

A HEALTHIER **U**

COMMITMENT IS CONTAGIOUS

ACADEMIC RE-ENTRY PLAN

VERSION 2 | 8.18.20



A Strong Comeback

The 2020-21 academic year will be unlike any other in Auburn University's history. As the university prepares for the return of faculty, staff, and students, we do so amid a backdrop of safety measures and new personal health precautions designed to continue our instructional mission amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Maintaining student learning and academic progression is paramount to Auburn University's mission. With the decision to resume face-to-face instruction and commence modified academic operations during fall 2020, the university will align with institutional safety measures that outline expectations necessary to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Students and faculty are expected to take responsibility for their health and safety as well as the health and safety of those around them as they engage in academic instruction.

Guiding Principles for Academic Instruction

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the safety of faculty, students, staff, and the broader Auburn community has remained our institution's priority and will continue to inform our academic, research, and outreach decisions. When considering the academic program delivery for the fall academic term, the university remains committed to the following objectives:

- + Provide ample opportunities for student retention and academic progress toward graduation;
- + Deliver instruction in a safe environment that both minimizes exposure to and the spread of COVID-19; and
- + Develop appropriate plans to support the university's academic operations should a new wave of COVID-19 impact the university.

Upon consultation from leading health officials, the university continues to articulate protocols and guidelines to support modified instructional parameters. In consultation with shared governance groups and the university's administration, the Provost's Office has developed the following academic re-entry plan to help faculty and students safely maintain teaching and learning. These guidelines are designed to both assist students, faculty, and other academic stakeholders with delivering various types of instruction and minimize disruptions to Auburn's academic mission.

Elements of this plan are highly dependent on the continued assessment of the COVID-19 pandemic and changing safety measures provided by federal, state, and local government and public health officials.

Modified Fall 2020 Academic Calendar

To support the health, safety and well-being of the campus and broader community, and in anticipation of a possible resurgence of COVID-19 in mid- to late fall, Auburn University's fall 2020 academic calendar has been modified so that faculty and students are not required to return to campus after Thanksgiving. In the modified calendar, all instructional days occur prior to Thanksgiving, and all final exams will be administered remotely after Thanksgiving. Specific changes are as follows:

- + Fall break is replaced with class days.
- + The first two days of Thanksgiving break are replaced with class days.
- + Total instructional days are reduced from 72 to 71, allowing all instruction to conclude before Thanksgiving.
- + Two Reading Days are added on November 30 and December 1.
- + Final exams are remotely administered, starting on Wednesday, December 2 and concluding Tuesday, December 8.
- + Fall commencement is scheduled for December 12, contingent on existing health and safety guidelines.

ORIGINAL FALL 2020 CALENDAR

| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| 17 AUG | 18 AUG | 19 AUG | 20 AUG | 21 AUG |
| 24 AUG | 25 AUG | 26 AUG | 27 AUG | 28 AUG |
| 31 AUG | 1 SEP | 2 SEP | 3 SEP | 4 SEP |
| L DAY | 8 SEP | 9 SEP | 10 SEP | 11 SEP |
| 14 SEP | 15 SEP | 16 SEP | 17 SEP | 18 SEP |
| 21 SEP | 22 SEP | 23 SEP | 24 SEP | 25 SEP |
| 28 SEP | 29 SEP | 30 SEP | 1 OCT | 2 OCT |
| 5 OCT | 6 OCT | 7 OCT | FALL BREAK | |
| 12 OCT | 13 SEP | 14 SEP | 15 OCT | 16 OCT |
| 19 OCT | 20 SEP | 21 SEP | 22 OCT | 23 OCT |
| 26 OCT | 27 SEP | 28 SEP | 29 OCT | 30 OCT |
| 2 NOV | 3 NOV | 4 NOV | 5 NOV | 6 NOV |
| 9 NOV | 10 NOV | 11 NOV | 12 NOV | 13 NOV |
| 16 NOV | 17 NOV | 18 NOV | 19 NOV | 20 NOV |
| THANKSGIVING | | | | |
| 30 NOV | 1 DEC | 2 DEC | 3 DEC | 4 DEC |
| FINALS 7 DEC | FINALS 8 DEC | FINALS 9 DEC | FINALS 10 DEC | FINALS 11 DEC |

WEEK

1

2

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MODIFIED FALL 2020 CALENDAR

| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 17 AUG | 18 AUG | 19 AUG | 20 AUG | 21 AUG |
| 24 AUG | 25 AUG | 26 AUG | 27 AUG | 28 AUG |
| 31 AUG | 1 SEP | 2 SEP | 3 SEP | 4 SEP |
| L DAY | 8 SEP | 9 SEP | 10 SEP | 11 SEP |
| 14 SEP | 15 SEP | 16 SEP | 17 SEP | 18 SEP |
| 21 SEP | 22 SEP | 23 SEP | 24 SEP | 25 SEP |
| 28 SEP | 29 SEP | 30 SEP | 1 OCT | 2 OCT |
| 5 OCT | 6 OCT | 7 OCT | 8 OCT | 9 OCT |
| 12 OCT | 13 SEP | 14 SEP | 15 OCT | 16 OCT |
| 19 OCT | 20 SEP | 21 SEP | 22 OCT | 23 OCT |
| 26 OCT | 27 SEP | 28 SEP | 29 OCT | 30 OCT |
| 2 NOV | 3 NOV | 4 NOV | 5 NOV | 6 NOV |
| 9 NOV | 10 NOV | 11 NOV | 12 NOV | 13 NOV |
| 16 NOV | 17 NOV | 18 NOV | 19 NOV | 20 NOV |
| 23 NOV | 24 NOV | THANKSGIVING | | |
| READING 30 NOV | READING 1 DEC | FINALS 2 DEC | FINALS 3 DEC | FINALS 4 DEC |
| FINALS 7 DEC | FINALS 8 DEC | | | |

“Although the classroom experience may look somewhat different this fall, our approach will always reflect Auburn’s commitment to academic excellence and student success. As faculty, we must all remain sharply focused on upholding the health and safety of our classrooms while also continuing to deliver instruction that is so critical to our mission.”

BILL HARDGRAVE, PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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GuideSafe Platform

To encourage continued safety and wellness among students, faculty, and staff during fall semester, the university will employ the health screening and exposure notification components of the GuideSafe™ Platform.

- +** **Health Screening:** Health screening will be enabled through Healthcheck, a COVID-19 assessment tool that allows individuals to report COVID-19 health status, symptoms, and exposure. Students are required to complete the screening each day before they come to campus. By responding to a series of screener questions regarding symptoms, the daily health screening provides a 'pass' for the student to move around campus (i.e., a green screen indicates the student is cleared to move around campus, whereas a red screen indicates the student should not be on campus). Students who report specific conditions will be instructed to contact the Medical Clinic for evaluation and possible testing. Students will not be tested unless recommended by the Medical Clinic.
- +** **Exposure Notification:** In conjunction with the Alabama Department of Public Health, Auburn will implement a proximity/exposure notification application as part of the platform. Individuals will be able to use the app to report a positive test result and anonymously notify other individuals with whom the person with the positive test result has been in proximity and may have been exposed to the virus. The benefit of downloading and using the application is that it will help improve tracing efforts to reduce the spread of the virus. Use of the application is voluntary, but strongly encouraged.

All information collected by the GuideSafe™ platform will be collected and stored in HIPAA-compliant servers. The information collected is held anonymously and there are no identifying values that can link the information to the participant. The generalized information will help the university mitigate possible spread of the virus and support the efforts of the Alabama Department of Public Health to protect individuals from COVID-19.



Instructional Delivery

Auburn University delivers a range of academic and experiential learning programs, including undergraduate, graduate, professional, clinical, laboratory, and online instruction. For fall semester, the institution will employ four general instructional methods.

Faculty will determine which instructional methods best align with the learning outcomes of their courses, and the chosen methods will be published in the university's scheduling systems by August 1. Students will be able to search courses by instructional method and adjust their fall schedules, if desired and if seats are available.

- 1 **Face-to-Face Courses** are conducted in person. Courses that require physical presence (e.g., labs and clinicals) are natural candidates for face-to-face instruction, but any course can be offered in this format.
- 2 **Online Courses** are conducted online in their entirety. Students are not expected to attend any class or exam in-person. Using the following categories, faculty should classify their online courses and notify students at the beginning of class and in the syllabus of these expectations:
 - + Synchronous Delivery: Student participation is expected during scheduled class days/times.
 - + Asynchronous Delivery: Student participation is not expected during scheduled class times. In this delivery, faculty give students flexibility for when they engage the content and take the exams.
 - + Mixed Delivery: Student participation is expected during some, but not all, scheduled class times. In this delivery, a faculty member might give students some flexibility for when they engage the content but require exams to be taken remotely during the scheduled class day/time.

Instructional Delivery

- 3 **Blended Courses** include some instructional activities that are conducted in-person and other instructional activities that are conducted online. Examples of blended instruction might include:
- + Faculty teaching a three-hour lab could conduct the instruction online and the experimentation in-person.
 - + Faculty teaching a course comprised of both lecture and case-study discussion could conduct the lectures online and the case-study discussions in-person.
 - + Faculty following a “flipped classroom” format could deliver the instruction online asynchronously and use in-person class times to help students (or smaller groups of students if they can be divided across multiple class times) work through activities.
- 4 **HyFlex Courses** are conducted face-to-face but are available online simultaneously. Students can choose to attend in-person instruction or participate online. HyFlex courses are conducted synchronously, with students learning both in the class and online at the same time. The Biggio Center can provide additional guidance for what to consider when conducting a HyFlex course. The Provost’s Office will provide tools to assist with scheduling a rotation of students to attend face-to-face.

Instructional Delivery

Although faculty will select one or more of the identified modalities, it is possible due to instructional needs or public health recommendations, that courses may have to shift to a different delivery method at any time during the semester.

- + Regardless of the delivery method, all classes will be captured/recorded to ensure availability of material to students. Recorded class sessions will be available in a secured platform; faculty members may decide if they want to keep the recorded sessions or remove them at the end of the semester. Portable computing technology with video and audio recording capability will be made available in case faculty experience a technology failure in the classroom.
- + If a faculty member does not feel comfortable or safe teaching in a particular modality which may be required by the department to meet the course's learning objectives, they should consult with their department chair/head to postpone their teaching assignment until spring or summer 2021. In some cases, it may be possible for a faculty member not to teach in the fall and double up their teaching in the spring, as an example. This, of course, will be determined by the needs of the individual courses and each department's faculty resources. The academic year 2020-21 is being treated as a tri-mester year such that the fall, spring, and summer semesters are interchangeable as it relates to teaching assignment.

Auburn's tuition and fee structure have been established regardless of the method of instruction. Tuition and fees will not be altered in the event that the mode of instruction is changed for any course for all or part of the semester. Auburn remains committed to offering the highest quality academic experience and will maintain the high quality of instruction that students expect while earning their degrees, regardless of the mode of course delivery. Auburn's faculty will continue to teach courses, and the course curricula will continue to prioritize the learning outcomes that faculty have established.

“The best Auburn experience is shared when we are together on campus, but we will need everyone’s cooperation to start and finish the school year strong.”

FRED KAM, MEDICAL DIRECTOR, AUBURN UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CLINIC

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Safety Expectations in Classrooms and Other Academic Spaces

Auburn University will maintain the following safety expectations in classrooms and other academic spaces.

1 Face Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The university is requiring face coverings everywhere on campus, both indoors and outdoors, regardless of physical distancing. This requirement applies to everyone on campus and also extends to those attending university events in non-university buildings. This university policy became effective August 19.

The university will provide all interested faculty with a face shield to use in teaching their classes. PPE requirements for experiential learning sites should be coordinated with relevant experiential offices at the university. Students and faculty should consult the University's Policy on Classroom Behavior for information on adherence to classroom expectations.



Safety Expectations in Classrooms and Other Academic Spaces

2 Physical Distancing

All faculty and students are expected to practice appropriate physical distancing when entering, occupying, and exiting the following academic spaces:

- + **Classrooms:** With face coverings required, maximum capacities for classrooms will be 50% of normal capacity. For many rooms, this can be accomplished by leaving one empty seat between each student.

Practicable distancing will be followed between individuals engaged in experiential learning opportunities (e.g., labs, vocational skill-building activities) as well as between students in vehicles required for travel to instructional field laboratories, etc. (e.g., skipping rows) when possible.

Students and faculty should consult the University's Policy on Classroom Behavior for information on adherence to classroom expectations.

- + **Non-Classroom Spaces:** Most academic buildings maintain informal, non-classroom spaces that allow for study, teamwork, etc. With face coverings required, students using these spaces should maintain appropriate physical distance by leaving at least one seat open between themselves and other students.

- + **Hallways, Elevators, and Restrooms:** Signage in areas such as restrooms will be added to encourage personal distancing in small spaces.

Safety Expectations in Classrooms and Other Academic Spaces

3 Cleaning

Disposable cleaning wipes will be available in classrooms for faculty and students to wipe down their spaces prior to class. In addition, these classrooms will be disinfected each weekday during the overnight hours.

4 Increased Personal Hand Hygiene

All students, faculty, and staff should practice enhanced personal hygiene. This includes washing hands with soap and water frequently and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds, especially after touching door handles, equipment, handrails, or other public surfaces.

If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol should be used. All students, faculty, and staff should use the handicap accessibility door button to open doors whenever possible. Additionally, everyone on campus is expected to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of the elbow. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



Instructional Contingency Plans

All faculty will create a contingency plan for the following potential course disruptions:

- + A student cannot attend:** Faculty should indicate in their syllabi how course content will be provided to students who cannot attend due to COVID-19-related absences. Faculty should reference the university's Policy on Class Attendance to arrange for students to complete missed work and/or major examinations. As noted earlier, all classes will be captured and made available to students who are unable to attend.
- + The instructor cannot attend:** Faculty should identify and communicate to the department chair a back-up instructor in the event the faculty member cannot attend due to isolation, quarantine, or other COVID-19 concerns.
- + No one can attend:** Per the university's Academic Contingency Policies, all faculty will maintain a "Syllabus B" or contingency syllabus to use in case a sudden resurgence of the COVID-19 virus requires the university to return to remote-only instruction. This contingency syllabus should be made available to students (e.g., posting it on Canvas) and should be kept current based on changing conditions. As per the policy, faculty are asked to include this statement in their syllabi:
"If normal class and/or lab activities are disrupted due to illness, emergency, or crisis situation (such as a COVID-19 outbreak), the syllabus and other course plans and assignments may be modified to allow completion of the course. If this occurs, an addendum to your syllabus and/or course assignments will replace the original materials."

Course Attendance

Students are expected to adhere to the university's Policy on Class Attendance. However, as the university continues to face a challenging situation where the health and safety of campus remain a priority, the following guidelines should be considered:

- + Students who are diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are engaging in self-quarantine at the direction of a health care professional should not attend class.
- + Students directed by the GuideSafe Healthcheck to seek medical attention should not attend class until they have done so.
- + When possible, students should provide formal documentation from a health care provider for absences. If students have to miss class, they should:
 - Notify instructors in advance of the absence, if possible.
 - Keep up with classwork if they can do so.
 - Submit assignments digitally.
 - Work with their instructors to try to reschedule exams, labs, and other critical academic activities.
- + Faculty should provide appropriate opportunities for make-up work.
- + All official student codes of conduct and rules of academic integrity will be upheld.

As the situation evolves, Auburn will continue developing new policies to protect our community. Let's work together to create a safe and healthy environment for teaching, working, and living.

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Instructional Resources for Faculty

Auburn University will provide instructional resources and support to faculty as they develop and implement their fall courses.

1 Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning

The Biggio Center has numerous resources available to support faculty, including:

- + Decision Trees – Tools to assist faculty in choosing the best instructional methodology by considering multiple situational and pedagogical factors.
- + Directed Workshops – Groups of faculty can participate in training on how to best utilize the different instructional methodologies.
- + Classroom Management Assistance – The university will provide classroom management assistance, if desired, to manage the students participating online. For example, if online students enter the class through Zoom, a student worker can manage questions from the online students.
- + Sample Syllabus Language – Sample language for various scenarios and expectations regarding fall semester instruction.
- + Exam Support – Support for proctored exams within the Biggio Testing Center and those with third-party platforms, as well as consultations regarding possible alternatives to high-stakes exams.
- + Technical Support – Support for Canvas, Zoom, Panopto, and other instructional technologies.

2 Classroom Technology

All classrooms will have recording capabilities.

Instructional Technology for Students

To be prepared for the possibility of remote instruction, students should have reliable and regular access to a Windows or Macintosh computer/laptop, a webcam (built-in on the computer or as an additional USB accessory), and access to broadband Internet. Refer to the Student Specific Computer Recommendations page for guidance on specific computer recommendations based on your academic program. In the event the university has to transition to remote operations, students with electronic textbook and other technology needs should contact the AU Bookstore at books@auburn.edu.

To complete the required daily Health Screening, students will need a smartphone or laptop computer. For exposure notification, a smartphone is required.



Research and Laboratory Spaces

Faculty and research/laboratory staff should take every reasonable precaution in safely continuing their research and laboratory instruction such as the use of proper face coverings and additional PPE as needed (e.g., face shields, gloves), physical distancing, etc. Faculty and research/laboratory staff should coordinate with their units and dean's offices to ensure they are following unit and college level protocols.

Experiential Learning, Internships, Practicums, and Other Service Activities

Faculty and staff should take every reasonable precaution in safely continuing student participation in experiential learning environments such as the use of proper face coverings and additional PPE as needed (e.g., face shields, gloves), physical distancing, etc. Faculty should coordinate with their units and dean's offices to ensure they are following unit and college level protocols.

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