

Suffolk County Community College

College Brief

NO. 176 July 12, 2021

TO: The College Community

FROM: Dr. Edward Bonahue
 President

SUBJECT: College Announces First Guidelines for Fall 2021

Last week, the college received COVID-19 guidance for the fall semester from SUNY. The document authorized SUNY institutions to relax certain COVID-related protection measures, while providing discretion to each institution to impose additional requirements beyond those provided. The SUNY guidance coincided with a number of recommendations presented to me by the college's Safe Start Task Force. After carefully considering both documents, I am implementing many of the recommendations and am issuing this College Brief to keep the community informed regarding plans being developed for the fall.

1. I endorsed the Task Force's recommendation to continue the requirement for all students, faculty and staff to wear face coverings/masks in all classrooms and labs, and at all college functions held indoors, regardless of the individual's vaccine status. I likewise endorsed the Task Force's recommendation that we relieve faculty and staff from any duty of trying to determine which students are vaccinated or unvaccinated. The Task Force has also been able to implement a process to track student vaccination status in a systematic way for testing requirements.
2. The master course schedule established by the Office of Academic and Student Affairs reflects approximately a 50-50 division between on-campus and virtual classes. Over the summer, student demand and registration has been leaning toward online classes, but we are beginning to see a slight uptick in on-campus demand from recent registrants. I have determined that, as an interim measure, the college will increase standard class capacities to 75% of pre-COVID levels and expand lower-enrollment applied classes to whatever higher capacities those instructional spaces will allow. In this way, we will create more on-campus seats for students who want them, improve workload equity between online and on-campus sections, and also have an opportunity to track not only student enrollment demand but also public health conditions for the rest of the summer.
3. I endorsed the Task Force's recommendation on updating access to our libraries and services in those buildings. This means we will no longer require students to make appointments to use our libraries and the support services in those buildings.

4. I likewise endorsed the Task Force's recommendation on sunseting the pooled saliva testing requirement for any occasional campus visitor.

As with all COVID-related actions, these decisions will be revisited on a continuing basis as state mandates or local conditions change.

In addition to the above items, the college continues to maintain the following requirements:

- Individuals who **are fully vaccinated** against COVID-19 (i.e., those who are two weeks past their final dose of an authorized vaccine) are no longer required to wear a face covering/mask outdoors on campus while alone or in small outdoor groups and gatherings. Face coverings or masks are still required in crowded outdoor settings and venues, when entering campus and interacting with College Public Safety Officers, as well as inside all College buildings, classrooms, labs, offices, and facilities; and
- Individuals who **are not fully vaccinated** must continue to use a face covering/mask while on campus any time there is a potential to be less than six feet apart from one another, including outdoors, consistent with the College's [COVID-19 Guidelines for Use of Face Coverings/Masks](#), except:
 - While actively eating or drinking with appropriate physical distancing, and
 - When by themselves alone.

This College Brief represents SUNY Suffolk's first fall 2021 guidelines; again, additional information will be forthcoming. Feel free to refer to this information as you address concerns and questions leading into the fall semester. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Irene Rios, Chair of the Safe Start Task Force, at RiosI@SUNYSuffolk.edu or me, at Bonahue@SUNYSuffolk.edu.