



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Florida Tech's Pandemic Response Team, working collaboratively across campus units, developed the enclosed Return to Learn recommendations to facilitate the university's safe and efficient return to campus-based living and learning in the fall & spring. Operations across campus—from the student experience to the work environment for faculty and staff—were evaluated for risk, assessed for opportunities and challenges and modified to ensure the health and safety of all Panthers.

Central to this work was the development of the Florida Tech Safe initiative, an evaluation of the university's safety culture, establishment of a safety pledge and implementation of policies and procedures to mitigate the risk posed by COVID-19.

Due to the dedication and policy adherence from our students, faculty and staff, we were able to successfully complete a hybrid 2020–2021 academic year. We hope this next step will bring us back to normalcy.

OUR PLEDGE: SAFE STUDENTS—SAFE CAMPUS—SAFE COMMUNITY

We look forward to providing our student body with a traditional campus experience in the fall. Having the vast majority of the Florida Tech community vaccinated against COVID-19 will be one of the keys to allowing an increase in activities on campus.

Until that time, our pledge for safe students, safe campus and safe community remains.

We will continue to carefully monitor public health conditions and maintain regular communication with health officials. Although we hope it won't be necessary, we have the experience and capacity to rapidly pivot to remote or hybrid instruction if necessary.

Florida Tech's plan aligns with local orders and ordinances of the city of Melbourne and Brevard County, as well as the state of Florida. It also follows recommendations from the federal government, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Florida Tech's Holzer Health Center.



We are in this together.

FLORIDA TECH SAFE PLEDGE

Being a part of the Panther family means that each of us must take extraordinary steps to stay well and persistently protect each other. Therefore, I will take responsibility for my own health and help keep the Florida Tech community safe by stopping the spread of COVID-19 and other infections as identified and instructed by the university.

I PLEDGE TO:

1 Protect Myself

Monitor for the symptoms of COVID-19 and report to a medical professional if I experience fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, dry cough, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat or loss of taste or smell.

Wash my hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.

Get vaccinated or continue to wear face coverings in accordance with university health and safety guidelines.

2 Protect Others

Stay home if I feel ill or after exposure to someone who is ill or has tested positive for COVID-19.

Wear an appropriate face mask and other protective gear as directed by the university unless fully vaccinated.

Be positive, sensitive and helpful to anyone around who may be troubled or struggling.

3 Protect our Community

Get vaccinated or continue to wear face coverings in accordance with university health and safety guidelines.

Report close contact exposure or positive test to the COVID-19 case manager and follow quarantine/isolation protocols.

Adhere to all university quarantine and isolation regulations if identified as a close contact or testing positive.

RETURN TO CAMPUS: FALL 2021

As we prepare for the new semester, the Pandemic Response Team has developed a series of goals and updates we believe will help produce a successful and safe academic year. They are anchored by these three essential concepts:

1. We would like to have a fully vaccinated campus community.
2. We will return to a full schedule of in-person instruction.
3. We will continue to take the steps to maintain a safe and healthy campus.

COVID-ERA POLICIES WILL REVERT

All academic policies that may have been waived during the pandemic will return during the 2021–22 academic year.

We reached this decision after careful planning and consultation with our health care and operational professionals to ensure that we can return to a healthy campus with appropriate safety precautions while also having the flexibility to implement new guidelines as necessary. As such, we will continue to follow CDC guidelines and our existing rules (modified as appropriate) based on those guidelines and advice from our own medical professionals and public health experts.

The availability of the vaccine will enable us to return to a “partial pre-pandemic” environment and, for this reason, Florida Tech continues to strongly recommend that our students, faculty, and staff get vaccinated.

We expect that our other health protocols—such as wearing masks for those not fully vaccinated, hand washing and increased cleaning—will carry forward this fall, but as with all things COVID-19, we will track changes, follow CDC guidelines and adjust accordingly when warranted.

Academics

In the hope that the majority of our campus community is vaccinated, Florida Tech will resume a full schedule of in-person instruction in the fall. A remote option exemption will be available for those who receive approval from their college dean.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The first day of the fall term is Aug. 23, 2021. The academic calendar will reflect traditional fall and Thanksgiving breaks.

Campus Housing

We will reinstate normal housing accommodations, and our two-year live-on housing requirement will remain in place. All full-time students are required to live on campus for two years. For fall 2021, this includes students who entered Florida Tech during the following semesters: spring 2019, fall 2020, spring 2021 and fall 2021.

Select residence halls will accommodate limited single occupancy at a premium cost. For additional details, visit floridatech.edu/housing/about-campus-housing.

Guest Policy/Badging

For the safety of our campus community, public access to the campus will remain restricted, and Florida Tech will continue to require university visitors to check in at designated welcome centers. For safety and security, visitors will be required to display their university-provided visitor pass. Faculty, staff and students will continue to display their campus-issued ID at all times when on campus.

Campus Dining

Panther Dining Hall, the Rathskeller and the newly added dining options in the Denius Student Center will be open for the full campus community this fall.

Travel

Any individual or group participating in university-related travel will need approval and may require a negative COVID-19 test pre- and post-travel or a completed vaccination pending related travel advisories.

Events

Florida Tech is committed to the health, safety and welfare of every member of the Panther community. Large university events and student events will require approval and will be reviewed on an individual basis. Organization and club meetings are permitted as long as they adhere to university safety protocols.

Our Student Life division is working hard to offer the safest experience we can for our student body. We look forward to welcoming you back and reigniting your college experience outside the classroom.

Commencement

Commencement ceremonies will revert to in person beginning with the summer 2021 commencement ceremony. University protocols regarding face coverings will apply.

Quarantine and Isolation

The university will continue to require isolation and quarantine protocols to be followed by all students. Florida Tech has assigned isolation space on campus but reserves the right to ask any positive students to isolate at home or off-campus at their own expense.

If you do not adhere to the isolation protocols and procedures, you may be referred to the Dean of Students and/or removed from campus. Contact tracing will continue, and students will be required to follow quarantine protocols if identified as a close contact unless fully vaccinated.

Students in on-campus housing will quarantine or self-isolate in designated space in campus facilities. Isolation suites will be limited to students housed in double-occupancy housing. Students with their own room will isolate in place with restrictions. A dedicated staff member will serve as liaison to students in these spaces, coordinating move-in and move-out as well as access to food, and assisting with health and wellness needs that arise.

Students who do not live in campus housing will be required to self-isolate or quarantine in their off-campus housing or another location. The university will not provide housing or dining for those purposes.

Vaccine Policy

To provide the best chance of returning to normal campus operations, all employees and students are recommended to receive the vaccination. The new CDC guidance says fully vaccinated people can:

- Resume normal activities that you did prior to the pandemic.
- Resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.

FACE COVERING POLICY

- If you are fully vaccinated, wearing a face covering is optional but encouraged while indoors.
- If you are not fully vaccinated or are ill, wearing a face covering is required while indoors.

For the latest vaccine information, visit the CDC website, cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines. Visit vaccinefinder.org for vaccine locations nearby.