of the COVID-19 virus, the policies are subject to change, and any changes will be widely announced and updated on the University website and/or Oglethorpe's [COVID-19 website](#). All members of the community agree to abide by this handbook as a condition of their enrollment or employment with Oglethorpe University.

As of the effective date of this handbook, course delivery will be predominantly in-person. The University will operate housing up to full occupancy for students to reside on campus. The campus will be open, and visitors are welcome as long as they adhere to the University's policies. More details are outlined in the applicable sections below. Regardless of the learning environment for the Spring 2022 semester, the tuition and fees will remain the same for students. The tuition and fees are in exchange for learning, academic credit, and any augmented academic and non-academic services provided during this time. The faculty and staff have prepared for quick changes to provide for a productive experience regardless of our physical location.

For all those in our community, it's critical to understand that, despite our collective efforts, it is impossible to eliminate the risk of positive cases or an outbreak on our campus. Community spread of COVID-19 is occurring nationally, including in metro Atlanta. That means the virus is spreading through the community in a way that cannot be attributed to travel to a specific location or exposure to a person known to be infected. We cannot guarantee that people present on our campus will not be exposed to or become infected with COVID-19 and suffer the potentially lethal health impacts of contraction. Members of our on-campus community and visitors accept and acknowledge such risks. We certainly do not wish this on anyone, and while we are taking recommended steps to mitigate this risk, we cannot categorically guarantee this will not happen.

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## I. Healthy Campus Promotion Plan

### a. Facility & Campus Operations

The Oglethorpe campus will be fully open and operational to begin the Spring 2022 semester, with the goal and intention to remain open so long as it is advisable. “Open” means that all aspects of ordinary university on-campus operations will be functioning to some degree and will be available for use by the community. This includes, in-person classes, residence halls, dining facilities, athletics, library facilities, and the museum. University visitors are welcome on campus as long as they adhere to policies outlined in this handbook.

### b. COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

All students, faculty, and staff enrolled or employed during the Spring 2022 semester must be “up to date” on their COVID-19 vaccines in order to be present on campus during such time or must receive an exemption under a medical or religious accommodation. Up to date means that an individual has received all doses for which they are eligible, including a booster. Students can submit their vaccination information [here](#), faculty and staff can submit their vaccination information through [Paycom](#). The initial deadline to submit vaccine information is January 31<sup>st</sup>. Those who become eligible for additional doses after January 31<sup>st</sup> must confirm they remain up to date by submitting their supplemental vaccine information within two weeks of the date they become eligible in order to remain in compliance with the vaccine policy.

Oglethorpe will assist the campus community by providing on-site access to immunizations or identifying sites where individuals may receive a vaccination(s). Vaccinations are provided free of charge. Oglethorpe will consider time spent to receive vaccination as “hours worked” for all employees. Students arriving to campus from abroad who are unable to access a COVID-19 vaccine or be fully vaccinated prior to arriving on campus may be given a grace period based on the discretion of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Individuals may apply for an exemption as a medical or religious accommodation only. Requests for exemptions by employees must be submitted to Human Resources. Requests for accommodations by students must be submitted through the online portal referenced above. Individuals who are granted an exemption will be subject to additional COVID-19 testing.

Employees who do not receive a vaccine or exemption may be placed on unpaid leave, and their status will be evaluated periodically. Employees may also be subject to the progressive discipline policy for submitting false information, obstruction of the vaccine policy, or any other violation of the vaccine policy. Students who do not comply with the vaccine policy may be placed on suspension, and/or otherwise ineligible to join the campus community, including residing in residence halls, attending in-person courses, participating in athletics, attending campus social events, or any other campus privilege as determined by the Vice President for Student Affairs. Students will be responsible for any financial impact of their violation of this policy and may be further subject to the Honor Code and Code of Conduct polices.

### c. Testing

Oglethorpe has employed a variety of testing strategies to assist the community in detecting cases and reducing transmission. PCR and antigen (rapid) testing, including at home tests, are acceptable forms of testing under this policy.

- **Baseline Testing:** Baseline testing at the beginning of the semester is required for all campus residents regardless of vaccination status, and for all non-residents and employees who are not up to date on their vaccinations.
- **Weekly Testing:** Following the baseline testing, the university will collect test results on a weekly basis consisting of a randomized percentage of the population on campus who are not up to date on their vaccines. Individuals will be notified via email if they are selected and must submit a valid test result through a link provided in the email within four calendar days.
- **Close Contacts & Symptomatic:** Members of the campus community with close contacts or symptoms of COVID-19 should seek testing in accordance with CDC guidelines and report positive results.
- **Student-Athletes:** Certain student-athletes may be subject to additional testing protocols in accordance with SAA and Athletics Department procedures while actively participating in athletics.

**Any individual who tests positive should refrain from coming to campus and immediately notify:**

- For students: [healthinfo@oglethorpe.edu](mailto:healthinfo@oglethorpe.edu)
- For staff: [sbutler1@oglethorpe.edu](mailto:sbutler1@oglethorpe.edu) and their immediate supervisor
- For faculty: [sbutler1@oglethorpe.edu](mailto:sbutler1@oglethorpe.edu) and division chair for course continuity matters

**Residents may remain on campus and will be given instructions from their case manager.**

Please contact [healthinfo@oglethorpe.edu](mailto:healthinfo@oglethorpe.edu) if access to testing is a barrier for any individual subject to this policy.

d. Face Coverings & Social Distancing

	<p><b>Face Covering</b></p> <p>Face covering means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. A face covering can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen. Face coverings may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or be improvised from household items, including but not limited to, scarfs, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. Face covering with exhalation valves may not be used. Gaiters must be double layered over the nose and mouth. A face shield does not qualify as a face covering.</p> <p>Face coverings may also be referred to as masks or respirators.</p>
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Wearing a face covering is optional in all settings, including indoors, on the Oglethorpe campus. It is against this policy to require others to wear face coverings in class, in private offices, or any space on the campus of Oglethorpe University. The university recommends that anyone who is not up to date on their vaccine, has a weakened immune system, or who chooses to add an extra layer of protection, continue to wear a face covering while indoors. CDC-compliant disposable face masks will be made available throughout campus in various departments and buildings for anyone who needs one. Please refer to the CDC guidance on proper face covering use here. Six-foot physical distancing is otherwise strongly encouraged where feasible, and as designated by signs and postings.

e. Facilities: Measures & Precautions

The following protocols apply to all facilities unless otherwise indicated in this policy.

Hand-sanitizing stations will be accessible throughout various campus locations including all public spaces and building entries. Foot pedal door hardware has been installed on public doors to reduce the surface touching of handles and grab bars. Traditional flush valves and fixture handles have been replaced with touch-free automatic sensors in public restrooms throughout campus. Designated locations that are considered “high touch surface spaces” will be equipped with sanitizing wipe dispensers to allow for self-cleaning before and after use. There will be signage in place identifying these locations as well as highlighting best practices. Additional waste and recycling containers will be strategically placed throughout campus public spaces to encourage healthy behavior and reduce risk of exposure to campus service workers. Acrylic barriers are available for all transactional locations throughout the campus to limit face to face contact and protect employees.

Consistent signage will be implemented throughout all campus buildings in locations where opportunities are provided to wash hands, use sanitizing stations, use sanitizing wipes, and use no-touch door hardware. These signs will be placed in open public spaces including restrooms, entry doors, main corridors, open spaces, study spaces, classrooms, elevators, stairwells and fitness facilities.

The University will also implement intensified and more frequent cleaning and disinfection efforts throughout the campus, prioritizing high touch surfaces including doorknobs/handles, elevators, desks/tables, light switches, sinks, counters, and restroom fixtures. Disinfecting foggers will be used to increase cleaning efficiency of high touch surfaces, in addition to increased cleaning. The outlined process and use of equipment and chemicals are approved for use by the CDC.

Current standard (MERV 8) air filters have been replaced throughout all campus building HVAC systems with [ASHRAE recommended](#) MERV-13 air filters to reduce risk of airborne spread in all of our campus buildings. All HVAC systems will be in a constant state of flow prior to and while buildings have occupancy as further recommended by ASHRAE. HVAC control systems will be adjusted to ensure the maximum allowable outdoor air cycling into the individual building systems according to system type and use. In addition to control measures, all of our systems that cannot function effectively with maximum outdoor air introduction have been equipped with ionization hardware that kills viruses and microbes within the air systems. This equipment is approved by ASHRAE and the CDC. The facilities staff will check all

campus building windows for functionality. Any windows that can be open will be evaluated for operation while considering safety/hazard issues associated. The HVAC water systems will have continuous circulations and all boilers and water heating system and holding tanks will maintain temperatures above 140°F to avoid microbial incursion ([ASHRAE](#)). Potable water systems will be inspected on a monthly basis while buildings are unoccupied, and a bi-weekly flush of the systems will be conducted during periods of shut down to avoid stagnate water which can lead to bacterial growth.

#### f. Dining Facilities

Dining services will continue operations for the Spring 2022 semester. Dining at Oglethorpe is provided by Aramark, a national food service company, who has trained all employees and informed their operations for COVID-conscious food safety protocols. This includes additional cleaning protocols, limiting contact on high touch services, providing “grab and go” options, and extensive staff training. During certain periods of high risk or transmission, dining services will operate as “grab and go” only.

## II. Academic Policies

### a. Attendance & Participation

Academic courses for Spring 2022 will be in-person unless otherwise indicated. Instructors will provide adequate support for students in quarantine or isolation and will have alternative methods of participation for students. Instructors are not required to provide synchronous access and recordings of class lectures may be arranged with faculty on a case-by-case basis. Course materials should be made available via Canvas and/or online. Oglethorpe will not otherwise have a uniform attendance policy across all classes and individual faculty will outline attendance policies in their course syllabi. Penalties and bonuses for absence and attendance may be used toward academic grading in the same manner as before the pandemic. Individual instructors may set their own policies requiring proof of inability to attend. Students who miss more than two weeks of class should expect to consult with their instructor and advisor about impacts on their academic program. Students who attend a class remotely from a public indoor location (e.g. study spaces or a lounge) should use, at least earphones, if not headsets, to hear and speak with the rest of the class. Any courses with a remote offering may only be attended by registered students.

An instructor reserves the right to exclude students from class, and mark them un-excused, if they fail to adhere to the applicable policies in this handbook.

b. Office Hours and Meetings

Meetings between students and faculty may be held inside with mask optional for both individuals; may be conducted remotely; or may be conducted outdoors on campus.

c. Use of Recordings

Each instructor may set their own policies as to the use of any recordings of their classes. Instructors may elect to post recordings of the class after the class is over with the understanding that the recordings are posted for the purpose of studying in the class and may not be uploaded anywhere else (e.g. YouTube). Others may share the recordings but only with students with a documented disability related to attending class and using the NDA provided by Accessibility Services for recordings. Any student recording lectures or discussions of the class without prior approval from the instructor shall be considered in violation of the Honor Code for seeking to gain unfair advantage over other students in the class. Distribution and use of someone else's recording (unless an official recording as designated by the instructor) is likewise an Honor Code violation.

d. Honor Code Application

The Honor Code and accompanying policy apply as written for in-person, hybrid, and fully remote classes. This includes sharing screenshots of exams, plagiarizing, use of disallowed materials (including other web sites), and other forms of cheating. Potential violations of academic policies that include an Honor Code violation will still be adjudicated by the Honor Council.

III. Residents & Housing Policies

a. Housing Operations

The University will operate housing at ordinary capacity, so long as it is determined to be feasible by the University administration. Students will not be exempt from their residency requirement for the semester. Usual roommate/suitemate agreements will be expanded to cover agreed upon COVID-19 practices for the unit. Suitemates will be viewed and treated as family

units. The agreements will be negotiated and signed by all residents and approved by Resident Advisors (RA) and Residence Life staff. A final copy will be given to all suitemates, and a copy will be kept with Residence Life.

b. Facility Care & General Precautions

Common rooms, common bathrooms, laundry rooms, elevators, handrails, and exterior doors will be sanitized each day by facilities staff. Hand-sanitizing wipes, stations, and masks will be provided in the residence halls for each resident. Disinfecting protocols will be added to the daily cleaning routine of all public spaces in the residence hall buildings. Hand-sanitizing stations will be in every residence hall common space and entry zones.

Common room kitchens will be open and functional. Facilities and security staff will update procedures and additional training in accordance with CDC standards in trash and recycling removal from residence halls, maintenance entry for repairs, and incident response.

Face coverings are optional when coming and going inside the residence halls, including in common areas and hallways. Students will not be required to wear a mask in their personal room/suite as agreed to in their roommate/suitemate agreements.

c. Baseline Testing & Preparation for Move-in or Return to Campus

Residents may be required to take a baseline COVID-19 test 72 hours prior to arrival to campus. Students will be responsible for obtaining their own test, and both PCR and antigen (which includes at-home tests) are accepted. Students who test positive should not arrive on campus should inform [healthinfo@oglethorpe.edu](mailto:healthinfo@oglethorpe.edu) and the Office of Residence Life for next steps.

Any student who is symptomatic in the two weeks prior to arrival on campus must also seek testing.

IV. Athletics

a. General Use of Athletics Facilities

The Facilities and Athletic Departments are working to maintain access to all athletics facilities for the campus community. The Howell Tennis Courts, the Track and Turf Field, and the Salamone Fields will be available when they are not in use by a university sponsored athletics program and between the hours of 9AM-6PM Monday-Friday, with limited weekend hours, or as otherwise posted by the Athletic Department.

The Schmidt Athletic and Recreation Center will be available when they are not in use by a university sponsored athletics program and between the hours of 8AM-10PM Monday-Thursday, 8AM-7PM Friday, 12PM-6PM Saturday, and 3PM-10PM Sunday.

b. University Sponsored Athletics

The Southern Athletic Association's (SAA) Presidents' Council voted to continue with the Spring 2022 season as planned. Oglethorpe and the SAA will continue to monitor the pandemic as the semester progresses and may make modifications or suspend play if circumstances dictate.

Rules for practices, play, and transport, including testing are governed by NCAA and SAA guidelines. Oglethorpe Athletics has further established department and sport specific procedures including testing, surveillance, officials, case thresholds, return to play protocol, compliance tracking, and expectations for coaches. Those policies are incorporated by reference into this Handbook and may be reviewed by request to the Department of Athletics. All athletics teams and student-athletes will be fully informed of and be held accountable to those standards. Athletic Department policies may include exemptions to the indoor mask policy for practices and competitions. The Director of Athletics will have full discretion in enforcing non-compliance with student-athletes and staff with regards to athletics participation. Students and staff may be further subject to disciplinary procedures as outlined in this Handbook.

V. Events on Campus

a. University Events

While certain events may take place on campus, remote or virtual options will be encouraged where feasible. During periods of high risk of transmission, in-person, indoor events may be limited. Face coverings are not required for events; however, they are strongly recommended at all times for those who are not up to date on vaccines or who have weakened immune systems. Additionally, efforts should be made to allow for social distancing.

b. Student Events & Group Gatherings

Remote or virtual events are recommended for student-sponsored events or gatherings. Student events are otherwise subject to the same policies outlined above.

Any group, including the responsible individuals, will be subject to conduct sanctions for a violation of this policy. Student Government Association (SGA) and student organizations will also be subject to group sanctions and funding limitations as provided in the University Bulletin.

VI. Response to COVID-19 Cases

a. Case Management for Students

The University will have designated staff serving as Case Managers to assist students with management and exposure to COVID-19, including advisement on quarantine and isolation

periods, coordination with housing and dining services, and validation from academic affairs on requests for information. Initial contact by a Case Manager will be made after a report of positive test or exposure is identified or sent by email to [healthinfo@oglethorpe.edu](mailto:healthinfo@oglethorpe.edu).

The county and state are engaged in professional contact tracing and remain the ultimate authority to which individuals should report cases if not done so at a testing location. While the university will manage reports of positive cases in an effort to mitigate exposure within the community, it will not be operating any formal contact tracing program.

b. Quarantine & Isolation

Mandatory isolation will be imposed for any individual who tests positive for COVID-19. Non-residents should isolate in their homes. On-campus residents may return home or may choose to isolate on campus, as space allows. The university will help students make arrangements for meals and isolation space for those who remain on campus. If the university reaches full capacity for isolation, students may be required to complete their isolation period off-campus.

A mandatory quarantine period will also be imposed for individuals as detailed below. Campus residents may quarantine in their assigned rooms, or a designated quarantine room based on the determination by their Case Manager. Non-residents must remain off campus during the quarantine period.

All members of the campus community must receive an “all clear” from their Case Manager or Human Resources prior to reentry to the on-campus community based on the following:

 <p><b>Quarantine</b></p>	<p><b>If Up to Date on Vaccination or Confirmed COVID Case in Previous 90 Days:</b> (a) no quarantine required from exposure only, unless symptoms develop; (b) stay masked for 10 days (c) testing suggested 3-5 days from exposure</p> <p><b>If NOT Up to Date on Vaccination or Recent COVID Case:</b> (a) At least 5 days since exposure AND no development of symptoms; and (b) stay masked until day 10</p>
 <p><b>Asymptomatic Isolation</b></p>	<p><b>All Individuals:</b></p> <p>(a) At least 5 days since positive test AND no development of symptoms; and</p> <p>(b) stay masked until day 10</p>

 <p><b>Symptomatic Isolation</b></p>	<p><b>All Individuals:</b></p> <p>(a) At least 5 days since symptom onset for mild/moderate AND 24 hours fever free without the use of medication AND other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving</p> <p>(b) stay masked until day 10</p> <p>*severe/critical/immunocompromised should extend isolation period for 10 days or as determined by their medical provider</p>
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c. Response to Outbreak

The university will review infection and hospitalization data trends for both campus and broader community case rates. A change in these rates may require strict adherence to guidelines, sheltering in place, campus closure, or other safety precautions. Based on national infection rates, it can be expected that a percentage of the community will be positive for COVID-19 upon arrival. Understanding that the following two-week period may lead to a small uptick, the community aim is for cases to decline thereafter and remain at or below baseline levels.

VII. Student Conduct

a. Enforcement of COVID Handbook Policies

Taking steps to minimize the risk of COVID-19 infections is a shared responsibility, and each member of the community has an important role to play in keeping the campus as safe as possible. Working together, we can help keep our campus open and enjoy the many benefits of in-person learning and interactions. The policies contained in this handbook are intended to do just that. Any student or student group violation of these policies will be addressed by the Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities and is subject to enforcement through the COVID Conduct Panel and Code of Conduct. Violations of this handbook can also be reported anonymously [here](#).

b. COVID Conduct Panels

Oglethorpe has established a COVID Conduct Panel to review COVID conduct violations submitted through the University conduct system, including the online complaint form, and to adjudicate appropriate sanctions. The panel will be guided by a tiered approach that classifies offenses based on their severity and provides sanctions that correspond to the severity of the offenses.

Tier One offenses represent simple offenses, or any other misconduct deemed to not be egregious or willful in nature.

*Recommended base sanctions: Warning and Education. Any subsequent violations, either during the appeal period or after, will immediately elevate the case to either Tier Two or Tier Three.*

Tier Two offenses are repeated Tier One offenses as well as offenses that are deemed to be more serious in nature than Tier One. *Recommended base sanction: Temporary removal from community, where relevant a required negative COVID test within 36 hours prior to return to campus, or revocation of benefits. Testing or temporary housing will be at the student's expense. Any subsequent violations, either during the appeal period or after, will immediately elevate the case to a Tier Three violation.*

Tier Three offenses are ones that are egregious and represents willful and malicious behavior that puts the community at risk of COVID exposure; examples include, but not limited to, coughing/spitting/sneezing on or near other individuals, having/hosting/attending gatherings/parties/events that violate policies, failing to meet vaccine requirements, and having already been found in violation of a lower tier offense. *Recommended base sanction: Removal from community for the remainder of the semester.*

Students will be notified of any offense by Oglethorpe email. All notifications will include, date, time, and any applicable facts of the alleged violation. Given the need for 100% compliance with COVID guidelines, the Respondent is presumed responsible. The individual may appeal any finding within 24 hours of a notification in writing by Oglethorpe email to the Vice President of Student Affairs.

#### VIII. Human Resources Policies for all Employees

Policies in this section are in addition to those applicable throughout this handbook. Oglethorpe further adheres to all federal and state laws related to COVID-19 and the workplace, including but not limited to, updates to FMLA regulations.

##### a. Work Schedules

All employees are expected to be back on campus for work at the beginning of the semester unless otherwise approved for remote work by a direct supervisor or under a quarantine/isolation period. Regardless of work location, employees should consult directly with their supervisors on their schedule and arrangements. Supervisors will remain flexible and understanding during this time.

##### b. Meetings

Zoom or Team are encouraged to conduct meetings (even one-on-one sessions) or facilitate group discussions, with colleagues or with students. Other methods of communicating include email, instant messaging and phone.

##### c. Employee Protocol for Positive Cases

All employees are required to stay home if they, or any person living in their home, is infected with COVID-19 or has symptoms of COVID-19. Employees who become ill or notified of

exposure while at work should go home immediately. As soon as possible, employees should alert [sbutler1@oglethorpe.edu](mailto:sbutler1@oglethorpe.edu) if they test positive for COVID-19.

Faculty who are unable to teach their classes should contact their Division Chair immediately. If possible, the instructor should arrange for another faculty member to substitute.

d. Required Compliance

Individuals who violate handbook policies and acknowledge their actions will typically be given the opportunity to correct their behavior and/or attend training. Repeated or severe acts of non-compliance will result in the individual's removal from campus until compliance is achieved. Continued non-compliance may also result in disciplinary action for faculty and staff up to and including separation from the University. Oglethorpe will utilize existing disciplinary regulations and policies as necessary but hopes to achieve compliance through a culture in which everyone on campus is dedicated to protecting each other's health and well-being.