

**From:** UBC Vancouver Provost & VP Academic Office  
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On behalf of Andrew Szeri, Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Vancouver, we are pleased to provide you with the first edition of our Return to Campus Planning Digest.

Our main focus as we plan for the resumption of on-campus activities is safety, for all faculty, staff and students. The goal of the digest is to provide information to the academic community about planning that is underway to not only ensure the safe return to campus but to give confidence to our community that the campus is indeed safe.

As such, we plan to address a number of subjects over the coming weeks, such as vaccination availability and campaigns, masking and physical distancing requirements, building ventilation, and future town halls for faculty members. If there are any topics that you would like us to address, let us know at [provost.office@ubc.ca](mailto:provost.office@ubc.ca).

### **BC and COVID-19: The Data**

See the current COVID-19 data for BC at the BCCDC COVID-19 portal: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data>.

Of note: View the [Update on geographic distribution of COVID-19 cases, lab testing and vaccination coverage, May 12, 2021](#) (PDF).

## **Teaching and Learning: Planning for Summer and Fall 2021**

### **Additional resources to Faculties to support summer and fall 2021 instruction**

Based upon planning in March and early April, an additional \$4.2-million has been allocated to Faculties for support needed for summer and W1 2021 term courses as the university transitions from predominantly online delivery in the summer, to more campus-based teaching in the fall. While instruction for the fall is still very much in the preparation and planning stages, there is a strong desire to incorporate flexibility for students as well as enhancements based on lessons learned over the past year of online teaching and learning. Support priorities are determined by each Faculty, and include on-going support of GAA/TAs for course design and delivery, increased capacity and flexibility of AV equipment, and for continuing expansion of the Learning Continuity Rovers (Tech Rovers) through to the end of December 2021.

### **Enhancements to how students see 'mode of delivery' information when registering for courses**

In response to the potential for a variety of modes of delivery for courses in W1 2021, Scheduling Services, with the support of Student Systems Management and UBC IT, is proposing the addition of two new label fields within SIS, "Mode of Delivery" and "Course Requires In-Person Attendance (Yes/No/See Section Comments)". This will enable students (and those advising students) to search and distinguish between courses that require in-person attendance, and those that are able to be completed remotely; in other words, the ability to effectively identify which courses offer an online option or pathway.

These new fields will enable students to see activity type (e.g. lecture, laboratory), mode of delivery (e.g. In-person, hybrid, online) and whether in-person attendance of a course section is required, in most cases without having to go into Section Comments. It will also resolve the mixed use of labeling in the activity type field that has previously conflated activity type and mode of delivery (i.e. we will no longer need to use “web-oriented” in place of “lecture”). These new fields will offer increased clarity for students during the course registration process, as well as bringing greater consistency in how we describe the way in which courses are offered.

### **Learning and Teaching Beyond COVID-19 project**

Over the next six months, we will be engaging faculty, staff and students in a conversation about what post-COVID-19 learning and teaching *could* and *should* look like. The intent is that rather than settle back into multiple versions of ‘a new normal’ that might emerge organically across the university, we can be deliberate about what we want to either retain, do differently, or reject as a result of our collective experience over the 14 months. The Learning & Teaching Beyond COVID-19 group will work across the summer, engaging faculty, staff and students to address the big questions to serve as valuable conversation starters: What have we learned? What has worked (perhaps even better than we thought possible in pre-COVID-19 times)? What has not? What changes might work if we enact them under different conditions or with adjustments?

One of the advantages that the large-scale move online has brought has been *flexibility*, but how much of this flexibility do students want to retain in their learning in a new normal? Does this align with the goals of academic programs and units, or is it at odds? For all of these big questions, what are the implications for our academic processes (scheduling, degree requirements etc.), our spaces (both physical and digital), and the supporting staff members involved throughout?

An invitation to participate in the Learning & Teaching Beyond COVID group has gone out via several channels; if you would like to distribute it in your areas, here is an [email](#) with a Qualtrics survey link for completion by those interested in participating in this first phase of the project.

### **Mask and physical distancing requirements for in-class and in-office**

Current planning at UBC for fall 2021 requires mask use by students in classroom settings, while masks are not required in distanced staff workspaces. This conforms to the health orders that are currently in effect.

Referenced order: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-workplace-safety.pdf>

Students must wear masks in the classroom per section 9 regardless of physical distancing i.e. “A student must wear a face covering over their nose and mouth when in an indoor common area or a classroom subject to the exceptions in section 11.” Section 11 allows for exceptions. Whether this will continue to be the requirement for the fall remains to be determined.

As per existing health orders and COVID-19 safety plans, workers do not have to wear masks in physically distanced work areas.

(Information source: Dr. Brian Emerson, Office of the PHO and the [Workplace and Post-secondary Institution Safety PHO Order \(May 2, 2021\)](#))

View the May 10<sup>th</sup> BC Post-Secondary Townhall with Dr Bonnie Henry, hosted by Thompson Rivers University: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nM1UIAm6nbA>

## Facilities

The Facilities team is currently planning for resumption of in-person classes on campus in September 2021. This includes the ramp-up of cleaning services and preparation of building systems for increased activity.

### Building ventilation and HVAC

We appreciate this is a serious concern for the academic community. Building ventilation systems are a particular area of focus given updated guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control regarding airborne transmission of COVID-19. An HVAC working group was established some time ago, consisting of staff experts from Facilities (Building Operations, Energy & Water Services) and Safety & Risk Services. This group will determine and recommend any further technical measures that should be taken with building ventilation systems to reduce risk of COVID-19 specific to resumption of on-campus classes. The group will then oversee the implementation of recommended measures prior to September.

## Supporting Students

### Preparing first year students

Academic Essentials is a free online program that prepares incoming first year students for academic success as they transition to university. Last year, the program was piloted with over 7,000 course registrations and over 3,000 students impacted. Increased capacity is planned across both campuses for this year. Students can register at <https://you.ubc.ca/academic-essentials/>.

## IT

### Use of Zoom as UBC's Primary Videoconference Tool

Zoom will continue to be the primary tool for online synchronous course delivery for teaching and learning as we approach WT1 2021. The videoconference tool will also remain the primary tool for faculty and administrative meetings, as well as university-held webinars and events. Existing Skype for Business videoconference rooms are in the process of being changed to Zoom rooms, since we are decommissioning the use of Skype for Business as of May 31, 2021.

### New UBC IT Service Centre Hours (Vancouver)

Effective May 3, 2021, the IT Service Centre's operating hours will be 7:30am - 6pm PT, Monday to Friday. This will be a year-round schedule. This change provides support to our customers during peak times, while optimizing staffing resources. To access IT support, please visit <https://it.ubc.ca/got-question-about-it-products-and-support>.

## Library reopening plans and access

[UBC Library](#) plans to reopen most or all branches on the Vancouver campus in time for the start of Winter Session Term 1 in September. Details about in-person hours and services are not complete at this time, but it is anticipated that the reopening of physical facilities will be gradual. The services for

users that are in place at this time, including reservation-based study space access in IKBLC, the Materials Pick-Up Service, and online, e-mail, and telephone reference and consultations will continue during the transition.

Over the summer, UBC Library will develop and share specific plans to provide safe spaces and practices for library users and library employees. These plans are being shaped with the following in mind: safety measures as outlined in the COVID-19 Go-Forward Guidelines for B.C.'s Post-Secondary Sector; available human and financial resources; consultation with users and campus planners; and data and experiences we have gathered from our users during the pandemic.

UBC Library has engaged in careful planning that has allowed support for remote and in-person learning, teaching, and research during the COVID-19 pandemic. As both remote and in-person activities will need increased access to library services and spaces, we will again apply a deliberate and data-driven approach.

### Hierarchy of Committees

The following chart show the various committees and working groups that have been formed as part of the return to campus planning process, along with a listing of the committee chairs. We will provide updates on the outcomes of those working groups when information is available. If you have questions about the composition of the committees, please let us know.

