

**Southwestern University**  
**Reopening and Campus Health and Safety Plan**

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# Reopening Safely

The Southwestern University Campus Readiness Task Force has been meeting for months, consulting with medical practitioners, immunologists, and public-health specialists to determine protocols on how we can live, learn, teach, and work together to open the campus safely in the fall. The Task Force made the recommendations included in this document.

As this is a rapidly evolving situation, additional safeguards will be put into place as needed to ensure that the University is engaged in best practices while still maintaining the highest standards for teaching and learning and continuing to create an engaged community. Despite all of our efforts to secure the campus, we cannot control what is taking place elsewhere in the state, nation, and world. If there comes a time when it is no longer in the best interest of our students, faculty, and staff to maintain an on-campus operation, we are prepared to move to an online format.

Workshops occurred all summer for faculty that involved pedagogy and technology skills for both on-campus and online instruction. There has been significant investment in outfitting classrooms with updates to instructional technology, and we have reached out to students to make sure they have access to computers and other technology that will allow them to participate online should that become necessary.

Updates on the current situation, policies, and schedule will be posted at [www.southwestern.edu/reopening](http://www.southwestern.edu/reopening). FAQs are available at [www.southwestern.edu/reopening/faqs](http://www.southwestern.edu/reopening/faqs). If you have additional questions, email [questions@southwestern.edu](mailto:questions@southwestern.edu).

## Guiding Principles

Southwestern's reopening plan is guided by four core principles:

1. Protect the physical and mental well-being of Southwestern University's students, faculty, and staff.
2. Retain and promote Southwestern University's distinguishing value proposition.
3. Ensure Southwestern University practices responsible financial stewardship.
4. Respect the shared-governance processes and divergent perspectives of Southwestern University's community.

# Health and Safety

## **Pirate Pledge**

We ask all students, faculty, and staff to sign the Pirate Pledge and promise to take personal responsibility for following University guidelines for protecting the health and safety of our community. The Pirate Pledge can be found at [www.southwestern.edu/piratepledge](http://www.southwestern.edu/piratepledge). Student Life will manage the process for distributing and collecting signed Pirate Pledges from students; Human Resources will oversee faculty and staff pledges.

## **Symptom Monitoring**

All students, faculty, and staff must self-monitor for the following symptoms. Any individual who is experiencing these symptoms or has come into contact with someone who has exhibited these symptoms must immediately isolate themselves and contact Health Services (students) or their medical provider (faculty and staff).

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Congestion
- Runny nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

All students, faculty, and staff must also self-monitor for—and immediately self-isolate and contact a healthcare provider if experiencing—the following *emergency* warning signs of COVID-19:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

Southwestern is investing in a mobile health-screening tool called WorkSafe that will help individuals and the University monitor the health of our campus community. WorkSafe is designed to help us maintain a healthy campus environment and remain in the classroom. It has several helpful features, including a daily proactive self-health check and the ability to ask questions or address health and safety concerns related to COVID-19 on campus. Faculty, staff, and students will each check in on a daily basis and be advised to proceed to class or work or to seek medical attention.

### **Guiding Health Protocols**

As part of our reopening plan, all persons (staff, faculty, students, vendors, and visitors) on campus will be required to follow our guiding health protocols, including wearing masks/face coverings, practicing physical distancing, and maintaining good hand hygiene.

#### *Masks/Face Coverings*

- All Southwestern University faculty, staff, students, and visitors must cover their faces with a mask or cloth face covering at all times on campus unless they are in a residence hall room or one-person office or eating.
- The face covering (or mask) must fully cover your nose *and* mouth to reduce the risk of transmission to others around you. The mask must be properly fitted and secured in place.
- Face coverings need to be made with a minimum of two layers of fabric; more layers usually translates to better filtration ability. A high-quality, high-density fabric (i.e., a minimum 180 threads per inch), such as quilting cotton, is preferred.
- Loose-fitting face coverings, such as traditional bandanas, are not permitted because of poor filtration and poor risk-reduction capabilities. Face masks with exhalation valves are not permitted.
- Masks must be worn, adjusted, used, stored, and cleaned properly. Preferably, you should wash your mask after each use or at least once a day, and you should rotate masks each day (e.g., wear mask A on Monday, mask B on Tuesday, mask C on Wednesday, and mask A—after it's been laundered and dried—on Thursday).
- Southwestern is providing every student, faculty member, and staff member with two high-quality nonmedical-grade masks. These are reusable and washable masks. One disposable mask will be provided to visitors. The University will have extra masks available for purchase to replace lost or damaged masks.
- Extra masks will be available in classrooms in the event a student has forgotten theirs.
- To safeguard the health of others, you will be asked to leave any public space on campus if you are not wearing a mask.

### *Physical Distancing*

- All faculty, staff, and students should stay home or in their residence hall whenever possible.
- Allow only people you live with into your home or room.
- Stay *at least* six feet away from people at all times, especially on campus.
- Keep *at least* six feet away from drivers and passengers on public transit and in rideshares.
- Use drive-thrus, curbside pick-ups, and delivery services to avoid physical contact with others.
- Wear a mask during—or simply avoid—gatherings where physical distancing is not possible.

### *Hand Hygiene*

- All faculty, staff, and students are asked to wash their hands frequently and thoroughly.
- According to the CDC's evidence-based approach to handwashing, you should follow these steps:
  - Wet your hands with clean running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap (avoid antibacterial soaps to avoid developing antibiotic resistance).
  - Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap, scrubbing your palms, the backs of your hands, your fingers, between your fingers, and under your nails.
  - Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds.
  - Rinse your hands well under clean running water.
  - Dry your hands using a clean towel or paper towel, or air-dry them.
- Southwestern is providing every community member with one refillable four-ounce bottle of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol (the amount recommended by the CDC) for use when soap and water are not nearby.
- Hand-sanitizer dispensers are available in every classroom and throughout all campus buildings for on-the-spot use as well as to refill personal hand-sanitizer supplies.

### **Enforcement of Guiding Health Protocols**

Adherence to the Pirate Pledge is essential to the health and safety of the Southwestern community, and ultimately to the successful completion of any in-person, on-campus learning for the fall semester.

### *Be a Good Neighbor/Empowered and Active Bystander*

All students and employees are encouraged to approach other individuals or groups who are not upholding the Pirate Pledge (i.e. wearing face coverings, keeping six feet apart, respecting room capacities, etc.). Respectfully request that they immediately modify their behavior to align with the pledge, and give others the benefit of the doubt the first time you observe a violation. Our primary goal is to educate and modify behavior.

If this does not resolve the matter, or if reminding the offending party/parties to uphold the Pirate Pledge is not a reasonable option, you may make a report as follows:

- Student violation in campus housing: Housing and Residence Life, 512.863.1624
- Student violation: Dean of Students, 512.863.1281
- Faculty violation: Dean of Faculty, 512.863.1567
- Staff violation: Human Resources, 512.863.1435
- Visitor or guest violation: SUPD, 512.863.1944

Retaliation for filing a report is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate and escalated disciplinary action. Anonymous reports will limit the University's ability to take any action; consequently, the university will grant anonymity to reporters who self-identify, but do not wish their identity to be known to the offending party.

### *Access to Campus Spaces and Addressing Noncompliance*

Faculty and staff are expected to deny entry to any individual who enters a classroom, lab, office, studio, residence hall, or other space (indoors or outdoors) without an appropriately placed cloth face covering. Faculty and staff should report instances of noncompliance of personal distancing, quarantine protocols, or other safety measures immediately to the dean of students, who will review the matter and determine if disciplinary action is required. Reminding an individual to wear a face covering who is immediately compliant does not warrant such a report.

### *Visitation Policy for Residential Spaces*

The temporary visitation policy for housing is, "With the exception of invited SU presenters and admission tours, entry into residential spaces (including fraternity houses) is restricted to residents of those spaces. Visitors from another residential space or from off-campus will not be permitted." Initial violations of this policy will be documented by Housing staff. A violation may be referred to the dean of students for an administrative hearing and may result in loss of on-campus housing for the noncompliant party or parties.

### *Social Gatherings, Meetings, and Off-Campus Behavior*

In the residence halls, social gatherings (of no more than 10 residents of that living community) may take place in common areas (lounges), with masking and distancing, among residents of that hall only. No one should enter private living spaces other than the students assigned to those spaces.

Whether on or off campus, social gatherings should be limited to your close (the small group you interact with regularly outside your residence; see link for more information). Students gathering with members of their close circle should still follow physical distancing protocols and other safety measures. **Large on- or off-campus social gatherings may not be hosted by students or student organizations regardless of social distancing or other protective measures.**

Student organizations should hold standing meetings virtually. Special meetings or activities must be planned in consultation with the Office of Student Activities, who will provide guidance and oversight to ensure safety and compliance in the planning and implementation of the event. No visitors (guest speakers, facilitators, etc.) are permitted on campus at this time.

Please understand that the University will prioritize the safety of the whole SU community over any one student's interest in being physically on campus. If students or student organizations, including those students living off campus, put the SU community at risk, they will be subject to disciplinary action. Sanctions may include immediate suspension or expulsion. The University in its sole discretion will determine if an incident constitutes student organization activity or individual behavior.

These practices will reduce opportunities for COVID-19 transmission. Our success in controlling viral spread is dependent upon students minimizing exposures through small social circles and limited group interactions.

### *Policy Violations and Sanctions*

Students and student organizations referred for disciplinary action for not adhering to the University's protocols, including the Pirate Pledge, may face charges for violating Personal Conduct Policies, including but not limited to

- Continuous Disregard for University Policies
- Disruption
- Official Directives
- Other Personal Conduct

- Pandemic Response

Students found responsible for violating these policies will face sanctions, which may include but are not limited to the following:

- Disciplinary probation (becomes a part of student's permanent record)
- Removal from on-campus housing and loss of access to campus other than to attend class (any lost room and board fees will not be refunded)
- Banned from campus for the semester: students living on campus must move out within 24 hours and finish the semester as remote learners only (any lost room and board fees will not be refunded); students living off campus must finish the semester as remote learners only
- Semester suspension (any lost tuition, room, and board fees will not be refunded)

These sanctions represent the expected results of a finding of responsibility; however, sanctions for each violation of policy will be determined by the specific circumstances of the incident and the disciplinary history of the offending party. The University in its sole discretion will determine if an incident constitutes student organization activity or individual behavior.

### **COVID-19 Testing**

All students, staff, and faculty are required to submit to COVID-19 testing as outlined below.

#### *Testing Prior to Return*

- All students living and/or learning on campus are required to submit proof of a negative COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test prior to their arrival on campus. Antigen or antibody (serology) tests will not be accepted.
- Students who can provide documentation of having recovered from COVID-19 within the past 90 days will be exempted.
- Upon arrival, students must take another COVID-19 test at a designated time and place on campus.
- Students who are engaged in fully remote learning and will not be coming to campus at all during the fall semester are exempt from testing requirements.
- All staff and faculty who will be physically on campus during the fall semester are required to submit proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR test prior to students returning to campus or as designated by Human Resources. Antigen or antibody (serology) tests will not be accepted.

### *Testing during the Semester*

- In order to ensure there is not a high percentage of asymptomatic cases on campus and to monitor infection rates, randomized testing will be conducted on campus throughout the semester.
- Any student with COVID-19 symptoms will be tested and quarantined until their test results come back.
- Any staff or faculty member with COVID-19 symptoms will be required to remain off campus until they have received a return-to-work release from their physician and are approved to return by Human Resources.

### **Triage and Containment**

The SU Health Center has increased its ability to assist students by establishing the Pirate Assessment Triage and Containment Hub (PATCH). Students must go to PATCH if they experience COVID-19 symptoms. PATCH healthcare professionals will ensure each student is examined and treated.

### *Contact Tracing*

The University has appointed two care coordinators to coordinate the isolation and quarantine of students, ensure that the basic needs of quarantined/isolated students are met, and manage contact tracing on campus. They will be the primary point of contact for all departments as it relates to a student's isolation, quarantine, and contact tracing. They will work with staff from Residence Life, the SU Health Center, Facilities Management, and Academic Success as well as additional contact tracers on campus.

### *Isolation and Quarantine*

Students who have been exposed to COVID-19 will be asked to quarantine, and students who have tested positive for COVID-19 will be asked to isolate at home or off campus for a period of at least 10 days and no fever for 24 hours. University care coordinators will assist students through either process.

If a student is unable to go home or off campus to quarantine, they will do so in their assigned residential space with precautions.

If a student is unable to go home or off campus to isolate, they will be provided, as available, a designated isolation room on campus. Currently, 9% of University housing beds are designated as isolation beds.

### *Counseling*

The University will be a) transitioning our part-time health educator to full time and b) adding an additional mental-health professional to the current staffing model. The staff is prepared to offer a robust virtual model and even some in-person options should that be of interest to the student.

# Campus Life

## Housing

Students are not required to live on campus in the fall. The goal is to de-densify campus housing by being flexible about exemptions and cancellation requests.

Housing, in collaboration with the Health Center and Facilities, has implemented protocols to decrease students' risk of exposure, while allowing for some of the community-building benefits of the residential experience. These protocols include the following:

- Requiring residents to wear masks or facial coverings while on campus and in community areas
- Restricting building access to residents of that building only
- Configuring community areas for physical distancing per current guidelines
- Educating residents about proper hand and respiratory hygiene
- Educating residents on proper cleaning of their private spaces
- Providing hand sanitizer across campus
- Using isolation/quarantine spaces for residents who test positive and/or have had exposure to the virus
- Cleaning common areas with OSHA-approved disinfectants and on an OSHA-recommended schedule
- Optimizing HVAC systems for better ventilation and increased percentage of outdoor air

All residential facilities will be closing on November 25, as we work to de-densify and thoroughly clean the campus between the fall and spring semesters. Students are asked to bring only the minimum of what they need for the fall semester and then completely move out before the start of the spring semester. Housing and Residence Life will be providing more information on the fall move-out process as early as possible to ensure students can make the proper arrangements.

If the pandemic necessitates that we close campus, Southwestern will apply an adjustment for unused room and board, as applicable, to spring 2021 charges.

In addition to what is occurring in residence halls, the fraternity houses are working to de-densify their spaces. As with other residences, only those who live in the house will be allowed entry into the house. There are no large events or gatherings. Facilities cleans two of the houses, and they have engaged with the other two houses to begin a conversation about cleaning resources for them as well.

## **Dining**

Dining hours are significantly increased to allow de-densified and in-person dining for those who choose to eat in Mabee Commons. Mabee Commons will be open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at a reduced capacity of 50%. There will be no buffet or self-serving options. Staff will be constantly monitoring the sitting area and wiping down tables and barriers as you get up. Sanitized tables will have a “Clean” sign indicating their availability.

Masks are required when entering, exiting, standing in line at, and moving about all dining locations. You may remove it when sitting to eat or drink.

Each student will receive a reusable container at their first trip to the Commons. The container may be exchanged for a new one at each visit to the Commons or the Merzbach Room. If a student loses their container, they may purchase a new reusable container. If the student forgot their reusable container, they may dine in (at the Commons or outdoors only) or may take a new disposable to-go box for a charge of \$0.25.

For those who desire to order meals to go, there will be an app to facilitate the order and provide pick-up details. For those who would like a grab-and-go option, that is available at the Cove.

## **Social Gatherings on Campus**

The Student Activities Office spent the summer imagining how to create safe community activities and opportunities for social interaction. They’ve developed some great small-group opportunities as well as virtual events. The residential experience staff are doing the same thing. While engagement may look a bit different, it is going to happen, safely.

Student Activities has provided the following guidance to ensure that physical distancing and other safety protocols are followed during all in-person social gatherings on campus. When hosting meetings or events in person, student organizations must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Masks or face coverings must be worn in all public spaces.
- Students must maintain safe physical distancing (six feet apart, both indoors and outdoors).

- Meetings and events are limited to 10 people or less unless a 25Live reservation has been confirmed by Student Activities Assistant Director Oliver Agger-Shelton (note: a reservation will normally require at least seven days' lead time).
- All meetings and events must be limited to a maximum of 50 minutes.
- Food and other refreshments should not be provided or shared.
- The hosting organization must bring items to clean the space.
- All documents to be shared should be done so digitally rather than with hard copies.
- Students will not be allowed to travel on behalf of any student organizations.
- Student organizations may not host any off-campus events.
- Student organizations are able to host speakers and performers virtually; however, in-person speakers and performers will not be permitted.

No event will be approved unless its organizers can first demonstrate how they will successfully follow these protocols.

### **Athletics**

Fall and winter athletics are suspended until further notice. Southwestern and the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference are reviewing options for moving fall sports to the spring and a delayed start for winter sports. In addition, Southwestern football, an affiliate football member of the American Southwest Conference, will suspend its intercollegiate football competitive season for the fall of 2020 with hopes of competing in the spring of 2021.

### **Mail Services**

The SU Post Office will be practicing social distancing, which will allow only one student at a time at the service window. Please expect longer lines and delays when picking up your packages.

We've also enhanced our package tracking system to include an email that will notify you when a small package has been delivered to your campus mailbox. Be sure to read the email that you receive from supostaltracking. The email will inform you to either bring your SU pirate card to the service window to pick up your package or to simply check your mailbox for a package.

### **Travel**

Any nonessential travel is highly discouraged. Essential trips are defined as shopping for groceries and essentials, going to medical and dental appointments, going to work, or taking trips within a short distance of your home or residence hall that are absolutely necessary for your well-being.

All students, faculty, and staff members are required to complete and update their individual travel plans within the Travel Registry with as much advance notice as possible. For purposes of the Travel Registry, travel that is for everyday activities, such as shopping for groceries or other essentials, within your local community does not need to be reported. Travel, whether for personal or other reasons, outside of your local county must be reported.

Information that is submitted through the Travel Registry will only be viewed by Southwestern, and confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. We may contact you for additional information, if needed.

The University will generally follow the CDC guidelines for travel in the United States. If any student travels to a country that is subject to the CDC's Level 3 or greater Travel Health Notice, they will be subject to a mandatory 14-day off-campus quarantine period and may be required to provide a note from their healthcare provider prior to their return to campus.

The University will follow state and local travel restrictions and encourages students who plan to travel to regularly refer to the most up-to-date information and travel guidance found on the applicable state or local health department. Information from the trip's origination, along the route, and destination should be monitored prior to and during the trip.

The University anticipates that students will comply with this policy to the best of their ability. Failure to comply, particularly when there has been a potential COVID-19 exposure to the student during unreported travel—which then has potentially exposed others on campus—may result in appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Handbook.

## Calendar/Special Events

Classes will begin on-campus and in-person on September 7, and the semester will continue in-person until November 24—just before Thanksgiving. All students will be required to move out of their residence halls at that time, permitting us to clean and sanitize the facilities in preparation for the spring semester. After Thanksgiving break concludes, we will have two full weeks of remote instruction followed by two days for remote review, music juries, and capstone presentations. Final exams will be conducted remotely from December 15 to December 19.

Assuming this schedule remains in place through the end of the fall semester, current fees for room and board will apply. If the University must close due to worsening pandemic circumstances or an external mandate, Southwestern will apply an adjustment for unused room and board, as applicable, to spring 2021 charges. Tuition will not be discounted.

### **Calendar at a Glance**

September 7: Classes begin on campus

November 24: In-person instruction ends

November 25: Move-out deadline for campus housing

November 30–December 11: Remote instruction

December 12 and 14: Remote reviews, music juries, and capstone presentations

December 15–19: Final exams

### **Homecoming**

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent need to embrace social distancing and other health and safety protocols to keep our campus community safe, we believe that October presents too many uncertainties for a large-scale event such as homecoming, particularly given that the weekend incorporates multiple indoor activities and engages so many different segments of the Southwestern community. Therefore, in an effort to provide all of our community members with the most enjoyable and safest experience possible, Southwestern has rescheduled this academic year's homecoming program to April 16–18, 2021. There is an excellent precedence for this, as our first homecoming was held in April 1909.

This year's homecoming activities will incorporate many traditional campus celebrations as well as a few new ones. It will also feature the inauguration of Laura E. Skandera Trombley as Southwestern's 16th president on Friday, April 16.

We fully intend to revert to our traditional fall homecoming next year as long as conditions permit.

### **Commencement**

The University has made the difficult decision to indefinitely postpone the class of 2020 commencement ceremony. We understand that this is a significant disappointment to our graduates and their families, but we were unable to identify a way to welcome 3,000 individuals to campus for an in-person graduation ceremony without adding risk to the campus and surrounding communities. Southwestern continues to determine how to proceed with a celebration of our 2020 graduates.

# Campus Physical Spaces

The University's Facilities Management team has mapped pedestrian traffic flow, installed signage, and laid out furniture in classrooms, common areas, and the dining hall to promote physical distancing.

## **Classrooms**

The following health and safety protocols have been put in place for classes and classrooms:

- Masks will be required during class.
- Classrooms will be physically distanced with six feet between students and eight feet between the faculty member and students.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be present in all classrooms, in hallways, and other common areas.
- In most cases, classes will be limited to one hour to limit viral load.
- Supplies will be available for students to clean desk surfaces upon entry.
- Class dismissal times will be staggered to lessen traffic flow in hallways and other common areas.
- Scheduling includes 15–20 minutes between classes to provide time for desk cleaning and hand washing.
- We will have traffic-flow guidelines in all buildings to help with physical distancing and unnecessary contact.
- Classroom furniture will be arranged in a fixed manner to reinforce safe physical distancing.

## **Cleaning and Sanitation Protocols**

The Facilities Management team is increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting all campus buildings. Spaces with higher occupancy and activity will be cleaned more frequently. All cleaning protocols are according to CDC guidance and include the following:

- Routine cleaning: waste removal, floor cleaning, and wipe down of horizontal surfaces
- Routine restroom cleaning: waste removal, cleaning and disinfection of floors, sinks, toilets, and urinals
- Enhanced cleaning: disinfection of high-touch surfaces, with wipe down of high-frequency touch points (e.g., door handles, light switches, elevator buttons, shared equipment, and control panels) using EPA-approved disinfectants

- Enhanced disinfection: disinfection of horizontal work surfaces in classrooms and common areas using EPA-approved disinfectants

The University will also supply disinfectants in every classroom so that students, faculty, and staff can wipe down desks, chairs, and equipment whenever entering and leaving campus spaces, such as classrooms, study lounges, offices, Sarofim studios, workout rooms, gyms, chapter rooms, etc. The Office of Student Life will provide guidance for how to clean and disinfect rooms reserved for social activities.

### **HVAC System Protocols**

Studies are showing that SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, can spread not just through larger respiratory droplets but also through aerosols that circulate with central air conditioning and heating. Southwestern is combating the possible transmission of the virus through A/C. All occupied spaces at Southwestern will maintain HVAC system operation for maximum space occupancy; this allows for maximum fresh-air supply, regardless of reduced occupancy or use. Ideally, gatherings such as college classes would be best held outside while physically distanced. Unfortunately, because of the central Texas climate, classes will need to be held inside, in air-conditioned classrooms. This is why everyone is required to physically distance *and* wear appropriate masks at all times on campus, including while in classrooms.

### **Elevators**

Elevators are operational and limited to one passenger at a time. Please use the stairs if able. Signage has been posted outside elevators to mark six feet physically distancing for any queue for the elevator.

# Academics

## Guiding Principles for Instruction

1. All students should have opportunities for regularly scheduled direct real-time engagement with their classmates and instructor. This should include in-person classes unless the faculty member has received approval to exclusively work remotely.
2. Faculty members should hold class sessions during each course's normally scheduled times (as listed on WebAdvisor).
3. In order to maintain appropriate physical distancing during classes (with individuals spaced at least six feet apart and all wearing masks), classroom furniture should not be moved. As a result, placing students in small closely clustered groups will not be possible.
4. Some students may be required to engage remotely (for the entire semester or temporarily, due to health issues or if placed in quarantine). Moreover, it is possible that a student may only be able to participate asynchronously. Therefore, we are asking faculty to provide an equitable path to success in the course for all such students.

## Remote-Learning Option

Southwestern recognizes that in-person instruction aligns with our mission and goals, yet the pandemic has required a new level of flexibility for both students and faculty concerning the delivery of the University's academic program for the fall semester. All Southwestern students have the option of engaging in remote learning. Students who need to pursue remote learning because of their health-related circumstances should reach out to Associate Director of Academic Success Jennifer Smull ([smullj@southwestern.edu](mailto:smullj@southwestern.edu)). All other students should contact Director of Academic Success Dave Seiler ([seilerd@southwestern.edu](mailto:seilerd@southwestern.edu)) to engage in remote learning.

## In-Person Classes

Most classes are meeting in person on a regular basis, but some may have remote components because of health accommodations or classroom capacity constraints. Some classes are conducted completely through remote instruction and will be labeled as such on WebAdvisor. The majority of our classes are scheduled for on campus.

## Attendance Policy

In an effort to create an empathetic culture of care for students during these unprecedented times, Southwestern faculty have been asked to develop attendance policies that acknowledge and support students who become ill, and/or who are concerned that

they may be ill, without creating barriers and without requiring healthcare visits for documentation of illness. Such attendance policies should also be extended to those students who are only able to engage remotely, keeping in mind that the remote-engagement environment can present its own set of challenges.

### **Faculty Office Hours**

Office hours and advising will be remote rather than in person to reinforce safe physical distancing practices.

### **First-Year Seminar and Advanced-Entry Seminar**

Both seminars will start at the same time as other courses and run throughout the semester.

### **Class Availability**

Due to new physical distancing rules in the classroom, some classes may be canceled. The University is committed to supporting students in making progress toward their degree. Please contact Director of Academic Success Dave Seiler, [seilerd@southwestern.edu](mailto:seilerd@southwestern.edu), to explore course options that will allow you to make progress toward your degree plan.

### **Tuition Discounts or Refunds**

Southwestern will not discount tuition if we move to remote learning. The University is committed to offering an outstanding educational experience centered on the student-faculty relationship within a small class atmosphere, whether in person or virtual.

Professors participated in faculty development over the summer to prepare for both blended instruction and remote delivery depending on their own circumstances. Remote learning at Southwestern will be very robust: faculty will be actively engaging with students during scheduled class periods through synchronous lectures, class discussions, and problem-solving. This synchronous learning will be combined with a variety of asynchronous activities—as is normally the case with in-person instruction—such as discussion forums, blogs, outside readings, homework problem sets, reflection pieces, etc. Southwestern will continue to emphasize faculty accessibility and close mentorship in all of its courses, whether delivered remotely or in the classroom. Our faculty are here because they love interacting with students, and that interaction will continue, albeit sometimes using different tools and formats, as we face some of the constraints posed by the pandemic.