GUIDANCE FOR VCOM FACULTY AND STAFF
FOR THE VIRGINIA, CAROLINAS, LOUISIANA, and AUBURN CAMPUSES

GUIDANCE APPLIED TO ON CAMPUS EDUCATION (part 1)
AND EDUCATION IN CLINICAL SETTINGS (part 2)
AND ALL THAT APPLY TO CONDITIONS UNDER COVID-19
BEGINNING 8-23-2021

In the summer of 2021, much of the country had moved to Phase 2 or 3 guidelines for preventing the spread of COVID-19. Since July, there has been a rise in COVID-19 in all states where VCOM campuses are located. This rise will likely continue as students return to campuses in our states. In preparation for a fall semester where COVID-19 remains a threat, VCOM is implementing new policies and procedures for faculty and staff on the VCOM Campuses. The Delta variation has brought about even more concerns, causing a rise in the numbers of patients with COVID-19, especially in Louisiana and Alabama, which lead the country in the rising numbers of new COVID-19 cases.

While great strides have been made in vaccination nationwide, Alabama and Louisiana both show less than 50% of persons are vaccinated. South Carolina, although improving, remains low. Virginia numbers of vaccinated persons exceed 50% and the rate of infection is less. VCOM fully supports the Surgeon General’s message that vaccination is the most important health initiative to reduce the threat of COVID-19 for the country and to allow a return to normal.

Even with the new Delta variant on the rise, the majority of vaccinated persons are immune to the Delta variant and the majority who have contracted the Delta variant have experienced milder symptoms. As a medical school, the VCOM family must be a part of the message that vaccination is needed to save lives, and as a medical school we must be a part of the healthcare field in working to dispel the misinformation that exists surrounding the vaccine and in promoting vaccination.

SECTION 1: VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYEES

Employees: VCOM has been strongly recommending vaccination for all employees since spring. As the vaccines become fully approved by the FDA (and are being removed from Emergency Use Authority), VCOM will be requiring all employees to be fully vaccinated (with vaccination to be completed by October); except where this is prohibited by applicable law. (VCOM appreciates greatly all employees who have completed vaccination already, we are > 90%).

- Employees may apply for a medical exemption or other approved exemption according to the state where the employee is working.
- Vaccination is for the safety of all students, faculty, staff (and the patients for whom our medical faculty and students provide care).
- Anyone having difficulty obtaining the vaccine should speak with Human Resources or the Dean, who will assist them in finding a vaccination source.
- Certain employee positions will require vaccination due to the duties and location of the position. (An example would be a clinical faculty member who sees patients and then works in the PPC/OMM lab with students). Whenever possible, the employee who is not able to comply with vaccination will be reassigned or placed on temporary leave until the threat of COVID-19 is over.
- VCOM follows the recommended pathways for determining accommodations following EEOC and OSHA guidelines. Currently, the EEOC and OSHA support the employer being able to require vaccination.

**Education on COVID-19 and the Vaccine:** VCOM created learning modules for all students and employees based on evidence-based medical data, to assure both employees and students would become knowledgeable regarding research and true facts about both COVID-19 and the vaccine.
- The results of evidence-based medical studies to date have overwhelmingly demonstrated the efficacy and extremely low risk of complications with vaccination and the extremely high risk of complications from the COVID-19 infection.
- Vaccination is the only true measure to assure each individual’s safety and the safety of the campus and the safety of the patients our physician faculty care for.

**Working From Home:** Working from home is no longer an option for VCOM employees.

(The exception to the above are the positions that were approved prior to COVID-19 for working remotely and were approved by the Supervisor and the Dean and President or the Division Officer and the President).

For new requests for exemptions and/or working from home the faculty and staff may apply through the Supervisor, Dean and President. To be done from home, the job must qualify that the duties can be done in an equivalent manner as to performance in person.

*To provide proof of vaccination, provide a copy of their vaccination card to Human Resources.*

*In Alabama, this is requested rather than required to meet state law requirements.*

**SECTION 2: REQUIRED EDUCATION ON COVID-19 AND ON VACCINATION - BASED UPON EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE FOR ALL EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS**

Recognizing the need for vaccination education, VCOM requires all faculty and staff to complete education modules on COVID-19 and on the COVID-19 vaccination by September 10, 2021. The educational modules will be provided online and each employee will be notified by Human Resources on the location and process to complete. The modules developed by our faculty contain evidence-based medical facts about both the virus and the vaccine.

VCOM is providing the modules to assure all employees and students are educated on medical facts regarding immunization rather than media and political opinion. The modules will also allow employees and students to educate family, friends, and their communities on the vaccination. In this manner, the VCOM family can become a part of the solution to COVID-19 - by raising the numbers of persons vaccinated in our states.
- Vaccination for COVID-19 must be treated as a true public health emergency!
Louisiana and Alabama have been among the top 3 states for increasing cases of patients with COVID-19 with some of the lowest vaccination rates in the country.

There should be no more needless deaths from COVID-19.

Here are some additional fast facts comparing the risks of COVID-19 to those of the vaccine:

- As of August 12, 2021; there have been 34,908,416 cases of COVID-19. There have been 609,671 deaths from the virus; a record high for any virus. That is approximately 2 persons dying in every 100 infected or .02. A very high risk.

- As of August 12, 2021; there have been over 346,000,000 does of vaccines administered and there have been a total 6,450 deaths in persons who received the vaccine. (Deaths within a time period following vaccination must be reported whether related to the vaccine or not). This equates to approximately .00002. A risk that would be considered rare and that is approximately 1000 times less than the risk of the virus.

Employees or students concerned about a medical reason for not completing vaccination, after completing the educational modules, should check with their physician prior to receiving the vaccine. Those with concerns may apply for an exemption through Human Resources.

Following the guidelines by the CDC for Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) for operation, has allowed VCOM to continue operations, be able to continue to offer students medical education and to employ everyone. VCOM will continue to follow the CDC guidelines for institutions of higher education, based upon evidence-based medical data. We are making great strides in employee vaccination with more than 90% of employees vaccinated on each campus.

Once you have completed the modules, as a member of the VCOM community, we hope you will continue to follow the guidelines from the CDC and will honor the Surgeon General’s requests to educate those you know on the true facts about the vaccine and by dispelling the misinformation on the safety of the vaccine that has been spread.


In the past year, the COVID-19 conditions have changed frequently causing VCOM policies and procedures to change frequently as well. This has made it difficult for students, faculty and staff to keep abreast of the most current policies. To create an improved method of communication, VCOM has created COLOR ZONES FOR CAMPUS SAFETY for the 2021-2022 academic year. Each zone has changes in policy to reduce risk. The changes will assure the safest operations during COVID-19. The tables interpreting the COLOR ZONES below will be placed by the entrances for quick reference by employees and students in identifying the current COLOR ZONE for the day. The zones will change as risk changes, so employees and students should assure they are following the appropriate policies for the zone posted. Employees will also be notified by email of any high-risk red zone conditions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONE</th>
<th>RISK</th>
<th>MASKS</th>
<th>ATTENDANCE</th>
<th>EVENTS</th>
<th>INCREASED SANITIZERS, &amp; CLEANING</th>
<th>REQUIRED SCREENING MYHEALTHTRACTER.COM USE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GREEN</td>
<td>VERY LOW</td>
<td>MASKS</td>
<td>REQUIRED</td>
<td>ALLOWED</td>
<td></td>
<td>ALL EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS WHO ARE VACCINATED MUST DOCUMENT WEEKLY</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not required by those vaccinated.</td>
<td></td>
<td>While allowed, all events must be planned through the Associate Dean for Student Services and the Dean OR through a request submitted to a Division Officer and the President</td>
<td></td>
<td>ALL EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT VACCINATED MUST DOCUMENT AT LEAST 3X/WEED AND ON ANY DAY BEFORE COMING TO CAMPUS. IN ADDITION, ALL EMPLOYEES ARE REQUIRED TO DOCUMENT IF ILL OR IF THEY HAVE HAD A SIGNIFICANT EXPOSURE TO A PERSON WITH COVID-19</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Required by ALL those who are not vaccinated.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>YELLOW</td>
<td>MINIMUM RISK BUT Increasing in the Community or State</td>
<td>MASKS required at all times by those not vaccinated</td>
<td>REQUIRED</td>
<td>LIMITED BUT ALLOWED</td>
<td>On Campus indoor events will be limited to those planned through the President and Deans office and only to those necessary. On Campus outdoor events will still be planned through the Deans office</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>For those who are vaccinated中华民族 required in halls, meeting rooms, classrooms, and where 6 ft. distancing is not possible only</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORANGE</td>
<td>MODERATE RISK</td>
<td>MASKS REQUIRED By all students and employees at all times on campus whether vaccinated or not vaccinated</td>
<td>REQUIRED</td>
<td>EVENTS LIMITED</td>
<td>All events must be preapproved through the Dean and President. Masks will be required for all persons. Negative tests may also be required.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Unless granted an appeal through the Division Officer or Dean and President)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>RED</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>MASKS REQUIRED ON CAMPUS FROM PARKING LOT TO INDOORS</td>
<td>ONLINE CLASSES Campus restricted to a limited number of employees</td>
<td>NO EVENTS</td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Monday, Wednesday, and Friday entries and any illness or exposure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AS IT IS ANTICIPATED THE CAMPUSES WILL GO THROUGH TIMES THIS FALL WHEN CASES INCREASE TO RED OR ORANGE AND TIMES WHEN WE SEE A DECREASE TO GREEN. THE TABLES ABOVE WITH COLOR ALERTS REGARDING SAFETY APPLY TO ALL CAMPUSES BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 1, 2021.
SECTION 4: QUARANTINE MEASURES OF SAFETY

• SELF QUARANTINE:
  o **Vaccinated employees and students**: A minimum required 5-day self-quarantine period without illness will still be required following any direct, significant, unprotected exposure. Quarantine is not required if the person is vaccinated, a mask was worn, and there was not direct contact (touching, etc.) with a person with an illness. If illness follows, the employee or student must test negative before returning to campus.
  o **Employees and students who are not vaccinated**: A minimum 7-day self-quarantine following any significant exposure and a negative test submitted to the employee or student’s COVID-19 Officer before returning to campus.
  o **Quarantine periods for employees** must be taken from sick days, vacations days, and/or other leave time (or a time where work can be done off campus as approved by the supervisor).

SECTION 5: MAINTAINING AN AWARENESS OF THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

An employee experiencing any of the following symptoms may not enter College facilities and should isolate immediately. Symptoms most common to COVID-19 include the following:

A. Fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit) or chills,
B. Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
C. Extreme fatigue from illness, with muscle or body aches,
D. Headaches related to an acute illness,
E. New and remarkable loss of taste, smell, and appetite,
F. Sore throat and congestion, and
G. Nausea, or vomiting, and/or diarrhea

It is not likely you will experience all the symptoms above, and so if you are experiencing any of the symptoms and feel ill, you must stay at home and isolate yourself from others to see if further illness develops. In general, there are no illnesses that you want to bring to the campus, even if it is not determined to be COVID-19. You must log the illness on the MyHealthTracer.com application. You must also contact your supervisor.

Recognize that some employees and students who are vaccinated have contracted the Delta variant. While they have been ill, the illness of those vaccinated to date has been mild. So, if you become ill with any viral symptoms, complete the MyHealthTracer.com application and be tested before coming to campus! If an employee or student becomes ill on campus, please notify your COVID-19 Officer. The COVID-19 officer will follow up on results of any COVID testing to assure others on campus are safe.

SECTION 6: ADDITIONAL PREVENTIVE HEALTH SAFETY MEASURES TO AVOID COVID-19 OUTBREAKS AND TO KEEP YOU SAFE!

Frequent cleaning of the building and hand sanitizer stands at all entrances will continue next to high use areas. All employees and student should practice good hand and face hygiene practices and wash hands frequently. Also, use the hand sanitizer frequently, esp. before/after touching doors, elevators, stair rails and frequently used surfaces. Employees and students should avoid sharing items such as pens, phones, computers, or other hand-held items.
General Safety Measures: You should continue to socially distance where possible. Do not congregate in halls, parking lots, bathrooms, libraries, or other small areas where social distancing cannot occur.

Safety Measures related to Restroom Use and Handwashing: To avoid overcrowding, the restrooms’ capacity is limited to the number of people in the stalls and no more than 4 persons waiting inside the bathroom. For this reason, to avoid congregating by bathrooms, employees should attempt to use bathrooms at times when students are not on a break (not at the 10-minute period before the hour i.e.: 9:50 to 10, 10:50 to 11, or from 12 to 12:15). Employees and students should wash hands for 20 seconds or more and use hand sanitizer.

Continue to Avoid Others Who Are Ill when off campus, whether at home or in transit, to not bring COVID or other illnesses to campus. Notify HR in a confidential manner if you are concerned someone is on campus who is ill.

SECTION 7. DELIVERY OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS ON CAMPUS

This section describes the safety measures that have been put in place and that will continue in order for the curriculum to be delivered in a safe environment in the classrooms and laboratories.

1. CLASSROOMS: While in Green and Yellow zone status the classrooms will now be used at full capacity as restrictions have been limited. Students should be aware that when the campus is in the Orange zone status two classrooms will be used for each class in the auditorium for better social distancing. During the Red zone status, the campus will be essentially closed and all classes will be online. Students and employees will be informed of status a minimum of weekly, and the color zone and tables will be posted on the door.

2. MASKS must be worn at all times in the classroom by those who are not vaccinated for all color zones. Masks will be required of all students, including those vaccinated, when the color zone is Yellow, Orange, or Red.

3. ACADEMIC CALENDARS: The Associate Deans for Medical Education on each campus will continue to provide the academic calendars.
   a. The academic calendar will list when the classes or lab occurs, and whether the educational lecture or lab is a mandatory learning (ML) event or an asynchronous learning event (AL).
   b. SEAT ASSIGNMENTS will continue as they have in years past before the COVID-19 pandemic.
   c. ANATOMY AND PPC/OMM LABORATORIES All Laboratories are considered as mandatory learning events. All students must attend laboratories and/or have an excused absence (which will require remediation). Masks must be worn by all students who are not vaccinated.
   d. PPC/OMM lab partners will be chosen for the entire block to avoid exposure to multiple students. Students will be allowed to choose their own partners.
   e. Laboratory time and size may be adjusted during Orange status and students and faculty will be notified if this occurs. Campus is closed during Red status.

4. ANATOMY and PPC/OMM LABORATORY will be split into two sessions where there will be no more than 50% of the class in the laboratory at any one time. This has been true for a number of years. Altered schedules may occur anytime an Orange or Red status occurs.
5. Faculty supervising LABORATORIES must be vaccinated. If not vaccinated, the faculty member must report to the Dean for other assignments (if possible).
6. Altered schedules may occur during and following a Red status.

SECTION 8. EARLY CLINICAL EXPERIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL TRIPS

Early clinical experiences and international trips have been placed on hold due to the increasing numbers of patients with COVID-19, both in the U.S. and in our partnering International sites. When these are reinstated, employees will be notified.

SECTION 9: POLICIES AFFECTING THE OMS 3 AND OMS 4 CLINICAL PROGRAM

- SECTION 9 IS FOR FACULTY AND STAFF WHO OVERSEE THE DELIVERY OF THE OMS-3 & OMS-4 CLINICAL PROGRAM ONLY

History: VCOM initially (2020-2021 academic year) determined new clinical program requirements for the OMS-3 and OMS-4 year students while under COVID-19 restrictions. The schedule allowed students to finish their academic program on time. For the academic year 2021-2022 the clinical program has returned to prior four-week block schedules with ten blocks in the academic year. These are listed below.

OMS-3 academic program and Required Rotations beginning in July 2021 and ending June of 2022.

- Eight required 4-week core clinical rotations in the following fields: family medicine, pediatrics, OB/GYN, surgery, psychiatry, rural primary care, and 2 internal medicine clinical rotation months.
- One third-year selective has been restored. The selective must be completed in VCOM core site. A list of selectives will be provided in the 2021-2022 handbook.
- One four-week period for the Research course period has been moved from year 4 to year 3 to enable the student to begin their research earlier, providing more time for data collection, study, and publication.

Vaccination: All OMS-3 and OMS-4 students will be required to be vaccinated to ensure a timely program and the clinical rotation site to which the student was originally matched. Vaccination is required for patient care for the fall term unless a qualified exemption is granted. (In Alabama, proof of vaccination status cannot be required and is voluntary by the student).
- Students must recognize, however, that as VCOM is not the owner of the hospitals or practices where students normally train, the hospital or practice has the right to establish their own vaccination requirements.
  - When the clinical site requires vaccination, and the student has not provided proof of vaccination, a relocation of the student to a site that does not require vaccination may be necessary. This may not always be possible and this may cause a delay in the student’s clinical program.
- Proof of Vaccination may also be required by many hospitals to qualify for their residency audition rotations. ACGME has stated that students should be made aware that it reflects poorly on the student with residency sites if the student is not vaccinated.
• **OMS-3 and OMS-4 Students who are NOT vaccinated for COVID–19 will be required to self-quarantine after any direct exposure to a patient or other person with COVID-19** and will generally require a negative test prior to returning to patient care. This may result in a delay in the educational program. Students must follow the guidelines of the clinical site as well.

• **Students who are vaccinated** and who have an unprotected exposure may also be required to self-quarantine. If required, the self-quarantine is generally shorter and the student will be required to follow the guidelines of their clinical site as to days of self-quarantine required and if any testing is required.

• **Students should be aware, if they become ill with COVID-19, the time allowed for recovery and for quarantine may delay their program.**

• **It is considered unprofessional and unethical for a student to represent themselves as fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to a clinical site if they are not vaccinated** and the student may be referred to the Honor Code Council or PESB if they do misrepresent this status.

• **Clinical Educational Modules and post-rotation exams** will continue to accompany all required rotations.

• The **Geriatrics rotation** in the OMS-3 year has been discontinued and is planned in future years as a part of early clinical experiences.

• **All students must use the MyHealthTracer.com as instructed.** As this is a screening tool for COVID-19, those who are not vaccinated must use the application daily.

**OMS-4 CLINICAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS for the Class of 2022** are as follows:

• **Four-weeks dedicated to professional development.** This may be taken in one- or two-week periods to allow flexibility for the students to complete residency interviews and the other requirements.

• **Five (5) elective rotations are allowed by VCOM.** Electives were designed to prepare the fourth-year student for the field the student wishes to enter and to allow those who haven’t made a final choice to experience a clinical rotation in a field the student is considering. Students will plan their electives when meeting with the Associate Dean for OMS-4 (and with advisement by clinical chairs).

• **Four (4) Selective Rotations.** In addition to electives, students **must complete the required selective rotations.** These are based on required medical knowledge to enter residency and may be tailored to the field the student is to enter. The **4 required Core Selective rotations** for the 2021-2022 academic year include the following: One (1) 4 week surgical selective; One (1) 4 week medical selective; One (1) medical or surgical selective; and One (1) intensive medicine selective.

• **One (1) required Emergency Medicine rotation**

• Only those students who did not complete a research rotation in their third year must do so in the fourth year. This may be done in place of the elective and not cause a delay in the program.

• **All electives are possible in the VCOM Core hospitals where residencies exist**, depending upon availability. A minimum of one elective is possible through the VSLO system. (This policy is per VSLO).

• The Director for OMS-4 Clinical Rotations will assist the student in determining the rotation availability and preparing their schedules.
• Many outside electives remain restricted nationally by GME oversight groups or by hospitals and residency programs. These restrictions are not VCOM restrictions and are being imposed externally.

• **Most outside elective rotations will require vaccination. This is imposed by the clinical site and not VCOM.** Associate Deans and Chairs must make students aware of these requirements.

• Elective and Selective choices for the fourth year selective(s) must be made from the 4th year Selective Rotations List in the student handbook.

• **Interviews for Residency:** In 2020, for the first-time residencies began interviewing virtually. OMS-4 students are to be made aware that online interviews for residency may or may not continue and therefore a rising fourth-year student must be prepared for both types of interviews. Ultimately, at this time, whether the interview process will be in-person, or the choice of virtual interviews is up to each residency site. The Associate Dean for OMS-4 and GME will provide further information on a program used to prepare students for residency interview.

• **All OMS-4 students** are required to use the [MyHealthTracer.com](http://MyHealthTracer.com) online application each day until fully vaccinated. After vaccination, the student must enter proof of vaccination once, must provide their status weekly, and must make an entry any time the student has exposures to COVID-19 or if the student experiences illness.

• In general, whether by VCOM or by the vast majority of hospitals and residency programs, all OMS-4 students are expected to complete vaccination as they are considered a healthcare worker. **Students should** recognize that many clinical sites will not allow students to rotate unless fully vaccinated and many residency programs will not select a student who is not vaccinated against COVID-19. When this occurs, VCOM will assist students to find locations where vaccination is not required.

• **Students should be aware it is doubtful that you will be able to match to a residency if not participating in vaccination. This is NOT a VCOM decision, but the decision of the residency program.**

• **Proof of Vaccination:** Students should be aware that, just as with the other required vaccinations for clinical care, proof of all vaccines is provided to the clinical sites prior to clinical training. COVID-19 is a part of the vaccinations provided now. (In Alabama, students who do not have proof of Vaccination provided to the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, when the proof of vaccination is requested, will have the following statement provided: This student has not shown proof of vaccination to Clinical Affairs). Again, as the hospitals are independent from the College, this may result in a required reassignment if the hospital to which the student is currently assigned does not accept the student.

• **Students may now see patients under investigation for having COVID-19 if fully immunized and if wearing all appropriate protections as designated by the Clinical Site.**
  o The student who is **not vaccinated** may not see patients with COVID-19 and, if they accidently see such a patient, they will be required to notify the COVID-19 officer and the exposure will always require a period of quarantine (according to the site or if the site does not specify 7 days and a negative test). This may delay the unvaccinated student’s program. Students should also check the site on the time periods required for quarantine.

• **Students** in clinical education should report any illness to their clinical education site and assure that he or she is excused for the day if experiencing any symptom of illness.

• **Students who are vaccinated** must also report any significant exposures on MyHealthTracer.com application, however, if wearing a mask and using all precautions, do not
generally have to quarantine unless he or she develops symptoms and/or tests positive. If the policy of the institution requires additional quarantine or testing the student must follow that testing or quarantine as well.

- **A Student MUST COMMUNICATE providing a Notification of Illness or Symptoms of COVID-19 and/or unprotected exposures (which may require missing days from a rotation depending on vaccination status and type of exposure). The communication includes:**
  - The clinical faculty member with whom they are rotating
  - The site coordinator and DSME (if in a VCOM core site) and the COVID-19 Officer (who is the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs).
  - Log the illness on MyHealthTracer.com.

Students should anticipate that all missed clinical rotations days will need to be remediated to pass the rotation and this can generally be done on weekends if a small number of days.

**Summary:** VCOM expects OMS-3 and 4 students, just as they expect employees, to model exceptional physician professional behavior to safeguard their health and the health of the public. This is accomplished through vaccination, early recognition of signs and symptoms, taking timely protective actions to avoid the transmission of COVID-19 to others in the clinical setting, and by reporting their situation to those responsible for their learning and well-being.

VCOM is hopeful the OMS-3 and OMS-4 students may complete the year without interruption, however, the academic calendar for these students may change as hospitals and clinics adapt to increased COVID-19 cases.

**SECTION 10: TRAVEL**

Faculty and Students who are traveling outside of the country or to a “hot spot” within the country must be vaccinated. For those faculty and students who travel the following policies apply:

- **a.** Vaccinations are required by all who are traveling out of the country. This prevents illness for the student and prevents the student from being a vector.
- **b.** The CDC states, “if Fully Vaccinated” the employee or student or employee Can Safely Travel in the United States. If not vaccinated, travel to areas of high-risk for COVID-19 will only be allowed when a self-quarantine can follow.
- **c.** Self-quarantine periods for faculty and staff must be taken from the employee’s vacation time, sick days, or other leave time. If a student is seeking self-quarantine time following travel, the time must be preapproved or the missed work will not be allowed to be remediated. Approvals will be limited as with other excused absences.
- **d.** Safe activities are still recommended while on travel for faculty and students such as outdoor activities, (i.e.: camping, hiking, etc.) which are still recommended while avoiding concerts, and indoor public gatherings that are considered super-spreaders.
- **e.** INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL International travel remains discouraged at this time and prohibited for those students or employees who are not fully vaccinated. VCOM international travel to VCOM international sites is postponed at this time’
- **f.** If fully vaccinated, and the travel is considered lower risk (1 and 2), the employee may travel anywhere in the US without quarantine. Employees who are vaccinated may travel to any country as well, however, they are asked to avoid countries where COVID-19 is
increasing or high risk (level 3 or 4). If traveling to such a country the employee should inform their supervisor. Employees and students should be aware a minimum five-day quarantine is required following travel for those who are vaccinated. (Self-quarantine time is taken from vacation or leave time for employees.) Self-quarantine is required before returning to campus and a negative COVID-19 test is also required prior to return from an international site.

g. Students who have taken international travel must be aware that, even if international travel is approved, and return to the U.S. is delayed, the student may or may not be able to make up missing exams, labs, or mandatory learning events.

h. It is not known when VCOM International Missions will be re-established.

All faculty and students must follow the CDC guidelines, as well as those specified above, following any international travel. Below is a quick reference for CDC requirements.

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**SECTION 11: Emergent Actions Related to COVID-19:**

The COVID-19 Committee Chair or the President, Campus Deans, the Senior Director for Human Resources, the Senior Vice President, and the Vice Provost for Institutional Planning and Accreditation will meet on any emergent conditions that arise and may call a meeting of the Committee when needed. The Director of Human Resources and the Student COVID-19 Officer may also be included if there is a Campus outbreak.

The COVID-19 Committee will meet periodically on student and employee requests for exemption and other issues that may arise during the year.

The VCOM liaison with the local Health Department / District or their COVID-19 contact will be notified of new cases. The Directors of the local Health Departments where any of the VCOM Campuses are located will be kept informed of any outbreaks and periodically of the state of the Campus.